

347 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017-3739
212 878-7274 Tel
212 878-7432 Fax

Katherine N. Lapp
Executive Director and
Chief Operating Officer



Metropolitan Transportation Authority

State of New York

February 17, 2004

Honorable George Pataki
Governor of the State of New York
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Re: 90-Day Response
MTA NYC Transit – Rapid Transit Services for Persons with Disabilities
Report #2001-S-69

Dear Governor Pataki:

On January 8, 2004, the State Comptroller issued the above-referenced final audit report.

As provided by Section 170 of the Executive Law, I am furnishing you with the attached response which addresses each recommendation contained in the audit report.

For your convenience, I have attached a copy of the final audit report.

Sincerely,

attachments

RECEIVED
Office of the State Comptroller

FEB 27 2004

Lynn Canton
Deputy Comptroller

RECEIVED

FEB 19 2004

OFFICE OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER
COMPTROLLER ALAN G. HEVESI
EXECUTIVE CORRESPONDENCE UNIT

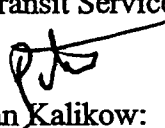


New York City Transit

February 2, 2004

Honorable Peter S. Kalikow
Chairman
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
347 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Re: NYS Comptroller's Final Audit Report (2001-S-69)
Rapid Transit Services for Persons with Disabilities


Dear Chairman Kalikow:

This responds to the January 8, 2004 New York State Comptroller's Final Audit Report, covering Rapid Transit Services for Persons with Disabilities.

Our responses to the audit are arrayed consistent with the order of the final report.

Recommendation (1) Monitor or study the use of accessible stations by people with disabilities, especially those using wheelchairs, to promote increased usage of the system by these people.

Response (1) We do not agree. We have considered this recommendation and decided that it would not be practical. Customers who use wheelchairs are one group of many that collectively, comprise the disabled community. Additionally, the law does not require such monitoring. Instead, the Office of ADA Compliance will enhance our promotional efforts as we continue to add more stations to the list of those that have been made accessible.

Recommendation (2) Develop written standardized inspection procedures.

Response (2) We agree. The Office of ADA Compliance will take the procedures already in place and augment these procedures based on the recommendations. The Office of ADA Compliance will include this recommendation in their goals for 2004.

Recommendation (3) Inspect subway stations more frequently.

Response (3) We agree. Existing Department of Subways inspection procedures already capture this information, we will also include it in the Office of ADA Compliance standard inspection procedures currently under development.

Recommendation (4) Insist on more timely corrective actions to resolve the problems observed.

Response (4) We do not agree. Out of service elevators are reported immediately by the Department of Subways. However, malfunctioning non-NYCT elevators are reported to the building owners, but not included in the "hotline" since we do not own them. We have achieved a reliability goal of 98.4 percent, which is the highest ever recorded.

Recommendation (5) Provide enhanced monitoring over heavily vandalized elevators.

Response (5) We agree. As was stated in our preliminary response, all new and rehabilitated elevators are equipped with surveillance cameras to minimize vandalism and enhance customer security.

Recommendation (6) Continue looking for ways to minimize the gaps between platforms and subway cars. In choosing ADA stations to rehabilitate, consider selecting those stations with gaps that can be minimized the most.

Response (6) We agree. We will continue to investigate all means in an effort to minimize gaps between platform and subway cars. It should be noted, however, that since many of our stations are pre-existing and the gap measurement is largely influenced by dynamic conditions, these measurements will be dynamically different from time to time.

Recommendation (7) Undertake a new feasibility study that evaluates using bridge plates to overcome the gaps between platforms and subway cars and consider how it was possible for other transit systems cited in the report to utilize bridge gaps.

Response (7) We do not agree. The use of bridge plates has been considered in the past but rejected because of increased dwell time requirements. The compressed intervals between trains on our system is not comparable to systems where bridge plates are used.

Honorable Peter S. Kalikow
February 2, 2004
Page 3

Recommendation (8) Assess the feasibility of using electronic monitoring devices that report elevators automatically when they are out of service.

Response (8) We agree. The Department of Subways is currently testing a prototype reporting device and initial results are promising. While we have plans to retrofit all elevators, this will be contingent on receiving requisite funding to complete the project.

Recommendation (9) Update the out-of-service elevator hotline more frequently, as changes occur.

Response (9) We agree. We anticipate achieving real-time out-of-service elevator information, but this will not be realized until each elevator is equipped with electronic monitoring devices.

Recommendation (10) Require daily inspections of all elevators by subway station supervisors, including elevators not owned by NYCT. Verify that they are being cleaned in a timely manner and reported to the hotline when found to be out of service.

Response (10) We agree. This is already being done by Department of Subways personnel.

Recommendation (11) Provide a supplemental report that lists elevator availability data by station, including elevators that are being rehabilitated or replaced.

Response (11) We do not agree. Our method of reporting out of service elevators is both standard and consistent with reporting requirements in the industry. It is also consistent with recommendations from the American Public Transit Association. Supplemental information is already available.

Recommendation (12) Explore the feasibility of providing elevator redundancy at ADA stations that are scheduled for rehabilitation and construction.

Response (12) We agree with this recommendation for new station constructions.

Honorable Peter S. Kalikow
February 2, 2004
Page 4

Recommendation (13) Ensure that the Procedures for Evacuating Mobility-Impaired Customers are posted at all strategic locations and that staff is trained in their use.

Response (13) We agree. The Office of ADA Compliance will begin semi-annual distribution of the approved policy, including instructions for posting. The Office will also work with the Department of Subways in order to incorporate this item in their training programs.

Recommendation (14) Consider purchasing computer software for the Elevator and Escalator Department that will help track the costs of maintaining ADA elevators and keeping them in good repair.

Response (14) We agree. This information is currently recorded and tracked in a computer data base.

Recommendation (15) Develop standard criteria for staff to use as guidance for determining where signage should be installed.

Response (15) We do not agree. NYCT has standard criteria to use as guidance for determining where signage should be installed. Standards are published under our current MTA Sign Manual. We also have a handbook from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that describes in great detail guidelines for signage related to ADA requirements, which we adhere to.

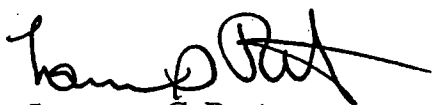
Recommendation (16) Establish an operating plan for the ADA Compliance Office for performing, documenting, and monitoring office tasks.

Response (16) We agree. Our earlier response dealt with reporting mechanisms. After careful reconsideration, the ADA Compliance Office feels that the recommendation could offer some strategic benefit. As such, the development of an operating plan will be incorporated in our goals for 2004.

Honorable Peter S. Kalikow
February 2, 2004
Page 5

As noted in the enclosed Comptroller's January 8, 2004, press release, we have done a good job making it easier for people with disabilities to use the subway. Although we have taken many steps to improve accessibility of the system, we still have many difficult challenges ahead. MTA New York City Transit has a strong organizational commitment for continued progress, and we will continue to view these audits as a constructive part of our effort.

Sincerely,



Lawrence G. Reuter
President

Enclosure

cc: K.N. Lapp
C. Crawford
M. Fucilli
M. Lombardi
M. Schnabel
B. Spencer