

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

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DATE: November 5, 1990
TO: Interested Persons
FROM: Cyndie Mayer, Senior Project Manager 
Virginia Beach, Accessibility Specialist 
SUBJECT: Report to the Legislature

Enclosed is a copy of the report on Metro Mobility Customer Service Procedure, prepared by the Regional Transit Board in response to Minnesota Statute 473.386 Subdivision 2 Section C. The stated purpose of this legislative mandate is to ensure that the Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC) establishes a customer service procedure which creates a system for registering and expeditiously responding to complaints by users, informing users how to register complaints, and requiring providers to report on incidents that impair the safety and well-being of users or the quality of service. Furthermore, the report is to address:

- customer service quality and provider reports;
- MMAC response to customer service quality; and
- steps taken by the RTB and MMAC to identify causes and provide remedies to recurring problems.

Information for this report was taken from the MMAC monthly reports and a consumer research study conducted by Ilium Associates, Inc. The report was reviewed by the Metro Mobility Task Force and the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee, and approved by the Regional Transit Board. RTB staff extend their appreciation to all who participated in the preparation of this report.

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REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
ON
METRO MOBILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE PROCEDURE

November 5, 1990

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the third annual report prepared in response to Minnesota Statute 473.386 Subdivision 2 Section C requiring the Regional Transit Board (RTB) to submit a report on Metro Mobility service quality to the commissioner of transportation and to the legislature. The stated purpose of this legislative mandate is to ensure that the Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC), which is a part of the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC), establishes a customer service procedure which creates a system for registering and expeditiously responding to complaints by users, informing users how to register complaints, and requiring providers to report on incidents that impair the safety and well-being of users or the quality of the service.

Further, the legislative report is to address:

- customer service quality and provider reports;
- MMAC response to customer service quality; and
- steps taken by the RTB and MMAC to identify causes and provide remedies to recurring problems.

Past and Ongoing Efforts

The first report, submitted August 1988, documented that efforts had been undertaken related to:

- new provider contracts, which became effective May 1988, requiring revised complaint reporting and resolution procedures by providers that had been suggested to the RTB by the Metropolitan Center for Independent Living (MCIL);
- a new customer service enhancement project to examine existing complaint handling procedures, prompted by reports that customers had not always been satisfied with or aware of the resolution of complaints by the MMAC;
- plans of the MMAC to develop written operational policies and procedures as well as contract compliance standards for monitoring provider performance; and
- use of the complaint system by the MMAC to monitor systemwide trends in order to identify issues and needs for improvement.

The second report, submitted in August 1989, focused on continuing efforts undertaken on both clarifying the responsibilities and performance expectations of providers, as well as improving the customer's ease of registering complaints and level of satisfaction in getting service problems resolved through communications with the MMAC. In particular, the 1989 report highlighted the following accomplishments:

- The *Policy and Procedures manual and Contract Enforcement Procedures* document was issued to providers by the MMAC in March 1989. This manual clarifies responsibilities and incorporates contract compliance standards for provider performance;
- The *Customer Service Enhancement Project* report, the result of a study initiated to improve the MMAC's responsiveness to customer needs, was completed in January 1989 by an organizational and training consultant, and the MMAC is in the process of implementing the full set of recommendations.

- A standardized *Vehicle Operator Training Manual and Resource Guide* was also developed by the training consultant and supplied to providers in January 1989 for distribution to all drivers in Metro Mobility service. This manual complements the existing training programs of providers.
- The MMAC proposed staffing level changes to the RTB to improve its system monitoring and customer relations functions. A new budget and a management plan were then approved by the board.
- The RTB has enhanced its own role by adding an accessibility specialist to its staff in March of 1989. This position serves as staff liaison to the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee and analyst for advancing policies and new programs to improve transit accessibility.

In 1990, the RTB, the MMAC, and the providers under contract to provide Metro Mobility service continued working together while focusing efforts on customer satisfaction, with the goal being to make the Metro Mobility system even more responsive to customer needs. By such cooperation, persons who rely on the service will thus have the best possible access to it.

Recent Activities

Related to the above, the following are some of the highlights of accomplishments during 1990:

- In early 1990, the Metro Mobility provider contracts were revised to incorporate new procedures resulting from new policies and new programs such as the Trip Assurance Program, described below. The Policy and Procedures manual and the Contract Enforcement Procedures document will be revised in the near future to reflect these changes.
- The *Trip Assurance Program* was implemented in July 1990 as a way of dealing with the increasing number of trip denials riders were experiencing in requesting Metro Mobility service. By entering denied trip requests in the MMAC computer for all providers to view and select according to their work load, and assigning non-selected trips to specific carriers, the program assures that virtually every trip requested by a Metro Mobility rider will be accommodated.
- The Regional Transit Board hired a consultant, Ilium Associates, Inc., based in Washington, to conduct a market research study of Metro Mobility users for the development of an accessible mainline bus service, and to assess the use and satisfaction of currently operated door-to-door services. This research was conducted in three main sections: a telephone survey, focus groups, and community forums. The feedback from this study provided the RTB and the MMAC with useful information regarding Metro Mobility service, as well as input on implementing an accessible transit system.
- The *Metro Memo* newsletter, which is sent out to certified Metro Mobility riders, was revised to make it easier to read and locate specific information. This improvement will greatly enhance communications between the MMAC and the ridership.

- The Regional Transit Board established a "Driver of the Month" award in January 1990 by which every month a Metro Mobility driver is recognized for his/her exceptional service to the Metro Mobility program. This award provides an added incentive for providers to maintain quality service to their riders, and gives customers a chance to provide positive feedback on the program by nominating candidates for this award.
- Recent modifications to the MMAC computer system for the Trip Assurance program and regular data entry allows for more efficient processing of trip requests, thus increasing providers effectiveness in meeting the demand for service from the ridership.
- To ensure the safety of passengers and oversee compliance of contractual obligations in service delivery, the MMAC hired a field inspector in February 1990. This position is responsible for inspecting Metro Mobility vehicles and documenting any defects and contract violations, and also conducts random field observations of Metro Mobility activities, reporting non-compliance activities to the MMAC for further action.

Performance Statistics

Customer service data indicates that during the past two years, the ratio of complaints to trips has remained low, with complaints representing less than one percent of the total number of trips provided. For the year May 1988 through May 1989, the MMAC recorded approximately 1,300 complaints while nearly 1.5 million trips were provided; this represents nine complaints for every 10,000 trips. For the year June 1989 through June 1990, approximately five complaints were recorded for every 10,000 trips, indicating that complaints have decreased in the past year. These overall results compare favorably to the experience of other cities, and are attributed to improved reporting and a continuing emphasis on customer service quality by the providers and the MMAC.

The most prevalent complaint for both years is late pick-ups, and failure of a vehicle to show for a scheduled ride is also a common complaint. Courtesy has become a serious concern for customers, as has passenger assistance, indicating that timely arrival and quality of service provided is of importance to the ridership.

Trip denials, which in the past has been a serious problem, have declined greatly since the implementation of the Trip Assurance Program. This program has succeeded in its goal of meeting the needs of persons with disabilities by ensuring that transportation services will be available when requested.

Next Steps

The RTB, the MMAC, and the providers under contract to provide Metro Mobility service, all will continue to cooperate in focusing efforts on customer satisfaction. It is our goal to make the Metro Mobility system even more responsive to customer needs, so that persons who rely on the service have the best possible access to it.

As part of the efforts to enhance customer service, the Regional Transit Board has contracted with a consultant to work closely with the RTB and MMAC in reviewing contract compliance procedures, vehicle inspection, staff work programs, and other issues pertinent to the Metro Mobility program. The consultant will then make recommendations to the board on changes which would improve the system and thus accomplish the above goal.

INTRODUCTION

This is the third annual report prepared in response to Minnesota Statute 473.386 Subdivision 2 Section C requiring the Regional Transit Board (RTB) to submit a report on Metro Mobility service quality to the commissioner of transportation and to the legislature. The stated purpose of this legislative mandate is to ensure that the Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC), which is a part of the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC), establishes a customer service procedure for registering and expeditiously responding to complaints by users, informing users how to register complaints, and requiring providers to report on incidents that impair the safety and well-being of users or the quality of the service.

Further, the legislative report is to address:

- customer service quality and provider reports;
- MMAC response to customer service quality;
- steps taken by the RTB and MMAC to identify causes and provide remedies to recurring problems.

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

- Customer research findings derived from MMAC monthly reports and a recent consumer research study on rider demographics and service provision;
- Description of the Metro Mobility customer service procedure to collect and resolve service quality reports (complaints);
- Recent actions to improve the customer service function that have and will improve the effectiveness and user-friendliness of the MMAC's customer service function;
- Metro Mobility provider performance statistics which documents information about operational performance collected by the MMAC from customer service reports.
- An executive summary of the consumer research study conducted by Ilium Associates, Inc.
- Additional attachments as relevant to this report.

CUSTOMER RESEARCH FINDINGS

Metro Mobility is a demand-responsive paratransit system designed to provide transportation service to persons with disabilities residing in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Since its restructuring by the RTB in the fall of 1986, the Metro Mobility program has seen a tremendous growth, including size of service area, number of certified riders, and total monthly ridership. Back in 1980, Metro Mobility service was available in an area of approximately 280 square miles which generally included Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and the first ring suburbs. Today, Metro Mobility operates throughout the entire metropolitan area transit taxing district, covering 960 square miles and serving 92 communities. This represents an expansion of 680 square miles of service area.

Along with the growth in service area, there has also been tremendous growth in the number of riders certified to use Metro Mobility. The number of total riders certified is as follows:

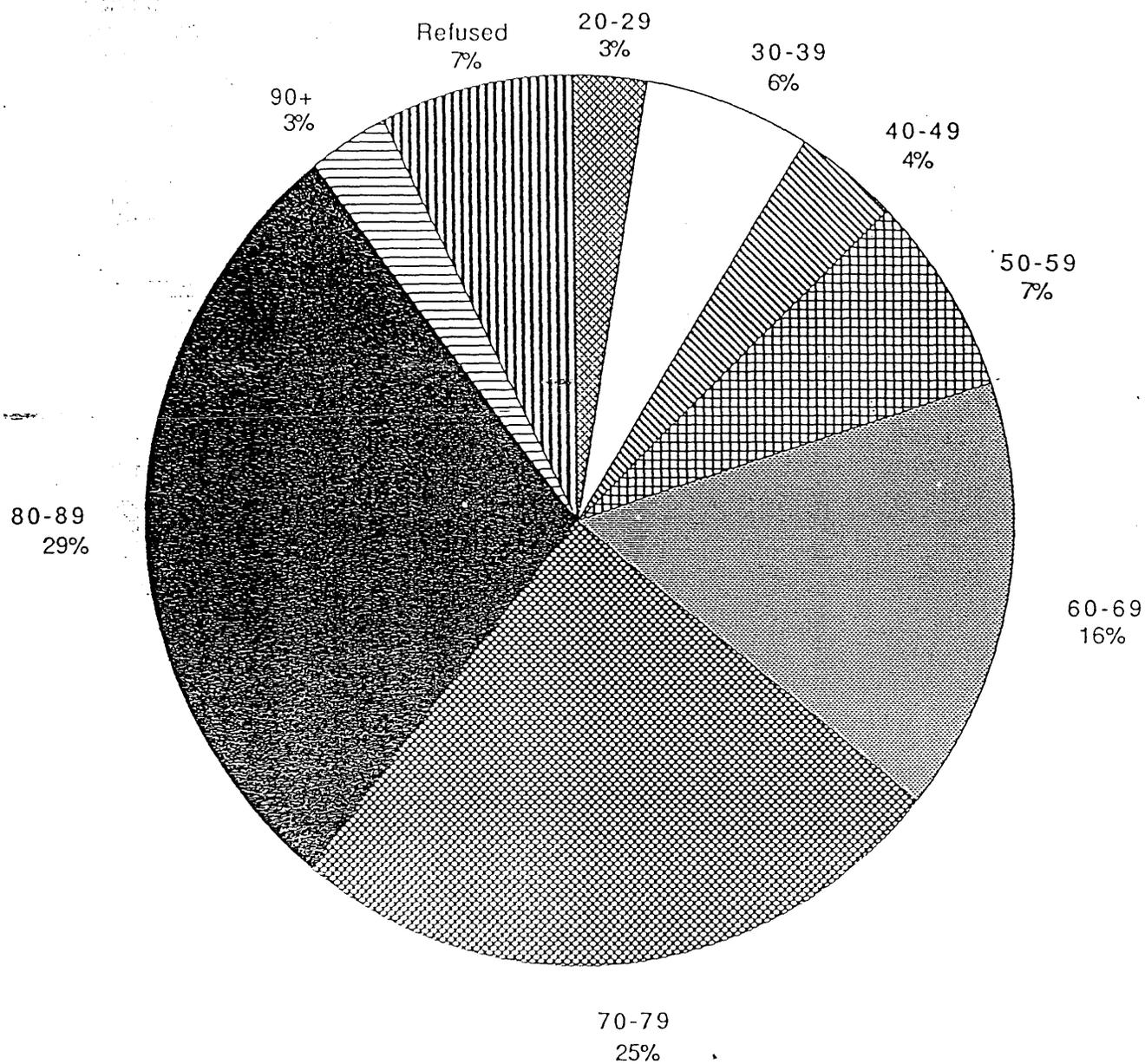
1986	2,324 certified riders
1987	5,318 certified riders
1988	13,114 certified riders
1989	18,022 certified riders
as of June 30, 1990	17,063 certified riders

Currently, there are more than 17,000 certified Metro Mobility riders. The drop in the number of riders between 1989 and 1990 is due to the recertification process implemented by the MMAC as the result of changes in the eligibility criteria. This process began in July of 1989 and was completed in June 1990. After this recertification is completed, riders will be registered annually and recertified every five years by their month of birth. Approximately 11,000 persons have recertified under the new eligibility criteria.

Wheelchair users make up approximately one-third of the total ridership (34.79%), with the remaining riders (65.21%) being individuals with other disabilities, such as arthritis, heart disease, visually impaired, or developmentally disabled. As indicated by the chart on the next page, a majority of the people using Metro Mobility are senior citizens. Certification statistics indicate that the program is attracting more and more of the aging population: 68% of all new riders certified in 1989 and the first eight months of 1990 were over the age of seventy.

A consumer research study conducted in the spring of 1990 discovered that Metro Mobility provides a valuable and effective service that meets many of the transportation needs of persons with disabilities. The results of this study are presented in an executive summary located in Appendix A of this report. A randomly selected telephone survey of 400 Metro Mobility users residing in Saint Paul and Minneapolis indicated that, for a significant portion of the ridership, Metro Mobility is their only means of transportation. Sixty-seven percent of the riders surveyed indicated they use the service exclusively; they make no other trips by any other means. Not only do riders use Metro Mobility exclusively, they also use it frequently. Forty-three percent of those eligible to use the service ride at least once a week; one out of every five ride nearly every day.

AGE OF RIDERSHIP



While the majority of people (57%) have been riding Metro Mobility for two or more years, nearly one out of every five persons is a new rider, an individual who has been using the service for less than one year. This large number of new people indicates the growing demand for service.

During the telephone survey, Metro Mobility riders were asked a series of questions to determine an overall rating of the service, ratings of specific characteristics, most needed improvements, and the number of times service has been available or delivered promptly.

Three-quarters (77%) of current riders surveyed are very satisfied with the service; an additional 20% are somewhat satisfied. By comparison, in 1987, 70% of the users rated the service "top quality." Nearly one in five users indicated service has improved in the past year, only 3% indicated service quality has decreased. It is interesting to note that when asked in what ways service quality improved or declined, many of the positive and negative comments related to on-time performance. In the past year, on-time service delivery has improved for some, not for others. Many of the other positive comments related to driver courtesy; unavailability and unpredictability of service were the more common negative comments expressed.

Riders were then asked a series of questions to determine the incidence of trip denials, time shifts, and on-time pick-ups. Nine percent of the riders indicated that service had been denied to them at least once within the past month; 12% indicated having not made a trip in the previous month because transportation was not available (this could be any transportation option including Metro Mobility.) When asked to describe the situation, it appeared that many riders did not make the trip due to lack of Metro Mobility availability, or because of the twenty-four hour advance trip order requirement.

As compared to service denials, a slightly larger percentage (13%) have been asked to shift a pick-up time within the past month, and 8% indicated having had a trip scheduled, and then being called later in the day to have the time changed. For the people who were requested to change times, 16% stated the change in time was inconvenient, while the remaining 84% stated the change was not a problem.

Forty-four percent of the riders had experienced an early arrival within the past month, with the van or taxi arriving more than 10 minutes early from the scheduled arrival time, and 61% had experienced a late pick-up, with the provider arriving more than 10 minutes after scheduled pick up time.

In comparing these figures with the statistics from the MMAC monthly reports (presented elsewhere in this report), late pick-up time is indeed the number one complaint recorded by the MMAC. Trip denials were a significant complaint in 1988 through early 1989, but dropped considerably in late 1989 through mid-1990. Time change has never been a strong complaint type at the MMAC, accounting for less than 3% of all complaints. Interestingly, while surveyed riders provided positive feedback on driver courtesy and assistance, courtesy and passenger assistance are among the top four complaint types recorded for the year June 1989 through June 1990.

Regarding the complaint procedure, 18% of the surveyed Metro Mobility users indicated they have ever called to register a complaint. This is 10% lower than the 28% statistic reported in 1987. Of those people who had not called to register a complaint, only 2% did not do so because they believed that by complaining, their eligibility would

be affected. Riders have called the service provider or the MMAC in equal numbers, and a significant majority of those who did file a complaint (80%) indicated that the complaint was processed fairly and with courtesy, and three out of four stated they knew how the complaint was resolved. 69% were satisfied with the outcome.

In summary, most riders are quite satisfied with Metro Mobility service. Those that have chronic problems with the service usually seem to have a provider problem rather than a problem with the overall system. The two most frequent complaints are having to call in the day before to be picked up, and pick-up for the return home is not punctual. Yet, in spite of these two items, the level of satisfaction with Metro Mobility is quite high. Riders also seem to be satisfied with the complaint procedure and resolution process.

DESCRIPTION OF METRO MOBILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE PROCEDURE

The Metro Mobility Administrative Center (MMAC) is responsible for the quick and effective resolution of customer service problems. In addition, the MMAC is responsible for the identification of areas of customer dissatisfaction so that new policies to improve service can be considered, developed, and implemented by the Regional Transit Board (RTB).

Customer Service Quality Reports

Currently Metro Mobility passengers who have service quality problems or safety concerns are advised to register a report with the MMAC. The customer service problem procedure is described in the Metro Mobility Rider's Guide, which is distributed to each person certified to use Metro Mobility. The bimonthly newsletter, Metro Memo, sent to all certified riders, is also a way to communicate system changes to customers and encourage them to use the Metro Mobility system effectively.

As described in the Rider's Guide and Metro Memo, customer service reports should be reported directly to the MMAC. Both publications direct customers to call the MMAC for:

- recurring problems such as consistently late vehicles;
- persistent trip denials;
- unsafe rides;
- rude treatment; or
- poor or unsafe vehicle conditions including wheelchair restraints, seatbelts, lift or ramp, and cleanliness.

In some instances, it is appropriate for the customer to contact the provider directly in order to resolve a current service difficulty. Customers are asked to contact the provider when:

- a ride is more than 15 minutes late;
- there are questions about time changes or referrals; or
- something has been lost on the vehicle.

In the event of any customer service report involving personal injury or property damage, customers are urged to contact both the MMAC and the provider. In addition, providers are required by contract to report to the MMAC all incidents and accidents that have resulted in personal injury or property damage.

The MMAC is fully staffed during regular working hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. A Rider Liaison is available to respond to customer problems and inquiries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

In the event of an after-hours emergency (for instance, to assist stranded passengers after hours who have a scheduled ride and are unable to contact their provider), calls to the MMAC are forwarded to the MTC Transit Control Center (TCC) office, which is open 24 hours a day. Staff at the TCC either contact providers who in turn dispatch vehicles to solve the problem, or contacts the on-call MMAC staff person if necessary. The MMAC Rider Liaison follows up on all complaints recorded by the TCC the following day.

With regard to complaint handling, a customer service report may be filed with the MMAC in person, in writing, or by telephone. The MMAC has two individuals who serve as Rider Liaisons, who are responsible for facilitating a relationship between riders and providers, ensuring rider satisfaction, and acting as a liaison. When a customer service report is received by the Rider Liaison or other staff person, the receiver completes a report form. Next, a copy of the report is sent to the identified provider requesting a quick response. When the situation warrants, the provider may be telephoned to help ensure quick resolution.

In most cases, a follow-up letter is sent to the person who reported the incident. In some cases a telephone call is made. In either case, the Rider Liaison apologizes to the person and makes an effort to explain what steps have been taken to remedy the problem.

The MMAC and RTB get involved with recurring problems. An example of a recurring problem would be if a provider failed to follow through on an agreed upon solution.

The MMAC contacts a customer within one day of receiving a complaint and most problems are resolved in one to seven days.

Information taken from the individual service report is summarized monthly by the Rider Liaison into three different reports and presented to the MMAC management. Those reports include: the Complaint Count and Accident/Incident Summary, the Monthly Complaint Count and Summary, and the Provider Complaint Count and Summary.

To assist the MMAC and the provider in researching a problem, assessing its cause and developing a solution, the following information is requested from a customer reporting a complaint:

- name of passenger
- date and time of incident
- certification number
- phone number
- address
- trip destination
- provider
- employee name/vehicle number
- scheduled pick-up time
- actual pick-up time
- details of incident

In many instances, this level of detail is required in order to achieve effective resolution of a problem. However, the person making the complaint is not required to give his/her name. When the person files the details of a complaint, her/she is informed that a copy of the report will be sent to both him/her and to the provider. The individual is also asked if he/she would like his/her name removed from the report sent to the provider.

As an example of the customer service procedure, a rider may call the MMAC to complain about a late pick-up. The Rider Liaison will talk with the rider over the phone and take down the necessary information on a service report form as described above. The Rider Liaison then calls the provider in question to discuss the reason for the delay in pick-up time. The provider's response is also documented, and if necessary referred to appropriate staff for further action (such as warning of possible contract violation.) The Rider Liaison then calls the rider with the follow-up information, or sends a letter.

It should be noted that filing a complaint requires assertive risk-taking behavior on the part of the passenger since in order to resolve a problem fully, the person shares information that may identify him/her not only to the provider but also to a driver or other

employee with whom the passenger has frequent contact. This is common in all customer service operations but may be particularly problematic when resolving Metro Mobility service complaints because a disabled passenger may fear he/she will receive poor service or not be able to schedule a ride if a complaint is filed.

In general, it is the experience of the MMAC that providers are receptive to receiving complaints and working to keep customers satisfied. The MMAC works to ensure that customers maintain their rights to file a complaint, and that resolutions occur in every instance.

Customer Relations Resolution

In the Metro Mobility program, providers are under contract to the RTB to "coordinate, manage, provide, and control all necessary activities to operate the Special Transportation Service." This includes performing such functions as employee hiring, training, management, and discipline. The provider must "develop methods to maximize service quality and safety" and must "provide competent technical service to handle and correct any and all problems" associated with the delivery of Metro Mobility service.

After receiving a customer service report, the Rider Liaison will contact and send to the provider the complaint report along with supporting material indicating where contract violations or operational procedure infractions may have occurred. The provider must then review the complaint and follow up with a report to the MMAC of how the problem will be resolved. For instance, if a customer reports about rude or inappropriate behavior of a driver, the provider will use the information to identify which driver is involved and document the details of the alleged incident. Based on this investigation, the provider might discipline and/or require remedial training for the employee, establish preventive procedures such as not scheduling the customer to ride with that driver, apologize to the customer on behalf of the driver, communicate to other employees any required behavior changes or warnings at the next safety meeting, and report these actions to the MMAC. It is the provider's responsibility to correct the problem and the MMAC's role to assess the adequacy of the response initiated by the provider.

The MMAC, if satisfied with the provider's response, will communicate to the customer the steps taken to resolve his/her complaint. This communication is generally by letter, but may include telephone updating about the ongoing progress towards addressing the problem.

If the MMAC is not satisfied with the resolution offered by the provider, the range of options available to the MMAC include working with the provider to develop a satisfactory solution, requiring the provider to perform necessary actions or beginning the contract non-performance process to assign fines or penalties. The MMAC Rider Liaison's role is to continue to update the customer about the progress made toward solving the problem. If the customer is not satisfied with the resolution, s/he should contact the MMAC so the Rider Liaison can further pursue the matter. Customer satisfaction is a key component of the customer service enhancement project.

If the customer is still not satisfied with the resolution offered by the MMAC s/he can contact the RTB's Accessibility Specialist. This new position was added to the RTB staff in March 1989 in order to develop and maintain relationships with the disabled and

elderly communities. The RTB's Accessibility Specialist serves as an advocate for transit consumers who experience barriers to service. The Accessibility Specialist will work with the customer and the MMAC to resolve the issue and look into resolving the customer problem.

The above outlines the customer service procedure as developed by the MMAC and the RTB. While riders are encouraged to utilize this process for more efficient handling and resolution of service complaints, it is recognized that not all individuals may choose to do so. The MMAC and the RTB continue to work on improving the customer service procedure in order to increase customer comfort and satisfaction in reporting complaints so that service quality can be enhanced.

RECENT ACTIONS TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE FUNCTION

Contract Enforcement

The MMAC has full authority to monitor provider performance for compliance with contractual obligations and to initiate disciplinary procedures and penalties. Customer service reports and provider accident/incident reports are two methods that the MMAC uses to assess service quality and problems requiring resolution. As stated in the previous chapter, the MMAC is responsible for documenting these service problems, communicating them to all affected parties and bringing the problems to resolution. If a provider does not resolve a problem to the satisfaction of the MMAC and the problem clearly arises from a violation of the contract agreement, the MMAC may initiate disciplinary action, or if warranted, declare a provider in default of its contractual obligations.

It is essential that the MMAC clearly communicate to providers and customers the expected performance levels in the Metro Mobility program. In early 1989, the MMAC issued to all providers the *Policy and Procedures Manual and Contract Enforcement Procedures* for the Metro Mobility program. This manual sets forth the operating policies and procedures related to day-to-day decisions involving Metro Mobility Service. Each section of the manual identifies the applicable policy and defines procedures according to category of responsibility: provider, passenger, MMAC and RTB. Contract enforcement procedures can be found in Appendix B of this report.

With these policies and procedures clearly defined, it has become easier to achieve service problem resolutions that satisfy the concerns of individual customers as well as lead to improvements in Metro Mobility service. The MMAC is now better able to monitor the system's on-time performance and institute mechanisms to achieve improved performance.

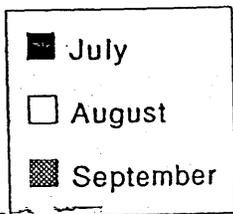
Trip Assurance Program

The newest initiative for improving Metro Mobility service is the Trip Assurance Program (TAP). This program, developed to deal with the growing problem of trip denials, basically provides for all requested transportation service to Metro Mobility certified riders. The riders still must request a ride from their provider the day before service is needed; however, if the provider is unable to fill the request, the provider then enters the trip data into the Metro Mobility computer and then any of the other 13 Metro Mobility providers are able to pick up the trip. Providers may view all trips placed on the computer and select those which fit into their work load. Those trips not picked up will then be assigned to a provider by the Metro Mobility Administrative Center. The assigned carrier will be required to provide the trip.

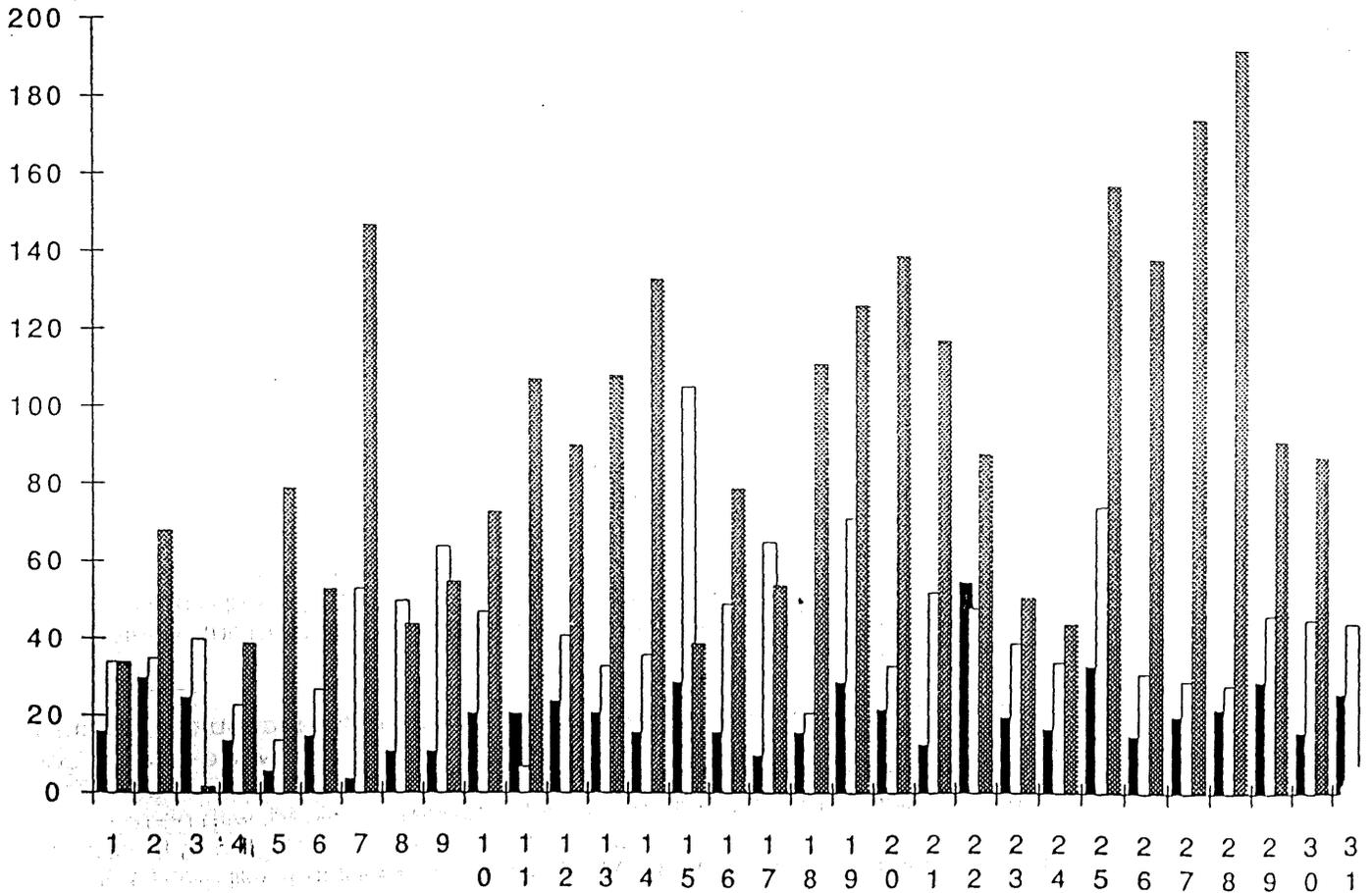
Riders are informed if their trip is placed in the Trip Assurance Program. The assigned provider will call the rider before 7:30 p.m. to confirm the trip and pick-up time for the next day. The provider may change the time of the pick-up for up to 30 minutes before or after the requested time.

This program is a significant improvement in the Metro Mobility procedure. Previously, if the provider could not accommodate the rider's request, the rider would have to call other providers. The computer now serves as a central clearinghouse for rides. The program also ensures that riders will have their trip requests serviced, with no more than a thirty minute change in pick-up schedule. The Trip Assurance Program is the latest way to build confidence among Metro Mobility customers that they will get a ride when they need one.

The Trip Assurance Program was implemented on July 1, 1990. TAP ended its first month with a monthly total of 623 trips and a daily average of 20 trips. Daily figures began to climb in August with a monthly total of 1,318 trips placed in the program, and a daily average of 43 trips. September saw a continued steady increase, with a monthly total of 2,719 trips and a daily average of 94 trips. The figure below shows a comparison of the three months, illustrating both the variation in daily trip totals, and also the monthly increases in trips being placed on the Trip Assurance Program. Despite this increase, the program has been functioning very well, virtually eliminating rider complaints regarding trip denials.



Trip Assurance Program
 Monthly Comparison
 July, August, and September, 1990



Vulnerable Adult Protection Workplan

In late September, the Regional Transit Board instituted a major effort to identify immediate and ongoing activities that Regional Transit Board staff and the Metro Mobility Administrative Center will conduct to investigate the scope and nature of all incidents of alleged abuse of vulnerable adults riding Metro Mobility. Corrective measures will also be developed and implemented.

The objectives of this work effort are to identify the number and nature of all incidents of alleged abuse of vulnerable adults riding Metro Mobility; develop and implement ongoing communications, training and monitoring of Metro Mobility providers regarding their responsibilities and RTB contractual expectations for vulnerable adult protection; communicate with riders, agencies and other affected parties about the RTB's commitment and activities for improving Metro Mobility safety; and identify and implement revised administrative procedures to ensure better reporting and resolution of complaints of vulnerable adult abuse.

The scope of the work effort has been developed into various tasks. These tasks involve such actions as

- requesting information on alleged abuse of vulnerable adults riding Metro Mobility;
- conducting criminal history background checks on both current and new Metro Mobility drivers;
- conducting mandatory training sessions for providers and drivers on sexual abuse and vulnerable adult abuse topics, as well as other selected topics;
- conducting site inspections as part of the ongoing MMAC contract enforcement program, with expansion of review of driver personnel records to verify that both required training and history checks have been conducted;
- preparing letter to various affected parties, including agencies, riders, and drivers outlining the situation and expressing the RTB's perspectives; and
- exploring legal issues concerning liability of the RTB or MMAC to require providers meet certain minimum qualifications in selecting driver candidates; and
- conducting research and drafting recommendations on appropriate legislation related to statewide licensing of special transportation service drivers and other procedures that may be required to ensure that monitoring and enforcement of vulnerable adult complaints can be carried out effectively.

The RTB plans to complete most of these efforts by November, 1990, at which time a number of recommendations regarding improvement of contract and administrative procedures and possible legislative changes will be discussed.

Trip Cancellations

Approximately 15% of all Metro Mobility service requests are cancelled. Two-thirds of the cancellations involve standing order service (regular customers) and one-third involve demand orders (occasional, or nonregular customers). Metro Mobility's trip cancellation rate of 15% is typical of other paratransit services surveyed. The MMAC found the following cancellation rates: 18% for the paratransit system serving the Boston, MS area; 19% for the system serving the Chicago, IL area; and 16% for the system serving the Columbus, OH metropolitan area.

Even though Metro Mobility cancellation rates are similar to other paratransit services, the MMAC has taken steps to reduce cancellations. These steps are identified below. One approach rejected by the MMAC is the suspension of Metro Mobility service for individuals who cancel "too often." This approach involves denying public service based on subjective judgements to define and identify "abusers." Rather than service suspension, the MMAC has relied on improving information collection and distribution.

The MMAC has undertaken the following activities to reduce and replace trip cancellations:

- A computer function gives providers the capability of identifying customers who "double book." As trip orders are entered into the computer, the cursor will begin flashing if that customer already has scheduled Metro Mobility service for the day. Upon further investigation, the carrier can determine if the same trip request has been scheduled with another carrier.
- The MMAC has sent letters to customers who have cancelled 20 or more times in a calendar month, encouraging them to reduce cancellations, and will strive to perform this monthly mailing on a regular basis.
- The MMAC will counsel a customer when a provider reports excessive cancelling by that customer. The customer's recent cancellations are identified via computer and are discussed with the customer.
- The MMAC computer was modified in January 1990 to allow providers to edit and abort the entry of trip data. Prior to this modification, data entry errors and changes in trip request data meant that the original trip order had to be cancelled so that the correct data could be entered. Each of these errors or changes were recorded as a cancellation. This modification has improved the accuracy of trip cancellation reporting.

These actions have greatly enhanced the MMAC's ability to improve the effectiveness of the Metro Mobility program, and thus has raised the quality of service provided to Metro Mobility riders.

Advance Reservations

Metro Mobility policy requires customers to request service with providers the day before service is needed. This prior day reservation allows providers to schedule Metro Mobility services most efficiently, thereby keeping costs as low as possible.

The MMAC has established a procedure by which riders requiring transportation services on holidays (such as Christmas or Fourth of July) may call their provider up to a week in advance to make a trip request. This allows providers to better schedule vehicles and staff for holiday service. Recent modifications to the MMAC computer allows providers to more efficiently enter advance trip reservation data, thus ensuring that the rider's trip request is recorded and can be serviced.

Metro Memo

In order to improve communications with Metro Mobility riders, in February 1990 the Metro Mobility Administrative Center changed the format of its bi-monthly newsletter, Metro Memo. The new look gives the Memo a more newspaper appearance, utilizing headlines, photographs, and reorganization of information into columns to allow easier reading and to assist riders in finding and understanding information which will help them in using Metro Mobility service. It is believed that this change of format can be very beneficial for the program, since the consumer research study indicated that the majority of riders (95%) prefer that information about the service be mailed directly to their home, and do read the Metro Memo.

Driver of the Month

In order to recognize the contributions of the drivers who actually operate the vehicles in the Metro Mobility program, the Regional Transit Board established the "Driver of the Month" award beginning in January 1990. This award is presented every month to the driver who has received the most nominations as providing exceptional service to Metro Mobility riders. Criteria utilized to select the "Driver of the Month" include no chargeable accidents, incidents or traffic violations; no verified complaints; good public relations skills; on-time service to riders; clean vehicle; and accurate paperwork. Drivers may be nominated by Metro Mobility riders, neutral observers or by providers. The award program has proven to be quite popular with riders, who enjoy the opportunity to provide positive feedback on their favorite drivers, and has helped to raise morale among the providers.

Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)

With the restructuring of the RTB board in the summer of 1989, the advisory committees were also restructured, with new members assuming their positions in January 1990. The Transportation Handicapped Advisory Committee (THAC) had its name changed to the Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) to reflect a shift in focus to overall accessibility of the RTB transit system, and also reduced its membership from 21 positions to 13 positions, comprised of the chair, eight positions representing the eight districts, two members appointed by the RTB representatives for the elderly and disabled, and two at-large members appointed in consultation with the State Council on Disability. TAAC's role is to provide advice on issues related to accessibility of all public transit services and the special transportation needs of elderly and disabled persons.

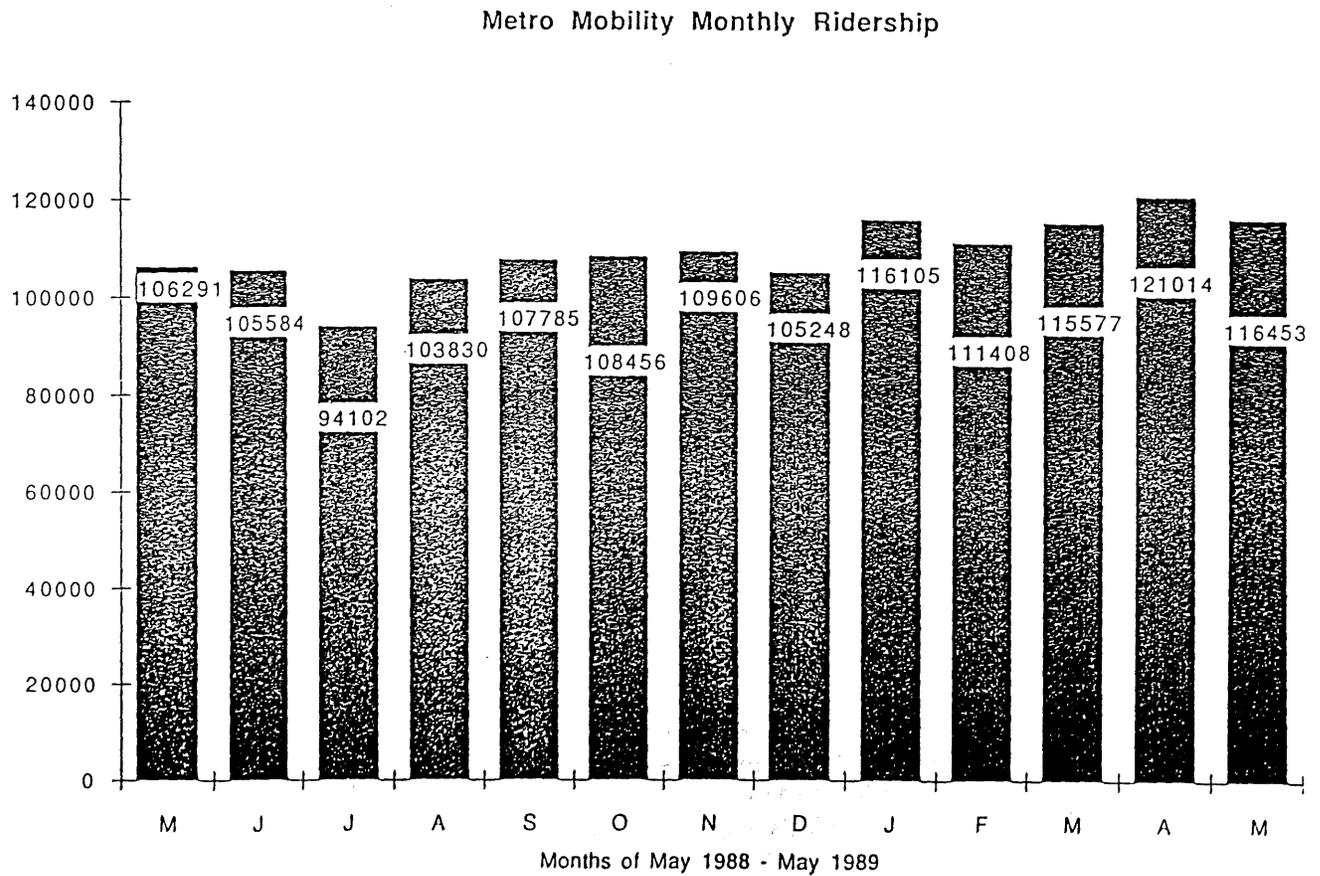
In addition to the committee restructuring, four subcommittees were established to focus on specific issues related to transit access: Metro Mobility, Fixed Route, Agency, and Rideshare. The Metro Mobility subcommittee, which reviews issues pertaining to Metro Mobility and reports its findings and recommendations to the full committee, has met several times over the year on projects such as MMAC and Metro Mobility provider contracts, RTB Legislative Report, Performance Measures, and the Customer Service Report. This subcommittee has played an important role in providing consumer input on decisions made by the RTB and MMAC related to the Metro Mobility program.

METRO MOBILITY PROVIDER PERFORMANCE STATISTICS

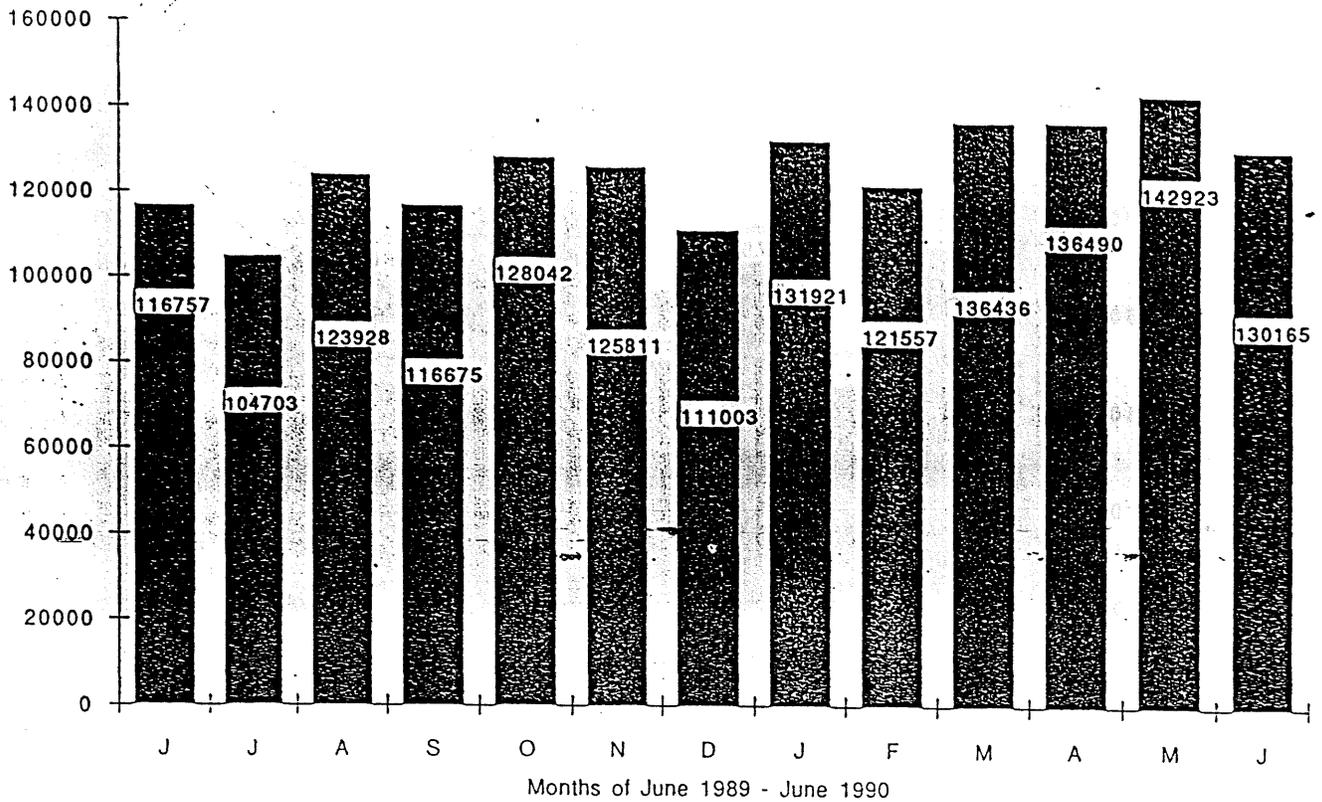
Historical Trends

We have witnessed a tremendous amount of growth in the Metro Mobility program since its restructuring in 1986 by the RTB. In the months of May 1988 through May 1989, a total of 1,421,459 trips was provided to Metro Mobility riders by fourteen service providers, for a monthly average of over 109,000 rides, with the highest total being a then-record of 121,000 trips in April 1989. The last seven months of 1989 saw this record broken on three separate occasions, with the record for 1989 being 128,042 trips in October. This record was broken immediately in 1990, with 131,921 trips in January. For the year June 1989 through June 1990, a total of 1,626,411 trips were provided, culminating in a record of nearly 143,000 trips in May of 1990, and resulting in a monthly average of over 125,000 trips. Figures 1 and 2 represent the monthly ridership from May 1988 - May 1989, and June 1989 - June 1990, respectively.

figure 1



Metro Mobility Monthly Ridership



Despite the increasing number of trips, the number of complaints received about Metro Mobility service has actually dropped. For the year May 1988 through May 1989, the MMAC recorded a total of 1,318 complaints out of 1,421,459 trips, for a complaint ratio of .09 percent, or nine complaints for every 10,000 trips. The average was 101 complaints per month.

Complaints dropped considerably in the year June 1989 through June 1990, even with the substantial increase in the number of trips. Although 1,626,411 trips were provided during this time period, a total of only 909 complaints were received, for a complaint ratio of .06 percent, or six complaints for every 10,000 trips. The average number of complaints was about 70 complaints per month. May 1990 did see a drastic surge in complaints, which can be attributed to operational difficulties with one particular provider. Corrective measures were implemented, and June saw a decrease in the number of complaints. With the decrease in complaints, one also sees a lowering of the complaint ratio; since June 1989, the MMAC has recorded less than one complaint per every one thousand trips provided. Figures 3 and 4 show the monthly total of complaints, and Figures 5 and 6 the monthly complaint ratio.

figure 3

Metro Mobility Monthly Complaints

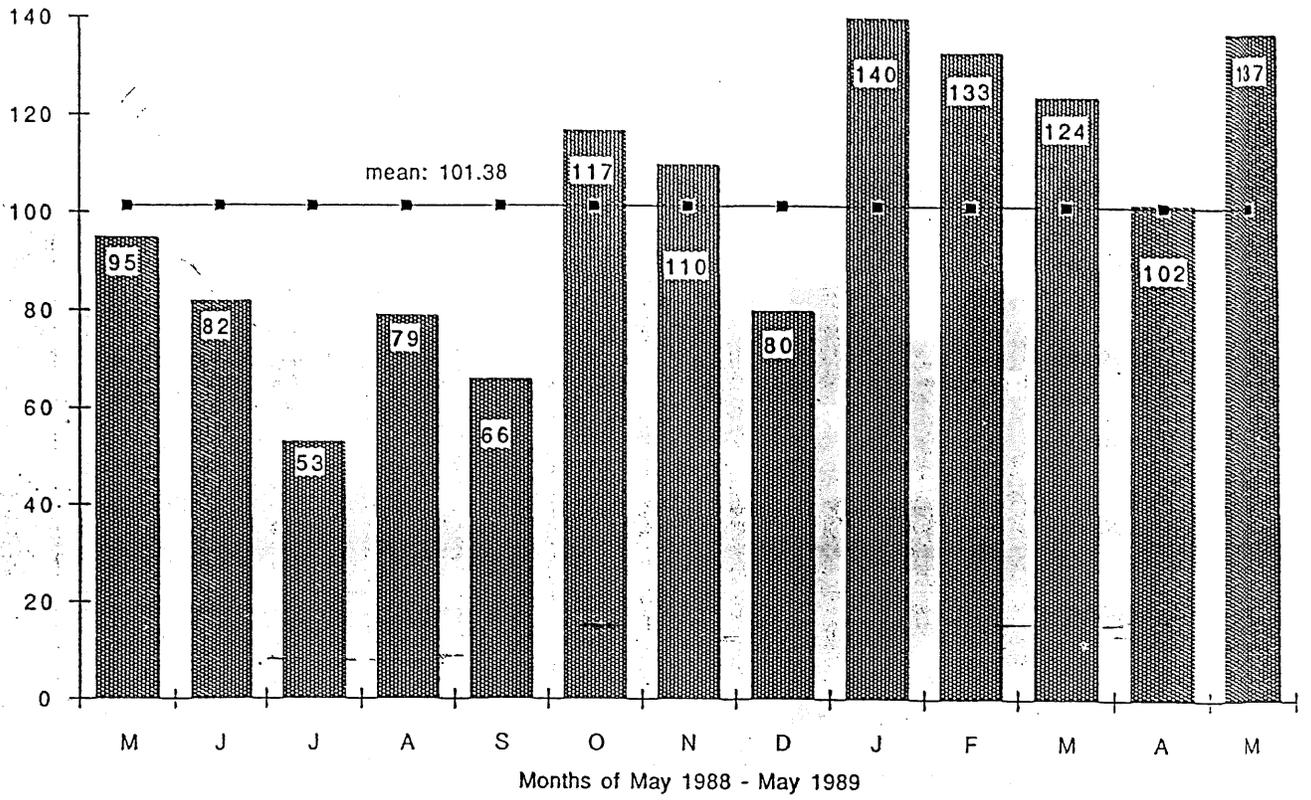


figure 4

Metro Mobility Monthly Complaints

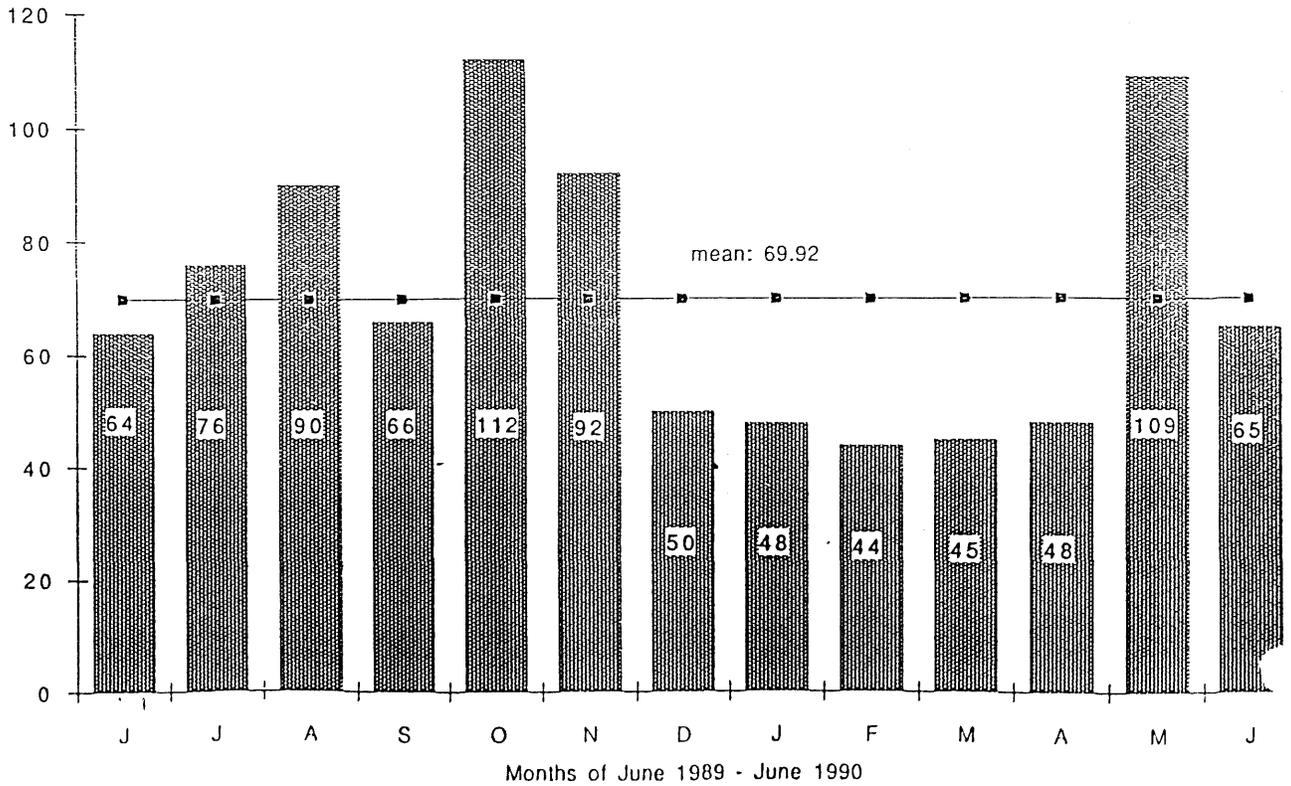


figure 5

Metro Mobility Complaint Ratio

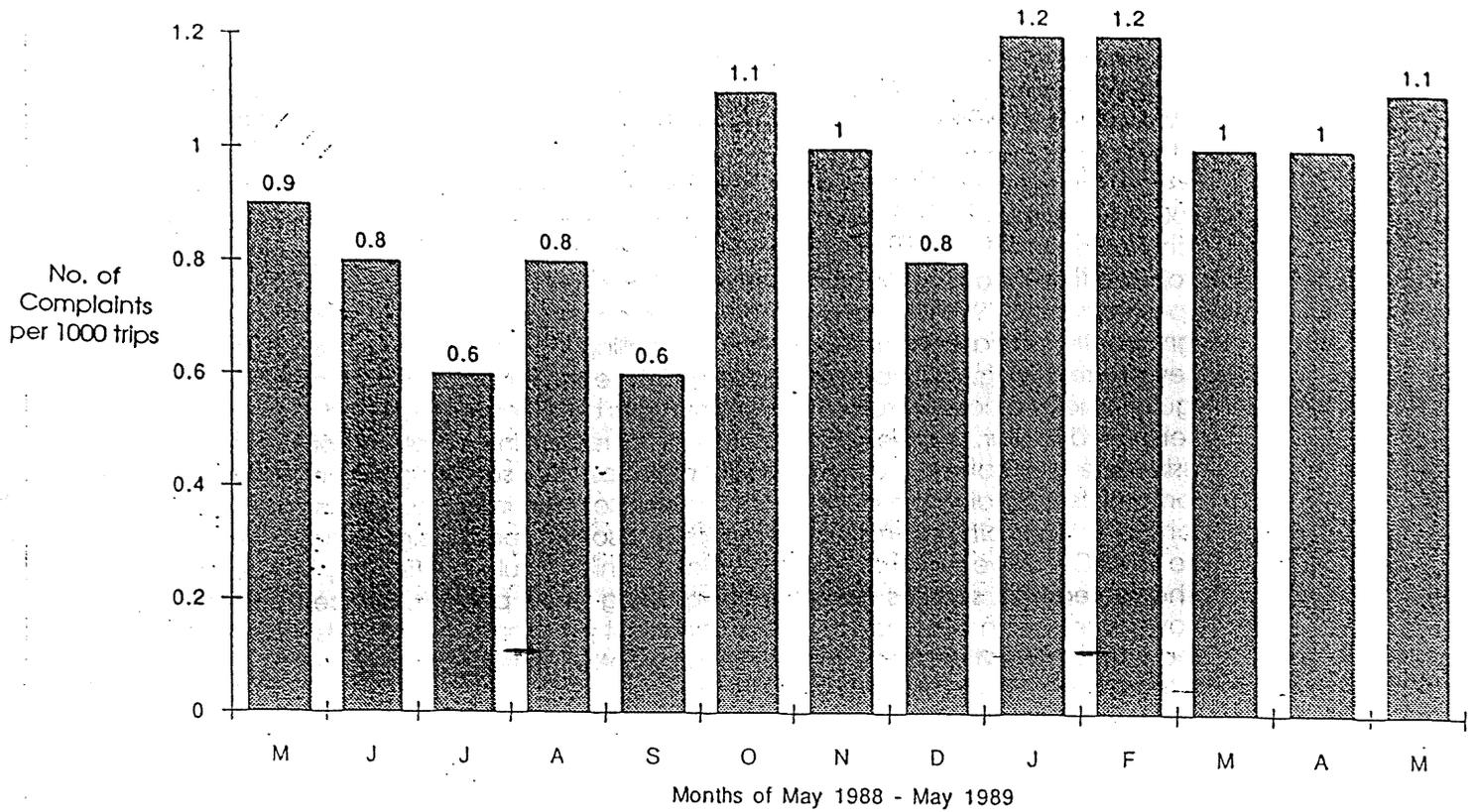
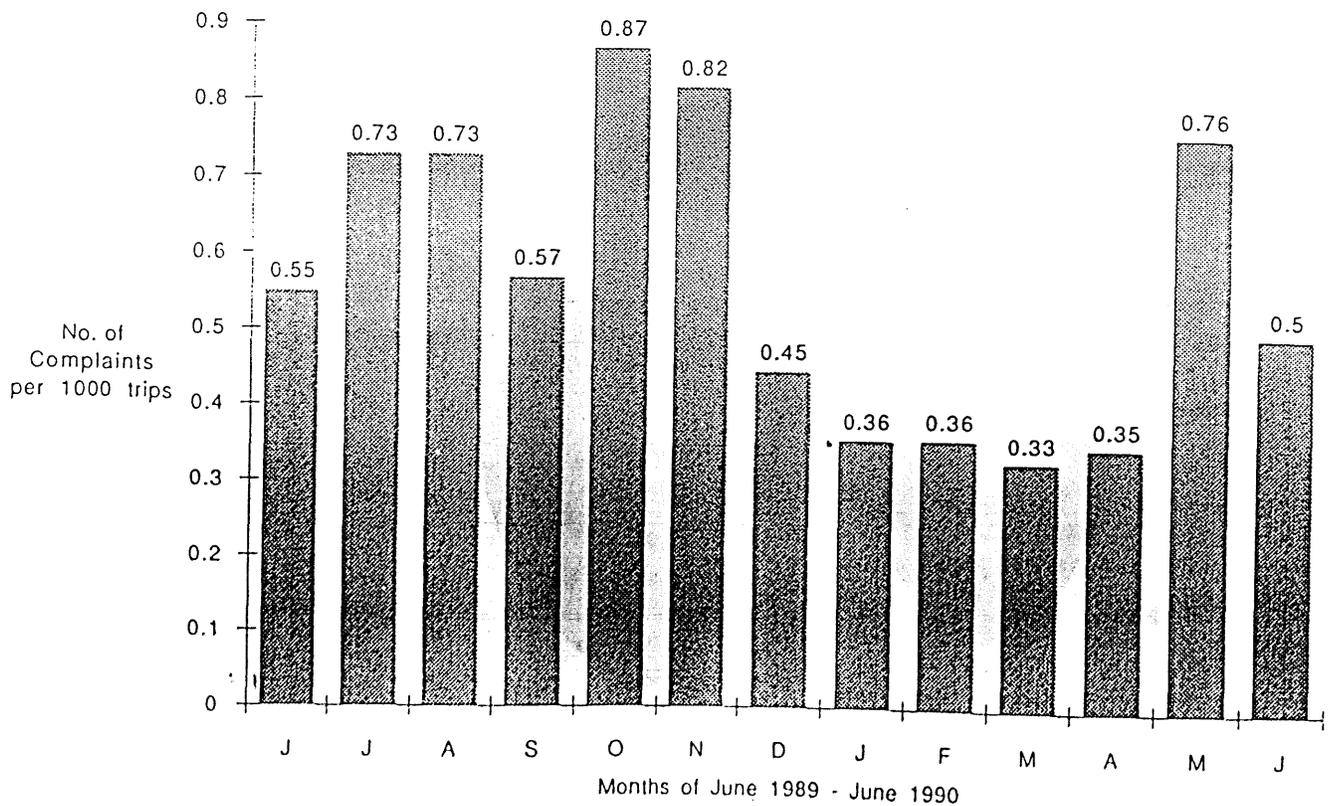


figure 6

Metro Mobility Complaint Ratio



From May 1988 through May 1989, as shown in Figure 7, the types of complaints most frequently reported were late pick-ups, representing 43 percent of all complaints, followed by trip denials at nearly 16 percent, and trip no-shows at nearly 13 percent. Late pick-ups continued to be the most common problem from the latter part of 1989 through the first part of 1990, with 51 percent of all complaints occurring for this reason. Courtesy complaints increased from fourth place to second place, with trip no-shows continuing to be the third most common complaint type. Interestingly, trip denials dropped from nearly 16 percent to slightly over eight percent. Figure 8 shows complaint types from June 1989 through May 1990. Passenger assistance also increased significantly, indicating that more riders are calling in with regard to the quality of service they are receiving, as opposed to complaints regarding ability to access the program. Figure 9 shows a comparison of complaint types between 1988-89 and 1989-90. As mentioned earlier, we see some significant increases in complaints of passenger assistance and courtesy, as well as late pick-ups. We see a significant decrease in complaints regarding trip denials, and decreases also in trip no-shows and safety concerns. The "other complaints" category also decreased significantly; in the past, the MMAC received a number of complaints which could not fit easily into any of the other categories, such as complaints regarding guest policies, concerns about provider service in conjunction with other transit programs, complaints about eligibility and rider certification, and complaints about other passenger's behavior. Complaints of these types have subsided in the past year.

figure 7

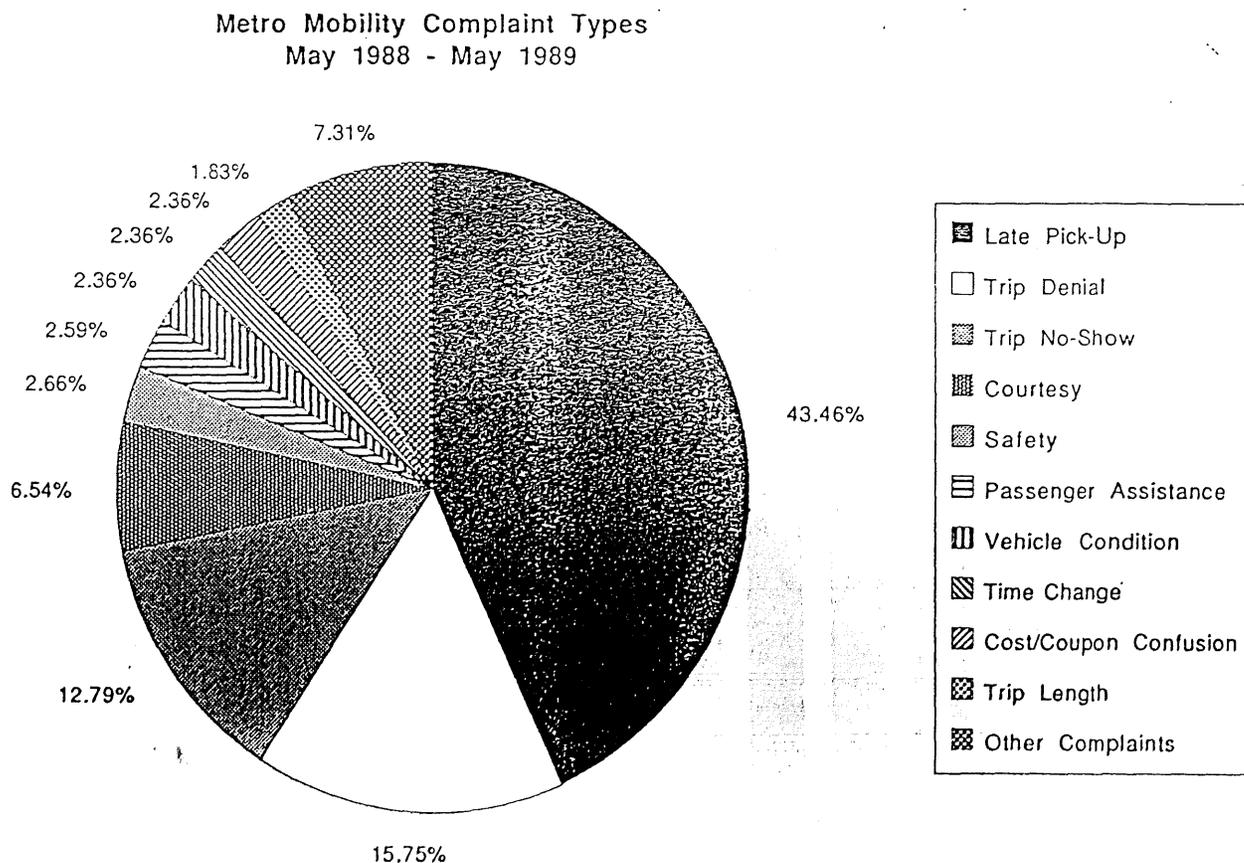


figure 8

Metro Mobility Complaint Types
June 1989 - June 1990

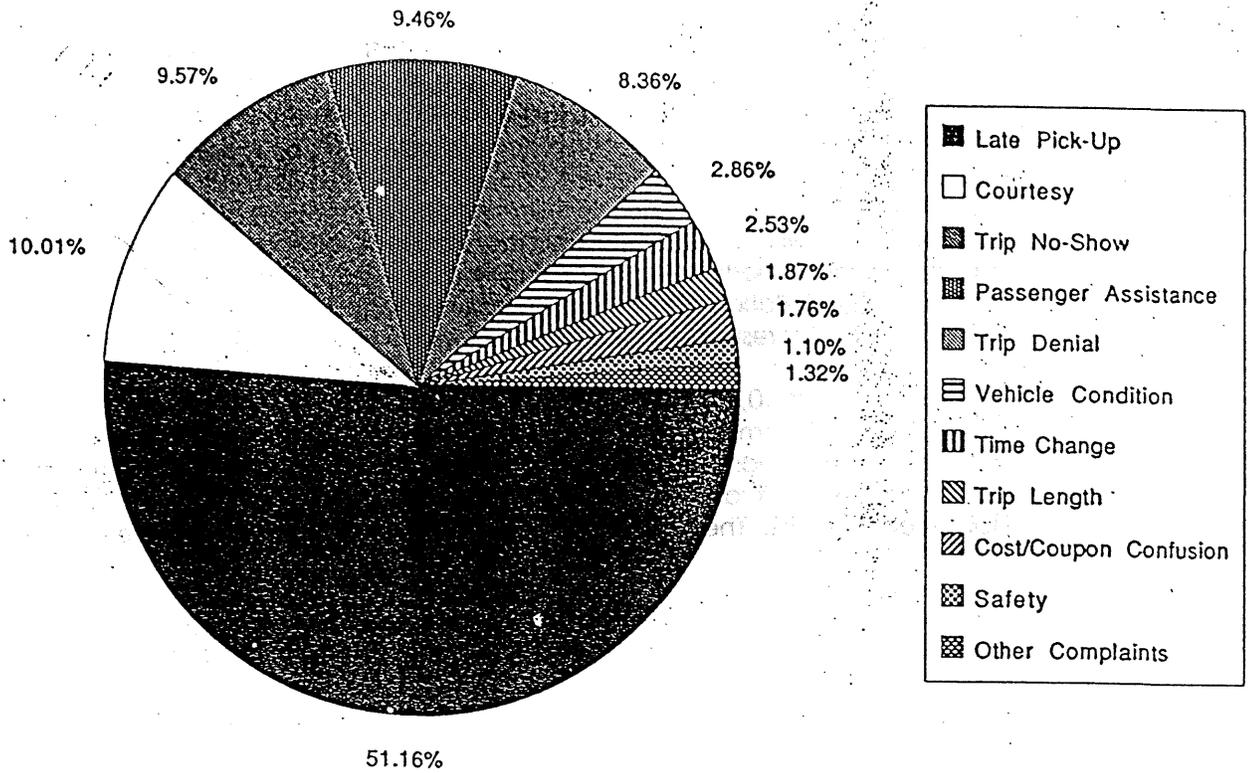
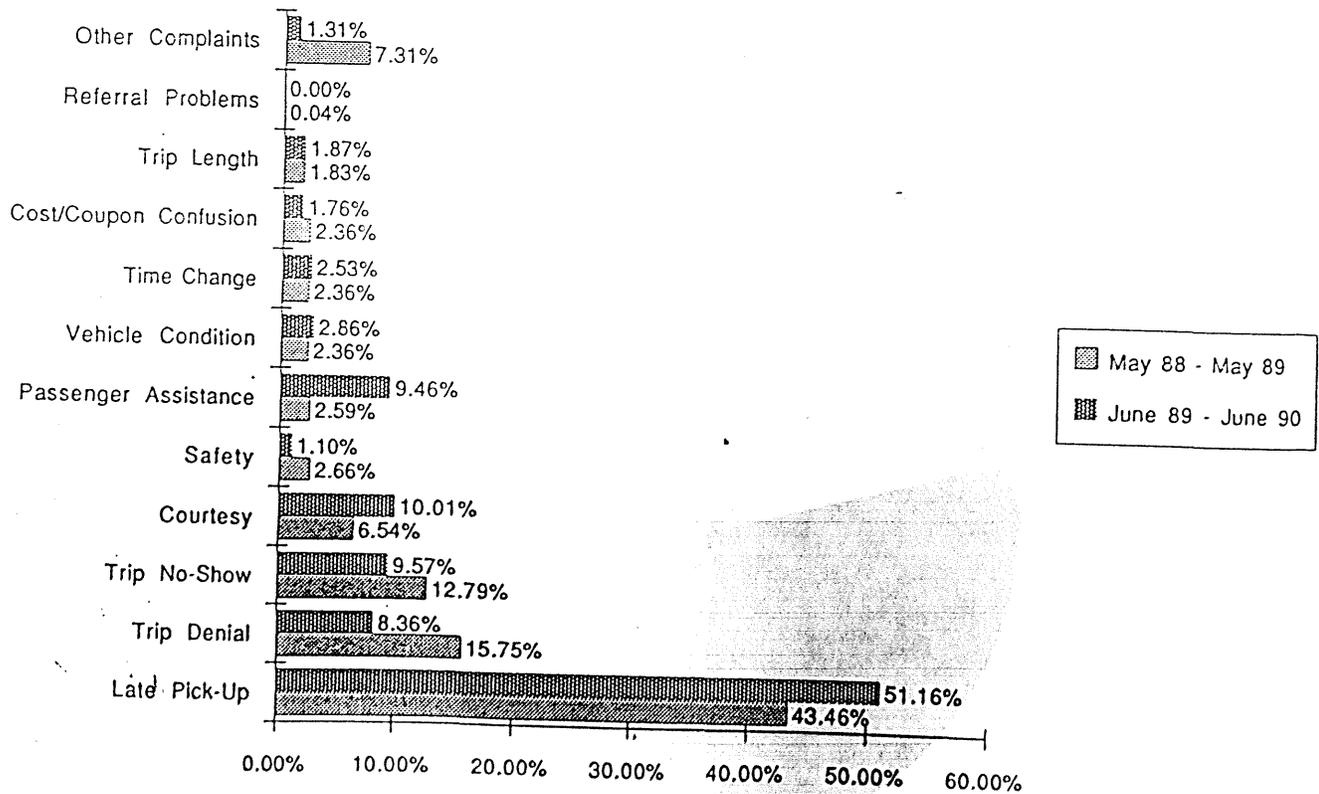


figure 9

Metro Mobility Complaint Type Comparison
1988-89 and 1989-90



Complaints Towards Providers

As seen in Figures 10 and 11, analysis of complaints shows that when broken down by providers, more than half of all the complaints for both May 1988 - May 1989 and June 1989 - June 1990 were for the largest taxi provider in the program, Minneapolis Yellow Taxi. Although recent efforts by the MMAC and the provider have resulted in an improvements in Yellow Taxi service, operational difficulties have still persisted for this provider. Yellow Taxi has recently been placed on probation, and the MMAC has been working closely with the provider and monitoring its activities in order to enhance service quality. Recent reports have indicated that such efforts have had positive results. The forthcoming installation of a new computer system at Yellow Taxi should also enhance its ability to better respond to the needs of Metro Mobility riders.

As shown in Figure 10, for the year May 1988 through May 1989, after Yellow Taxi with nearly 54% of all complaints, the next largest complaint totals were to Suburban Paratransit and its parent company, Morley Bus Company, which together had 16% of the complaints (10% and 6%, respectively), followed by Metro Ride with 6% and Handicabs with 5%. The remaining 19% is then spread out among the remaining nine providers.

In the year June 1989 through June 1990, Yellow Taxi accumulated nearly 55% of all complaints, with the majority of remaining complaints going again to Suburban Paratransit (8%), Handicabs with nearly 7%, and Ebenezer with 5% accounting for 20% of all complaints. Nineteen percent (19%) is then spread out to the remaining ten providers, and 6% of the complaints were made to the MMAC with no provider identified. See Figure 11 for more information.

figure 10

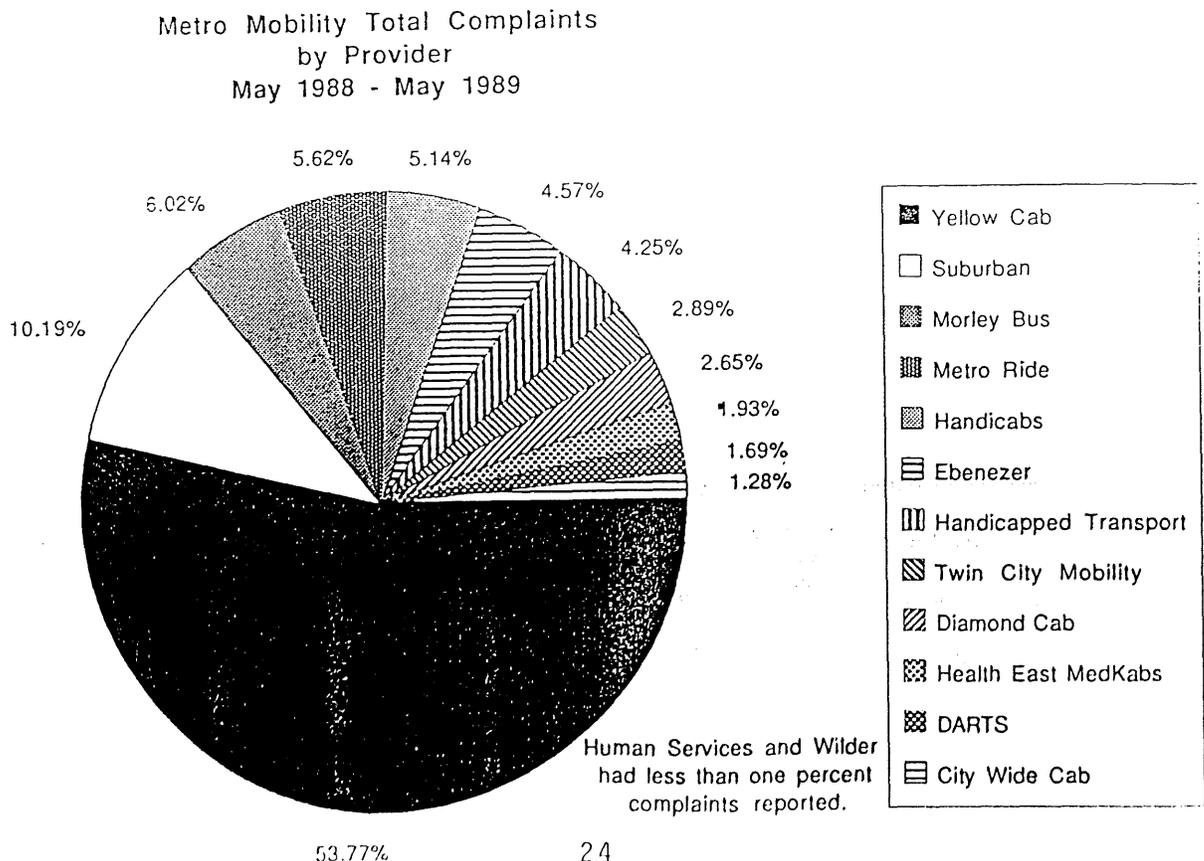
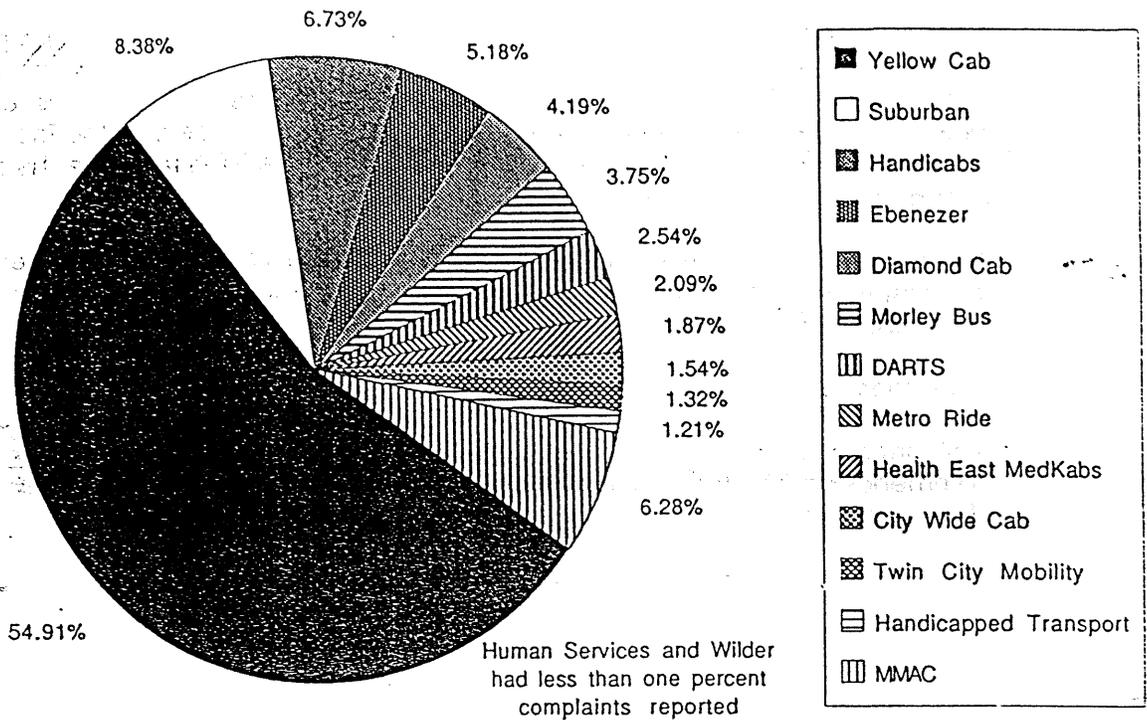


figure 11

Metro Mobility Total Complaints
by Provider
June 1989 - June 1990



Commendations

Although the MMAC receives many complaints from customers reporting about problems with the Metro Mobility program, it also receives many commendations for the program. For the year May 1988 through May 1989, the MMAC recorded 1,318 complaints, and received 403 commendations of provider service. For the year June 1989 through June 1990 the MMAC received 909 complaints, and 902 commendations.

Interestingly, although Yellow Taxi receives the largest number of complaints, it also receives the largest number of commendations. Yellow Taxi received 210 commendations for the year May 1988 through May 1989, making a total of 52% of all commendations received. This was followed by Handicabs, with 54 commendations, or 13%, and another taxi company, Diamond Cab, with 53 commendations, also accounting for 13% of the total commendations.

For the year June 1989 through June 1990, Yellow Taxi again led in the number of commendations, with 234, or 26%. Handicabs again ranks in second place with 86 commendations, or 10%, followed by Suburban, with 68 commendations, or seven percent.

Conclusion

The monthly Metro Mobility ridership has exceeded normal projections for the program, leading to increasing difficulties for providers in accomodating all trip requests, and problems for customers in receiving needed transportation services in a most efficient manner. Last year's report indicated a strong problem with trip denials; the Trip Assurance Program implemented in July 1990 has been the RTB's response this problem, and appears to be successfully resolving this issue.

As we review complaint types, we see trip denial complaints dropping considerably in the past year, and more focus on quality of service; such as being on time, courtesy, and passenger assistance.

While there are certainly still problems with the Metro Mobility program which will need more careful study and resolution, such as continued monitoring of the Trip Assurance Program and its impact on service quality and provision, providers and staff are to be commended for their efforts to maintain quality service while handling the large number of trip requests.

APPENDIX A

**Executive Summary
of
Consumer Research Study**

**Metro Mobility and Mainline Bus
Accessibility**

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**Consumer Research Study
Executive Summary**

**Regional Transit Board
Mears Park Centre
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Marketing Research & Management
Program Development
Environmental & Graphic Design
Marketing Communications

ILIUM

Introduction

The Regional Transit Board undertook a study to gain information from Metro Mobility users for the development of lift-equipped mainline bus service, and to assess the use and satisfaction of currently operated door-through-door services. The study is one component of the RTB regular route accessibility work plan. This plan was prepared to develop the most effective implementation of newly purchased MTC lift-equipped buses.

The executive summary provides the study objectives, methods and the significant findings of the research. The complete study report is available from the RTB.

Objectives

The Regional Transit Board developed five objectives for the study.

1. Identify and describe the potential riders of accessible mainline bus service.
2. Identify the travel needs of this group as they relate to mainline bus service development.
3. Determine the perceived barriers to using the service and the features that would attract riders.
4. Determine the rider satisfaction and use of existing transportation services.
5. Determine communication strategies for new and existing services.

The research devised to meet the study objectives involved a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, and an opportunity for community involvement. A total of four research tasks were undertaken.

1. A randomly selected telephone survey of 400 Metro Mobility users who reside in Minneapolis or St. Paul. This survey included 100 people identified as potential users of mainline accessible service.
2. Four focus groups with Metro Mobility users to discuss barriers, features and potential of mainline accessible bus service.

3. Four community forums to provide an opportunity for interested citizens to discuss mainline accessible bus service and comment on service development, service implementation, barriers, and needs.
4. A review of secondary data including operational data, internal memorandums, former research reports, RTB plans and programs.

Significant Findings and Recommendations

The significant findings and recommendations were prepared to address the objectives of the research project and several other issues that surfaced when the research plan was implemented. They have been organized by the following topics. In some cases only findings are reported, in others both findings and recommendations are presented.

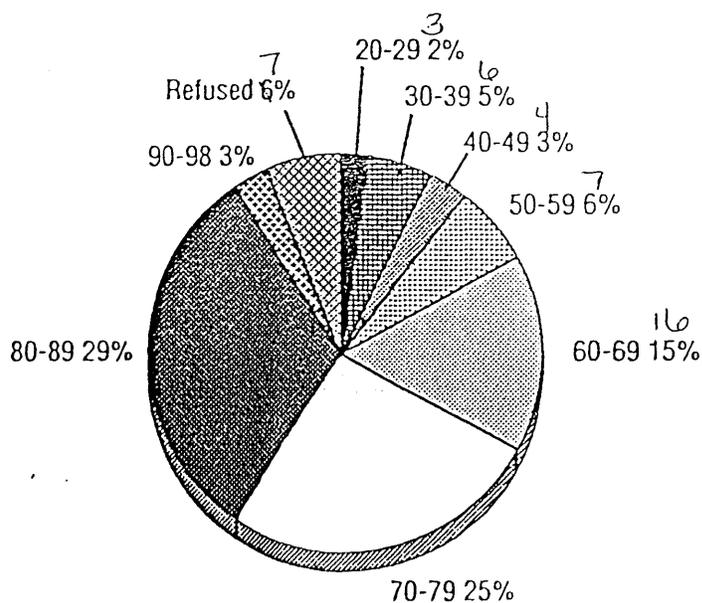
- Value of Metro Mobility
- Disabled Population Travel Needs
- Service Rating
- Importance of Service Quality
- MMAC: Service Planning, Marketing
- Metro Mobility Identification
- Mainline Accessible Service, Barriers
- Mainline Accessible Service, Target Market
- Mainline Accessible Service, Service Design Features
- Mainline Accessible Service, Service Implementation
- Mainline Accessible Service, Marketing

◆ Finding: Value of Metro Mobility

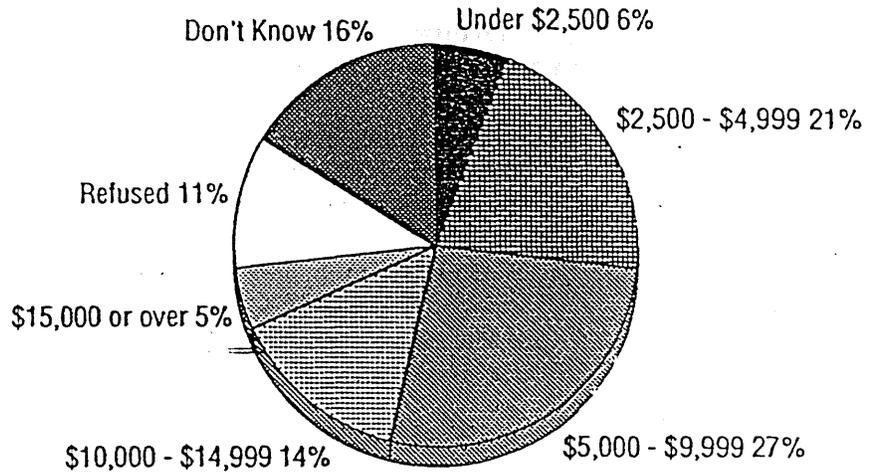
Metro Mobility provides a valuable and effective service that meets many of the transportation needs of people with disabilities.

- For a significant portion of the riders, the service is their only means of transportation. 67% indicate they use the service exclusively, they make no other trips by any other means.
- People use the service frequently: 43% of those eligible to use the service ride at least once a week, one in five ride nearly every day. They use it for a variety of trip purposes, with the highest portions for medical trips and shopping. The availability of service allows people to visit friends, conduct personal business, attend community events and go to church.
- A majority of people who use the service are over 70 years of age. 54% have incomes under \$10,000. 51% live alone, and 77% are retired.

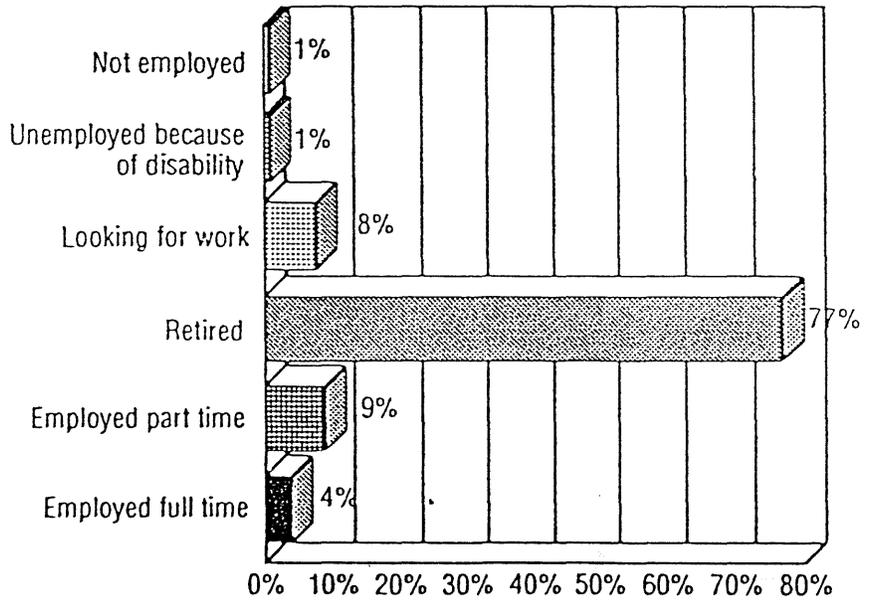
Age



Income



Employment



◆ Finding: Disabled Population Travel Needs

People with disabilities have diverse travel needs, and a number of these needs are not met by the current design of Metro Mobility service.

- Like the general non-disabled population, those with disabilities have travel needs that are diverse — some can be planned, others are spontaneous, travel occurs anytime, anyday, for any purpose.
- Metro Mobility is designed as an advance reservation, group riding service. It is not designed to serve travel needs that cannot be planned, or that change quickly. Examples of these trip needs are emergency travel, airport pick-up, midday business travel.
- Some of these needs will be met with implementation of mainline accessible service, others will not or will not be until the mainline system is 100% accessible.

❖ Recommendation:

To meet the diverse travel needs of the disabled community there should be more travel options available. These options may relate to gaining accessibility for current services (for example, vanpools and airport limos), or be an option developed from a currently operating service (some availability for emergency trips from Metro Mobility service providers).

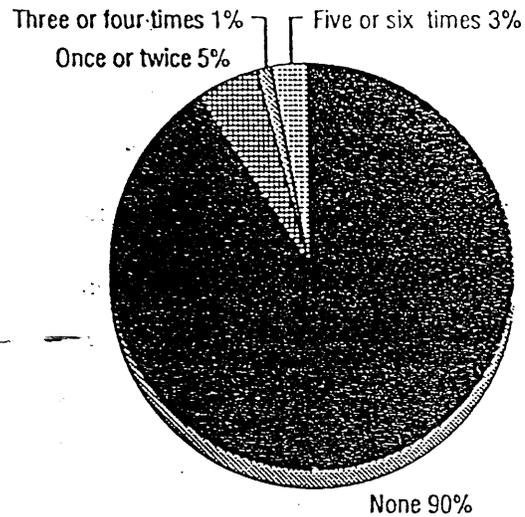
◆ Finding: Service Rating

- Three-quarters of current riders are very satisfied with the service, an additional 20% are somewhat satisfied. Only 3% indicate dissatisfaction.

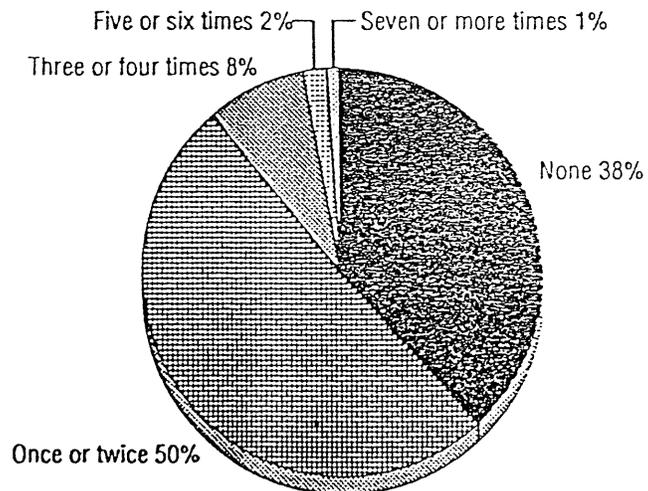
◆ Finding: Importance of Service Quality

- Service quality is as important to users as service availability.
 - As determined by the research, the quality of the service (particularly on-time performance) is as much of a concern to Metro Mobility users and impacts more users than problems with service availability.

In the past month, how many times have you requested a trip and it was refused?



In the past month, how many times has the provider arrived late? This means more than 10 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time.



- When asked to rate specific service characteristics, riders are least satisfied with on time pick-up, and calling in advance to schedule a trip.

	Satis- fied	Neither	Not Satis- fied
The comfort and condition of the vehicles	96%	1%	2%
The courtesy and assistance of the drivers	96%	1%	2%
The driving skill of drivers	86%	8%	4%
The amount of information available about Metro Mobility	83%	8%	8%
The helpfulness and courtesy of people who answer the phone at the provider	87%	5%	8%
How often the provider picks you up at the time you requested	72%	8%	18%
How often the provider arrives at your destination on time	75%	7%	20%
Calling 24 hours in advance to schedule a trip	77%	3%	19%
The cleanliness of the vehicles	96%	1%	2%
How safe you feel when riding	98%	1%	1%
The length of time your trip takes	94%	1%	4%

❖ Recommendation:

Plans and programs to improve the service should place equal emphasis on the quality of service delivered as on the quantity of service available.

◆ Finding: MMAC Service Planning and Marketing

The current combination of MMAC as “administrator” and for profit or non-profit contractors as service providers has worked well. However, there is little service planning or marketing being done. Improvements to these areas could improve system-wide service efficiency and quality.

- Metro Mobility serves a large number of trips a day (4,000 to 5,000). This is a substantial amount of service being delivered making the system a sizeable transportation entity.
- The system works remarkably well especially considering service is provided in such a large area and by so many different agencies/operators, and that all service is door-through-door.
- The current role of MMAC is confined to processing information (eligibility, complaints) and contract management. This is little or no service planning or marketing.
- As the demand for the service grows, there will be increased need for improvements in operating efficiency and potentially for “demand management.”
- Users would like improvements to communications about the service.
- Some functions (such as driver sensitivity and safety training) may best be conducted by one entity.

❖ Recommendation:

Consideration should be given to strengthening the service planning and marketing functions related to the provision of door-thru-door services and for some common operational functions to be conducted by one entity for all service providers. Some trips currently made door-through-door may best be served by subscription type services.

◆ Finding: Metro Mobility Identification

Identification of Metro Mobility service is weak, and not well defined.

- There is little concern for the image or identity of Metro Mobility as a valuable public service.
- When the trip assurance program is implemented, a customer may not know the name of the service provider assigned to pick them up. If an unfamiliar service provider shows up, the customer may not understand or make "the connection" that the taxi or van is for them.
- With increasing competition for financial resources to support the service, it is more important for the general public to be aware of Metro Mobility service.

❖ Recommendation:

Develop a graphic standard and specifications for application of the Metro Mobility identity on and in the vehicles.

Finding: Mainline Accessible Service, Barriers

Significant barriers exist for the use of mainline accessible bus service.

- There is a lack of knowledge of MTC service: routes, schedules, paying the fare, locations of bus stops.
- There is a fear of the unknown, and the unfamiliar. People who use Metro Mobility travel door-through-door. As a result, they are unfamiliar with pathways to the bus stop and from the bus stop to their destination.

People feel secure in the Metro Mobility van; they do not feel safe or secure waiting for a bus.

People are unsure if their wheelchair (or three wheel vehicle) will be able to use the lift and be secured on the bus.

- There is a fear of being stranded by mainline bus service. Currently, riders know and understand they will not be stranded (no matter how long the wait) by Metro Mobility.
- Weather is a barrier, both snow and cold, as well as the impact of snow on bus operations.
- There is a concern that current mainline bus passengers will be inconvenienced, making the passenger with disabilities feel uncomfortable.
- A significant majority of Metro Mobility users are elderly who are very satisfied with the service they receive. Their habits will be unlikely to change.
- Current Metro Mobility users are highly satisfied with the service they receive. For many the service is more convenient because it is door-through-door.

◆ Finding: Mainline Accessible Service, Target Market

The target market for accessible mainline bus service was defined.

- The market size is relatively small, defined as approximately 6% of those eligible to use Metro Mobility. This translates to a range of approximately 300 to 900 individuals. However, the study scope did not address individuals who are not currently certified who may be potential riders. Also, the service has yet to be implemented. Experience in other markets indicates the use grows over time if the service is implemented and operated successfully.
- As compared to all Metro Mobility users, the market is:
 - More likely younger, under 60 years of age.
 - Mobile (high frequency of trips for many trip purposes).
 - More likely male.
 - Those with a positive, "can do" attitude.

- Not as well served by Metro Mobility, specifically the 24 hours in advance trip reservation requirement.
- There seems to be no correlation to health condition or degree of disability with willingness to use the service.

◆ Finding and ❖ Recommendation: Mainline Accessible Service, Service Design Features

- Initially, the preference for service will be midday, non-peak hours, Monday to Friday.
- Potential riders are very concerned about service dependability, buses being on-time and lifts working. Providing more frequent service on fewer routes (versus less frequent service on more routes) is preferred.
- Routes selected should serve shopping and medical destinations. There were many requests for service to one of the major regional suburban shopping malls.
- Location of accessible housing and the pathway from the housing to the bus stop are very important to route selection.
- To maximize travel opportunities, it may be appropriate to change current route interlining, and examine current end of route designations.

◆ Finding and ❖ Recommendations: Mainline Accessible Service, Service Implementation

- The planning process should identify the list of routes to be implemented over the next several years and the timing of the implementation. To help insure a successful implementation, it is recommended that only one or two routes be made accessible at any one service change.

- A comprehensive driver training and sensitivity program is a key to the success of the service. This program should communicate to drivers the diverse health conditions that exist, and sensitivities to limitations in mobility, sensory or mental conditions. The training should include opportunities for MTC drivers and mechanics to meet individual with disabilities.
- Pathways to and from the bus stop will need to be examined.
- Procedures for operation in snow and when the lift malfunctions must be defined, and reviewed with the disabled community. Once approved, these procedures must be communicated to the target audience.
- A guaranteed ride home program should be included as part of the service implementation program. Such a program should be designed to eliminate the potential rider's fear of being stranded at their destination.
- A dedicated phone "hotline" should be established for a person to call for up-to-date information on detours and to report emergencies (being stranded).

◆ Findings and ❖ Recommendations: Mainline Accessible Service, Marketing

- While the market for this service is at the outset small, with proper development it will grow.
- The marketing program should be organized by route, and be a "grass roots", neighborhood oriented effort. A media blitz type program will not work.
- The program should emphasize travel training, opportunities for potential riders to use the lift prior to trying the service, meeting the drivers and clear how-to-use materials.
- The program should not oversell the service or raise expectations.

- The key benefits are “go when I want to go”; the benefit of not having to plan travel 24 hours in advance.
- Direct mail will be effective. The purpose of the mailer needs to be clearly marked on the outside of the envelope.
- Special user information aids should be developed for initial program implementation. These should include a map of accessible routes with accessible activity centers displayed, an easy-to-understand schedule brochure, a how-to-ride brochure, and a brochure that lists (and shows pictures) of wheelchairs (and three wheel vehicles) that can be accommodated on the lift.
- A system to communicate route changes, detours (snow and regular) and service changes must be set up.
- A non-coin fare payment method should be developed and implemented. As part of the initial marketing campaign consideration should be given to free passes or tickets.
- Accessible housing staff need to be included in the marketing program. They will need to be trained in the system “how-to”, and, as important, they should be organized to be advocates for the service.
- The marketing program must include a communication component to the general bus riding public. It should inform riders of the program and what they can do to “welcome” these new MTC passengers.

Final Comment

The results from this study have identified who is using current services, how well they are being served, what improvements people with disabilities prefer, and the criteria for successful introduction of mainline service.

The current system performs very well and receives high marks from the riders. Yet, there are needs not being met and opportunities for improvement. One of these opportunities is mainline accessible service. The research has shown that this service can be successful in Minneapolis, St. Paul. It will require sensitive, extra special efforts during the service planning and implementation phases, and an on-going commitment after service begins. With both of these, one can expect ridership to grow substantially over time.

APPENDIX B

RELEVANT MATERIALS

Vulnerable Adult Protection Workplan

Contract Enforcement Procedures

Vehicle and On-Site Inspection Report Forms

Provider Accident/Incident Report Form

Customer Service Report Form

Monthly Complaint Count and Summary

Metro Mobility

VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION
Progress Report

TASK NO.	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITY	RESOURCES	TIMETABLE	STATUS	COMMENTS
1	Request summary data from counties.	MMAC/MTC	MTC attorney	Send letters Mon., Sept. 17; request information to be submitted by Mon., Oct. 1.	Given low response rate, RTB chair has sent letters encouraging cooperation with MMAC.	Hennepin County withholds data due to its interpretation of data privacy restrictions.
2	Request reports from law enforcement agencies.	MMAC/MTC	MTC security officer	Send letters Mon., Sept. 17; compile information by Mon., Oct. 7.	Letters mailed by MTC security officer Wed. Oct. 10.	MMAC will ensure responses through follow-up calls and/or visits.
3	Direct MM providers to file unreported incidents.	MMAC		Send letter Thurs., Sept. 13; require reports to be due by Tues., Sept. 18.	Complete.	MMAC found one previously unreported incident.
4	Issue bulletin to MM providers on criminal history checks for new hires since July 1990.	MMAC		Send letter by Thurs., Sept. 13.	Complete.	RTB attorneys propose a workshop on negligent hiring and retention laws affecting provider liability.
5	Conduct site inspections of MM providers' personnel records.	MMAC		Perform inspections Mon., Oct. 1 and Tues., Oct. 2.	Complete.	MMAC summary analysis was submitted Fri., Oct. 19.
6	Direct providers to submit listing of all drivers hired prior to July 1990, noting criminal history checks.	MMAC	RTB attorneys	Send letter by Wed. Oct. 10; require lists to be returned by Mon., Oct. 22.	Cancelled.	The objective of this task can be accomplished with new driver licensing requirements proposed for 1991 implementation.
7	Sponsor training sessions, previously planned, on vulnerable adult and sexual abuse.	MMAC/RTB	Departments of Human Services and Corrections	Schedule training sessions on Fri., Sept. 21 and Thurs. Sept. 27; require refresher training to be completed by Mon., Dec. 3.	Complete.	MMAC to inspect personnel records in Dec. to verify training. Some providers express desire for even more training.
8	Institute random, unannounced site inspections.	MMAC		Begin as of Sept. 28.	Unannounced visits to each site will occur throughout Nov. and Dec.	This is now part of MMAC's ongoing monitoring.
9	Clarify complaint reporting procedures, in writing, to human service agencies.	MMAC		Send letters by Fri., Oct. 7.	Complete.	Letters were mailed week of Oct. 22.
10	Issue special edition of the Metro Memo.	MMAC	MTC staff	Mail by Wed., Oct. 17.	Complete.	The Metro Memo was mailed week of Oct. 22.

Metro Mobility
VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION
Progress Report

Continued

TASK NO.	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITY	RESOURCES	TIMETABLE	STATUS	COMMENTS
11	Send letter from RTB chair to Metro Mobility riders.	RTB		Draft letter by Thurs., Sept. 20	Complete.	Approximately 18,000 letters were mailed week of Oct. 1.
12	Send letter from RTB chair to Metro Mobility providers.	RTB		Draft letter by Thurs., Sept. 10.	On hold.	RTB chair and executive director spoke at MM provider meeting Wed., Sept. 19.
13	Explore liability of RTB in requiring specific driver selection criteria and standards.	RTB	RTB attorneys	Inform legal counsel of issues by Fri., Sept. 21.	Legal comments given to RTB staff at meeting on Wed., Oct. 31. Next meeting on Tues., Nov. 5.	Attorneys are still considering the need for contract language changes.
14	Investigate role of MMAC to conduct driver training sessions as a requirement for drivers to begin in service.	MMAC	MTC attorneys	Prepare recommendations for RTB review by Thurs., Nov. 1.	In progress.	Re-assigned, from RTB to MTC attorneys.
15	Distribute signs for placement in vehicles that display the number to call to report complaints or incidents.	MMAC		Prepare artwork by Tues., Sept. 25; distribute to providers by Mon., Oct. 15.	Delayed, in printing at MTC.	The existing Rider Rights and Responsibilities sign was modified to include this information.
16	Seek Interpretations of the Data Privacy Act and the Vulnerable Adult Protection Act.	RTB	RTB attorneys	Inform legal counsel of issues by Thurs. Sept. 21.	Legal research reviewed Wed., Oct. 31. Next meetings to be held Tues., Nov. 5 with RTB attorneys and Wed., Nov. 6 with DHS and Hennepin County staff.	Issues include "mandated reporters" definition and county information sharing restrictions.
17	Research legislation needed for licensing Metro Mobility drivers.	RTB	RTB attorneys	Prepare recommendation for Policy Committee review on Mon., Nov. 26.	A strategy was developed with RTB attorneys at the Oct. 31 meeting.	Timely to pursue new licensing and training requirements as part of Mn/DOT's STS rules to take effect in mid-1991.
18	Explore transfer of the RTB's contracts with Metro Mobility providers to the MMAC.	RTB	RTB attorneys	Prepare recommendation for Policy Committee review on Mon., Nov. 26.	In progress.	Attorneys are considering this topic.
19	Examine the benefits of creating a task force to advise the RTB on legislative changes.	RTB		The need for this task will be decided after completion of the other work tasks.		

CONTRACT ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

These procedures are established to fairly and consistently address provider violations of the contract and to correct the causes of these violations. The MMAC is granted authority to establish and administer enforcement procedures under X. GENERAL PROVISIONS, D. ENFORCEMENT of the contract between providers the Regional Transit Board.

The MMAC will monitor provider performance and contract compliance. Monitoring methods will include conducting field observations, surveying passengers by telephone, reviewing vehicle inspection reports submitted to the MMAC by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, analysis of customer complaints, and conducting inspections at provider sites.

It should be noted that the MMAC has procedures for handling service complaints which are separate from these enforcement procedures. Complaints received by the MMAC are generally processed under the complaint procedures rather than under the enforcement procedures. The MMAC may follow the contract enforcement procedures after analysis of a complaint or where a provider fails to comply with the agreed upon solution to a problem.

It should also be noted that the MMAC has separate procedures related to vehicle inspections. The MMAC conducts inspections of vehicles, completes the MMAC Vehicle Inspection Report, and takes follow-up action in accordance with established procedures.

These contract enforcement procedures set forth the steps that may be taken.

I. Processing Violations

- A. A Notice of Possible Violation may be written only by MMAC personnel authorized to do so by the MMAC Manager and will be reviewed for approval by the MMAC Manager or his/her designee. A Notice of Possible Violation will be written within 48 hours of the MMAC becoming aware of the possible violation. Each Notice of Possible Violation will contain pertinent information concerning the possible violation.
- B. The provider will have three days after receiving written Notice of Possible Violation to respond to the charge. The manager will determine if the provider response is sufficient to warrant that the notice be withdrawn. If the notice is withdrawn, the manager will document this decision and return it along with the provider response and the Notice of Possible Violation to the person who originated it and to the provider. If it is determined that the provider is in violation, a Notice of Violation will be issued to the provider and the provider will have three days after receiving the notice to indicate in writing to the MMAC how it will cure the violation.
- C. Once the cure is submitted to the MMAC by the provider, the MMAC Manager will take appropriate disciplinary action as outlined in these procedures. Determination of appropriate disciplinary action may be influenced by factors such as satisfactory nature of the cure, provider cooperation, and past record.

D. Documentation on all matters related to provider contract compliance will be retained in MMAC files for three years and will be accessible only to the MMAC, RTB, and the appropriate provider.

II. Possible Disciplinary Actions

The following disciplinary actions may be taken:

A. Notice of Violation

A provider may be issued written notification of a contract violation. The provider has three days after receiving the notice to indicate in writing to the MMAC how it will cure the violation.

B. Letter of Warning

A provider may be issued written notification advising that probation and/or a financial penalty not to exceed \$500.00 will result if another violation occurs within the next 60 days.

C. Financial Penalty

A provider may be assessed a financial penalty in accordance with step 3 of the Steps for Handling Class B Violations.

D. Probation

Probation is a 60 day period of supervised time in which provider activities are monitored by MMAC and/or RTB inspections conducted biweekly. The first of these inspections will be arranged at a mutually agreed upon time. Subsequent inspections will require a two-hour advance notice by MMAC or RTB staff. More severe disciplinary action will result if violations occur during these inspections or during the probationary period.

E. Suspension

Contract service may be suspended by the RTB after consultation with the MMAC.

F. Termination

Contract Service may be terminated by the RTB after consultation with the MMAC.

month

year

MMAC Vehicle Inspection Report

Provider Name: SYSTEM	VEHICLE INSPECTIONS/FIELD OBSERVATIONS REPORT
	# circled numbers = Safety Defects

Vehicle Interior

- ___ 1. Insurance Card
- ___ 2. First Aid Kit
- ___ ③* Fire Extinguisher - 5 lb.
- ___ 4. 2-Way Radio
- ___ 5. Flashlight
- ___ 6. Emergency Triangles (3)
- ___ 7. Blanket (exc. taxi)
- ___ 8. Ice Scraper (10/1-4/30)
- ___ 9. No Smoking Sign
- ___ 10. Provider Telephone No.
- ___ 11. Riders Bill of Rights
- ___ ⑫* Passenger Seat Belt
- ___ ⑬* Driver Seat Belt
- ___ ⑭* Child Restraint Device (when needed)
- ___ ⑮* Wheelchair Securement
 - ___ a. Tracks
 - ___ b. Buckles/Attachment
 - ___ c. No. Devices vs. No Passengers
 - ___ d. Lap Belts
- ___ 16. Interior Cleanliness
- ___ 17. Windows
 - ___ a. Cleanliness
 - ___ b. Cracked/Chipped
- ___ ⑱* Emergency Brake
 - ___ a. Won't Hold
 - ___ b. Excessive Pedal Travel
- ___ 19. Step Stool Secured
- ___ ⑳* Jagged Edges, Interior
- ___ ㉑* Exhaust Leakage

- ___ 22. Rearview Mirror
- ___ ㉓* Horn
- ___ 24. Heater
- ___ 25. Defroster

Vehicle Exterior

- ___ 26. Inspection Sticker Expires _____
- ___ 27. Current Wheelchair Sticker
- ___ ㉘* Rearview Mirrors
- ___ ㉙* Brakes Squeal, Unusual Noise
- ___ ㉚* Wheelchair Ramp
 - ___ a. Non-Skid Surface
 - ___ b. Attachment to Vehicle
- ___ ㉛* Wheelchair Lift
 - ___ a. Operation
 - ___ b. Railing or Spare W/C
- ___ ㉜* Tires _____ Position _____
 - ___ a. Cuts _____
 - ___ b. Bulges _____
 - ___ c. Low Tread _____
- ___ 33. Body Condition
 - ___ a. Loose Body Parts
 - ___ b. Cleanliness
- ___ 34. Exhaust Sound
- ___ 35. Doors, Proper Closure/Alignment
- ___ ㉞* Turn Signals
- ___ ㉟* Brake Lights
- ___ ㊱* 4-Way Flashers
- ___ ㊲* Windshield Wipers
- ___ 40. Metro Mobility Decal Displayed

VEHICLE INSPECTIONS:	# VEHICLES W/NO DEFECTS _____
	# VEHICLES WITH DEFECTS _____
TOTAL # VEHICLES INSPECTED _____ # REINSPECTIONS DONE _____	
DEFECTS FOUND:	# EQUIP/COND DEFECTS _____
	# SAFETY DEFECTS _____
	TOTAL # IDENTIFIED DEFECTS _____ # TAKEN OUT OF SERVICE _____
AVG # DEFECTS:	AVG # DEFECTS PER VEHICLE _____
FIELD OBSERVATIONS:	TOTAL # FIELD OBSERVATIONS _____

METRO MOBILITY ON-SITE INSPECTION REPORT

Provider Name:	Inspection Date: / /	Time: am pm
Address:	Phone:	
Manager/Supervisor:	Inspector's Name:	

No. Metro Mobility vehicles in service No. Metro Mobility vehicles (back-up)
 No. Metro Mobility drivers full time No. Metro Mobility drivers part time

- 1. Certificates of Compliance No. vehicles covered Exp. Date
- 2. Certificates of Insurance No. vehicles covered Exp. Date
- 3. Driver trip/log sheets retained for 3 years?
- 4. View financial records.
- 5. Fire Extinguisher Training No. Drivers' Fire Ext. training verified
- 6. State Certification of PAT trainer Name of PAT Trainer: _____
- 7. Regularly scheduled Company Safety Meetings? Frequency? _____ Minutes? _____
- 8. Complaint file with procedures for problem resolution?
- 9. Accident/Incident file with accident prevention recommendations?
- 10. Dates of Accidents & Incidents (within 1 year): _____

11. Drivers' Records on file? No. Driving Records inspected
 MUST HAVE: Driver's Health Cert. within 2 years; Passenger Assistance Training Cert.;
 First Aid Cert. within 3 years; Vulnerable Adult/Sexual Abuse Training verification;
 *Criminal History Background check; Driving Record by 7/1 of each year showing driver
 18+ years of age & no revocations, suspensions or cancellations within 3 years.
 EXPLANATIONS: _____

- 12. View vehicle maintenance records No. vehicles inspected
- 13. View completed daily & regular vehicle inspection forms.

✓ : Checked/acceptable	X: Unacceptable	-: Not checked/not applicable
Correction(s) needed by:	Inspector's Signature:	
Date:		
Correction(s) made:	Provider Representative Signature:	
Date:		

Return to: METRO MOBILITY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER, 570 - 6th Ave. No., Minneapolis, MN 55411

*Criminal History Background checks must be done on all drivers hired since 7/1/90.

Phone Report

Follow Up Report

PROVIDER ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT

All accidents or incidents involving personal injury or property damage must be reported to Metro Mobility Administration Center within 24 hours. This written report must be completed and sent to MMAC with 48 hours.

Date of Report _____

Date of Incident _____

Provider _____

Phone # _____

Driver _____

Vehicle # _____

Contact Person _____

Title _____

Passenger _____

Cert. # _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Passenger _____

Cert. # _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Day of Incident: _____ Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____

Location of Incident: _____

Description of Accident/Incident: _____

Immediate Action Taken: _____

(over)

Describe personal injuries or property damage: _____

Describe immediate medical treatment and any follow up treatment or care: _____

Explain cause or possible cause of accident: _____

Could this accident have been prevented? _____ How: _____

What steps or procedures are being taken to prevent future occurrences of this type? _____

Has the involved driver completed the required Passenger Assistance Course? _____
If yes, list date of course completion: _____
If not, list date of hire _____

Person filing this report: _____ date _____

Report received at MMAC by _____ date _____

Follow up: _____

Reported by: _____ Date: _____



METRO MOBILITY MONTHLY COMPLAINT COUNT and SUMMARY

Information from Metro Mobility Service Report File:

SAFETY CONCERNS _____

PASSENGER ASSISTANCE _____

VEHICLE CONDITION _____

TIME CHANGE _____

REFERRAL PROBLEM _____

TRIP DENIAL _____

LATE RIDE _____

NO SHOW RIDE _____

TRIP LENGTH _____

COST/COUPON CONFUSION _____

COURTESY _____

OTHER _____

COMMENDATIONS from
PASSENGERS:

TOTAL _____

TOTAL _____

PASSENGER PROBLEMS :
Reported by Providers
and MMAC. _____



METRO MOBILITY MONTHLY COMPLAINT COUNT and SUMMARY

Information from Metro Mobility Service Report File:

SAFETY CONCERNS	_____
PASSENGER ASSISTANCE	_____
VEHICLE CONDITION	_____
TIME CHANGE	_____
REFERRAL PROBLEM	_____
TRIP DENIAL	_____
LATE RIDE	_____
NO SHOW RIDE	_____
TRIP LENGTH	_____
COST/COUPON CONFUSION	_____
COURTESY	_____
OTHER	_____
TOTAL	_____

COMMENDATIONS from
PASSENGERS:

TOTAL

PASSENGER PROBLEMS : _____
Reported by Providers
and MMAC.

Month _____ Year _____

COMPLAINT COUNT & ACCIDENT/INCIDENT SUMMARY

	CW	DT	DC	ES	HC	HT	HE	HS	MR	MB	SB	TC	WT	YE	MM	Total	
Safety Concerns																	Safety Concerns
Passenger Assistance																	Passenger Assistance
Vehicle Condition																	Vehicle Condition
Time Change																	Time Change
Referral																	Referral
Trip Denial																	Trip Denial
Late Pick Up																	Late Pick Up
No Show Ride																	No Show Ride
Trip Length																	Trip Length
Cost/Coupon Confusion																	Cost/Coupon Confusion
Courtesy																	Courtesy
Other																	Other
Total																	Total
Passenger Problem																	Passenger Problem
Commen- dation																	Commen- dation

Accidents/Incidents

- Codes
- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| (A) Personal Injury | (1) Minor |
| (B) Vehicle Damage | (2) Moderate |
| (C) Property Damage | (3) Substantial |
| (D) Other | (4) Major |
| nc: non-chargeable | (5) Catastrophic |

- CW City Wide Cab Co.
- DT DARTS
- DC Diamond Cab Co.
- ES Ebenezer Society
- HC Handicabs, Inc.
- HE Health East Med-Kab
- HS Human Services, Inc.
- HT Handicapped Transport System
- MR Metro Ride
- MB Morley Bus Co.
- SB Suburban Paratransit
- TC Twin City Mobility
- WT Wilder Transportation
- YE Yellow Taxi Co.
- MM Metro Mobility