

# access

## QUALITY SERVICE SUBCOMMITTEE (QSS) MEETING

Thursday, October 17, 2019

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Access Services Headquarters  
El Monte Metro Building  
Third Floor Council Chamber Room  
3449 Santa Anita Avenue  
El Monte, CA 91731

<u>Item</u>	<u>Item Description</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1.	Call to Order	
2.	Roll Call	
3.	Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 15, 2019	Action
4.	General Public Comment	
5.	The Great California Shakeout Drill	
6.	"Where's My Ride" (WMR) Update / Ruben Prieto	Presentation/Discussion (provided at meeting)
7.	Customer Relations Overview and Function / Susanna Cadenas	Presentation/Discussion (provided at meeting)

8.	Recommendations for the Definition and Development of Same-Day Ride/Trips)/ R. P. Martindale-Essington	Presentation/ Continued Discussion
9.	New Issues Raised Subsequent to posting of the agenda	Discussion
10.	Adjournment	Action

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Note: Access Services Quality Service Subcommittee (QSS) meetings are held pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act [Cal. Gov. Code §54950] and are open to the public. The public may view and obtain all written information supporting this agenda provided both initially and supplementally prior to the meeting at the agency's offices located at 3449 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte, California and on its website at <http://accessla.org>. Documents, including Power Point handouts distributed to the QSS by staff or QSS members at the meeting will simultaneously be made available to the public. Two opportunities are available for the public to address the QSS during a QSS meeting: (1) before a specific agenda item is debated and voted upon regarding that item and (2) general public comment. The exercise of the right to address the QSS is subject to restriction as to time and appropriate decorum. All persons wishing to make public comment must fill out a yellow Public Comment Form and submit it to the QSS Chair. Public comment is generally limited to three (3) minutes per speaker and

the total time available for public comment may be limited at the discretion of the Chair. Persons whose speech is impaired such that they are unable to address the board at a normal rate of speed may request the accommodation of a limited amount of additional time from the Chair but only by checking the appropriate box on the Public Comment Form. Granting such an accommodation is at the discretion of the Chair.

The QSS will not and cannot respond during the meeting to matters raised under general public comment. Pursuant to provisions of the Brown Act governing these proceedings, no discussion or action may be taken on these matters unless they are listed on the agenda, or unless certain emergency or special circumstances exist. However, the QSS may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future QSS Meeting.

["Alternative accessible formats are available upon request."](#)

## ITEM #3

DATE: October 17, 2019

TO: QUALITY SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

FROM: R. P. MARTINDALE-ESSINGTON, ADA COORDINATOR FOR  
CUSTOMER RELATIONS

RE: QSS MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 15, 2019

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

On August 15, 2019 at 19:00 AM , the meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Michael Conrad.

### 2. ROLE CALL

In attendance were the following QSS members, staff, audience participants, and guests:

Michael Conrad, QSS Vice-Chair; Rachele Goeman, QSS; Belinda Conrad, QSS; Jan Johnson, QSS; Wilma Ballew, QSS; Bill Zuke, QSS; Jessie Ortiz, MVV; Jackie Sanchez, CTI; Mike Fricke, CTI; Michael Sherer, Guest; Annette Arriola, Alta Resources; Megan Mumby, Access; Mike Greenwood, Access; Brian Selwyn, Access; David Chia, Access; Susanna Cadenas, Access; LaTisha Wilson, Access; Melisa Mungia, Access; Liz Lyons, QSS; Ronald Harris, QSS; Gloria Broderick, QSS; R. P. Martindale-Essington Access/Facilitator.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

R. P. Martindale-Essington alerted the QSS that an Item Supplement was placed on the Information Table covering Item #5: Online Reservations and Item #6: a continuing discussion of the Development of Same-Day

Rider Trips. Additions to the Same-Day discussion include: (1) what a potential fare might look like; 2) what restrictions might exist; 3 No-Shows and who would handle these; (4) complaints, and how would these be addressed. The Supplement contains three excerpts from various articles exploring topics such as: why aren't ADA Paratransit systems engaging in Same-Day trips anymore?; LYFT's new accessible vehicle program; and Dallas Texas's DART joint project with Uber providing free trips for some of its fixed route users. These articles are provided to stimulate the thinking processes in looking at how to put together a potential premium Same-Day service.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR MAY 16, 2019

Vice-Chair Conrad called for approval of the meetings minutes and the motion passed by voice vote with two abstentions: Rachele Goeman and Belinda Conrad. No corrections were requested.

### 4. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no Public Comments submitted by the public.

### 5. ONLINE RESERVATIONS DEMONSTRATION AND REVIEW RE-VISITED

In a follow-up to her previous and popular presentation, Ms. Melissa Mungia provided an update on the progress and status of the Online Reservations System (ORS). The update covered: (1) the project's introduction; (2) the project's timeline for implementation, (3) its current progress, and (4) future enhancements to the system. The ORS allows one to book trips to and from previously visited addresses, edit existing trips, cancel trips, and manage upcoming reservations. Online reservations can be made using a smartphone, tablet or computer using an internet connection. The project will be rolled out to the last Access service area, Antelope Valley, by December of 2019. As of the date of the presentation, over 1100 customers were using the system, including 186 self-described users with visual impairments. Another 888 users self-declared as having physical disabilities, whereas, 250 users self-identified

as having cognitive disabilities, and 39 self-declared users reported having some form of hearing impairment. Ms. Mungia went on to point out that two of the future enhancements for Online reservations would include: an ability to schedule a new trip and combine the ORS with the Where's My Ride (WMR) app. Ms. Mungia went on to demonstrate some of the ORS's capabilities.

Member Goeman inquired as to whether or not persons using the JAWS screen reader reported issues with the drop-down boxes used in the ORS? She was having difficulty making a drop-down box selection using either her desktop or laptop computer. Using an older version of JAWS, Version 14, Facilitator R. P. Martindale-Essington recommended updating to a newer version of the screen reader. (Version 19 is the latest one presently available). He would speak to her later about this matter.

Member Harris asked a question regarding cancellations. He asked if the same parameters for booking trips applied to Online reservations as they do when using the phone? The answer is "yes." For example, if one were to cancel a scheduled trip an hour before its due time, the Online system would warn you that you could cancel your trip but also alert users that one would receive a No-Show in keeping with Access policy.

Member Johnson inquired about booking a reservation with a cat. She asked if this could be identified using ORS? Ms. Mungia agreed to speak with her after the meeting because she would have to investigate this.

It was also brought up that attributes, such as: "van-Only", would appear in one's profile.

Member Garate clarified for the QSS that he and Melissa had verified that under the Passenger and Load Detail section of the system, below the heading: "Adaptive Equipment", there is a text field screen labeled: "Instructions", which is where one could add any information you would want the driver to know about concerning your trip. (This is a 40-character text field used by those wanting the driver to know about specifics relating to their trip).

Member Zuke asked a timing reservation question. He asked if one booked a trip for Friday on Thursday night, and booked an early

Saturday trip on Friday, would the ORS permit this? And the answer is “yes” for the procedure would exactly follow what you would do on the phone.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEFINITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SAME-DAY RIDE/TRIPS

Facilitator R. P. Martindale-Essington continued with the CAC Goals Subcommittee’s discussion regarding this topic. Reading from the first paragraph of the provided Supplement, he recalled that in previous QSS meetings, the topics of response time, a brokered system to deliver such a program, and the need for current rather than old statistics in order to analyze the impact of starting and maintaining a premium Same-Day service. Today’s presentation, he declared, would focus on four elements: (1) potential fare/distances; (2) eligibility criteria; (3) cancellation and No-Show penalties; and (4) customer service and complaint responses. He then invited members to participate in a round-table discussion, which will then be submitted to the CAC Goals Subcommittee. (Note, the QSS was only able to hold discussion on the first of these topics and it is this specific element, which will be summarized here.

Providing a brief history of the old Same-Day premium service (circa 2000), Martindale-Essington mentioned that Access Services was compelled to end the program at the insistence of Metro since it was interfering with the delivery of the mandated Next-Day program. In its place, Access Services developed the Free-Fare Bus and the Free-Fare programs in Los Angeles County.

Facilitator Martindale-Essington opened the discussion by asking the following question: if we were to put together some kind of Same-Day premium service, what would the fare system look like? What do you all think would be realistic in terms of fares? Taking into consideration that such a system is going to cost money, how much do you think a fare should cost? Should it be distance-based? Should it be a flat fee? And if so, how much?

Member Goeman put forth the idea that if this was something Access were to take on, should the fare be based on a single trip or round-trip? If more is to be charged, then possibly a flat fee makes more sense for a round trip. A last minute trip to the store might cost \$7.00 but this would cover both legs of the round-trip. She feels that this would not be something a person would utilize daily and so a higher cost is justified. She asked if anyone had yet looked at the criteria surrounding this? Martindale-Essington stated that he did not know the answer and thus asked if any staff members knew of such research? He went on to say that since this was a request from the CAC, the entire conceptual process of coming up with a new program is in the hands of the QSS. Ideas derived by the QSS will be given to the CAC for further revision and development.

Vice-Chair Conrad offered a different spin on the flat fare idea. There should be a provision for a one-way fare because a person may be using such a Same-Day trip to go to a place, stay there overnight, and then later desire to come back the next day. Should a one-way fare be higher than a flat round-trip fare?

Member Conrad pointed out that if one was to spend the night somewhere and come back the next day, this trip would fall under the ADA Paratransit system and not a Same-Day system. She wanted to know when such a program would be implemented and Facilitator Martindale-Essington mentioned that this was a concept and at present, there was no timetable for beginning such a project. But who better to build such a program than riders, providers and staff.

Member Johnson envisions such a Same-Day service as being an emergency service and thus she expects to pay more for it. Her concern is that a distance-based fare may lead to the problems she experienced under the old Same-Day system where she was being charged different amounts by various providers going to the same place. Today, GPS would solve this problem. The group was reminded that anything we collectively recall about the old Same-Day service is now obsolete because technology has changed everything. But Member Johnson's question is still valid. What is the value of a distance-based fare over a one-way fare?



Member Ballew raised the point that LYFT and Via already exist and thus, there may not need to be any justification for a revamped Same-Day program. But she also stated that she had much to still read on the subject before rendering an opinion. At the May QSS meeting, it was brought up that other programs exist and some have even partnered up with fixed route providers. The Supplement provided covers some of this type of activity and explores why ADA Paratransit has not embraced such a concept.

Member Zuke appreciated having a detailed roadmap from which to do research. He stated that even a \$15.00 one-way fare wouldn't be unreasonable depending on how important the cause of the trip. There are important reasons for Same-Day trips. Facilitator Martindale-Essington stated that this project will be an ongoing item for the QSS. He asked should members after today's discussion still have other ideas, to please email or call him about them.

Member Lyons, looking at the future of such a program, mentioned that No-Shows, cancellations and time limits will have to be addressed. Guidelines will have to be set. Under emergency conditions, she would be willing to pay \$15.00 and more. Martindale-Essington suggested that a phone conference might be one of several ways by which to handle these elements.

Member Broderick reminded everyone that the ADA holds that all trips are valid and that none can be prioritized over another. However, for a premium service, such considerations, like trip type, can be looked at.

Member Garate had additional questions and ideas about such a program. Agreeing with Member Lyons, the question needs to be defined: what is a Same-Day trip? Is it someone who is stranded, say, being released from the hospital and they have no way to get home? Or, is it someone at home who wants to go from one place to another? Would guests pay the same fee as a rider? How many trips would be served in an hour on such a program, assuming existing equipment was to be used? One way to utilize resources may be to impose a varying fare system: fares may be higher during peak hours and lower during slow times, as Uber does with their congestion pricing model. Same-Day transfer trips may be a problem given the coordination which may have

to take place between providers. These ideas lead directly to eligibility questions and will be tackled in upcoming discussions.

Member Sanchez echoed the thoughts of Member Garate and she also emphasized her thoughts that such a Same-Day system should not be constructed as an emergency service but as a general purpose service in keeping with the ADA Paratransit system. Determining what an emergency is for one person may be an entirely different reality for someone else.

Member Ortiz suggested that traveling within a local region might require a flat fee but what if that person travels outside to a different region.

Member Harris expressed his concern over several issues: chief among these being: a definition and understanding of the concept of premium. The expectation of "premium" is that you are paying more or a higher cost to get specialized service. Member Harris put forth the idea that indeed a way to reduce No-Shows and cancellations should be to take the money up front for the trip with no expectation of refund. This would reduce overuse of the system. New people would have to be hired under this new system because the existing personnel can barely keep up with the increasing demand under the ADA Paratransit system. There has to be a way to pay for such a premium service if it were to be created. Referrals are required.

Mr. Martindale-Essington concluded the discussion by encouraging members to read over the Supplement information and to develop thoughtful considerations on this and the other three points. He stated that he would submit the Supplement electronically and asked everyone to submit their responses to him over the next several weeks. He further asked that when responding to a section that one list the section number and topic making it easier for him to organize the material into a future report. The next QSS meeting is scheduled for October 17, 2019 and not November 21, 2019. The November meeting was cancelled because it falls either on or near the Annual Meeting. This doesn't mean that a teleconference can't be held but most likely, work will proceed on this topic at the next QSS meeting.

Guest Michael Sherer suggested a new service: Access Air, where they fly you to your destination. And though accepted with humor by the audience, it should be noted that Uber and Amazon are contemplating air service from hotels to airports and the transporting of goods using drones.

## 7. NEW ISSUES RAISED SUBSEQUENT TO POSTING OF THE AGENDA

This item was not addressed due to the expiration of meeting time.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Conrad adjourned the meeting and called for the vote to approve the motion. It was seconded by Member Goeman and the vote passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

### **ITEM #5, #6, #7, and #8**

DATE: October 17, 2019

TO: Quality Services Subcommittee

FROM: R.P. Martindale-Essington, ADA Coordinator for Customer Relations

RE: Upcoming Items

In October 2019, four (4) main topics will be addressed during the upcoming QSS meeting. The QSS will again be meeting on the exact day that state, county and city organizations will be participating in the Great California Shakeout-- which means that members will have an opportunity to take part in a statewide exercise drill. Ruben Prieto, I.T. Systems Administrator, will provide the QSS with a quick update on the latest status of the "Where's My Ride (WMR) app. Susanna Cadenas, Customer Relations Administrator, will give a presentation outlining an overview describing the role and function of the Access Services Customer Relations department that she heads. Lastly, R. P. Martindale-Essington, ADA Coordinator for Customer Relations, will continue the ongoing QSS round-table discussion on recommendations for the definition and development of Same-Day ride/trips.

