

FTA COMPLIANCE REVIEW MAPLE GROVE TRANSIT

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AUDIT



METROPOLITAN
C O U N C I L

February 2017

Americans with Disability Act (ADA)

- 1) Finding: Maple Grove Transit had poor compliance in announcing streets and major intersections during 2015 based on their 2015 fixed route internal compliance monitoring reports.**

Standard affected:

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Triennial Review Workshop Workbook Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, ADA, pg. 4-9:

“Stop announcements are required for fixed-route service at transfer points, major intersections, destination points, intervals along the route to orient passengers, and any stop upon request. The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) ADA regulations supersede any union agreement that prevents the entity from requiring operators to call stops.”

Maple Grove Transit policies are clear when it comes to stating that drivers are supposed to announce transfer points, major intersections, and destination points. Maple Grove Transit also has an internal monitoring system of vehicles, operators and the annunciator system.

The internal monitoring system shows that drivers were not compliant with both Maple Grove Transit’s policies and FTA guidelines in 2015. Drivers had a compliance rate of 44% in calling out streets and major intersections. There was a lack of follow up in regards to attaining compliance. The 2014 compliance rate for calling out streets and major intersections was 91%.

Calling out stop announcements and major intersections is required as an ADA regulation to assist those individuals with visual impairments, or other disabilities, to be oriented to their location.

Recommendation:

1. Provide follow-up training, bulletins, reminders, etc. to bus drivers so that they are ADA compliant in announcing stops and major intersections on fixed route services within Maple Grove Transit. Complete a follow-up compliance review to ensure that compliance rates are at an adequate level.

Maple Grove Transit Response:

Maple Grove has operating agreements with service providers that drivers comply with all ADA regulations including stop and street announcements for persons who are sight impaired. These announcements are also Metro Transit policy. Maple Grove continues to disseminate the requirement to Metro Transit. Maple Grove is in the process of implementing automated bus announcements and expects to start using them by April 1, 2017. Some manual announcements will continue as only 35 of 39 buses in the express fleet are equipped with this technology.

Drug and Alcohol

None

Equal Employment Opportunity

None

Financial Management and Capacity

None

Legal

None

Maintenance

2) Finding: Vehicle pre-trip inspection logs are not being used to document defects.

While completing the on-site audits, multiple Maple Grove fixed route buses had undocumented maintenance issues.

Standard affected:

Per FTA Circular 5010. 1D Ch. IV, Section 3.j “The lessee shall maintain project property at a high level of cleanliness, safety and mechanical soundness under maintenance procedures outlined by the project sponsor. The project sponsor lessor and/or FTA shall have the right to conduct periodic maintenance inspections for the purpose of confirming the existence, condition and the proper maintenance of the project property.

Per the Master Lease Agreement by and between the Metropolitan Council and City of Maple Grove for public transit vehicles Ch. IV, Section 4.03 Vehicle Record File: “An Individual Vehicle Record File must be maintained for each Council Vehicle. At a minimum, the file must include the following information: (F.) vehicle pre-trip inspection logs, signed by the driver, for the last six months in accordance with DOT regulations.”

During the onsite inspection of Maple Grove vehicles located at the Martin J. Ruter garage, eight out of nine buses inspected were observed to have body or tire damage and/or fluid leaks. Onsite record examination and further discussions showed that work orders had not been placed for most of the observed maintenance issues and thus the original incident occurrences could not be determined. Discussions with garage managers explained that while pre-trip bus inspections are conducted by drivers, there is no formal procedure to routinely document the results of pre-trip inspections. Maintenance issues and other information is often verbally relayed from drivers to mechanics. According to Metro Transit managers, issues that are reported to maintenance personnel during the pre-trip inspection are recorded on a log-sheet by a mechanic, and then entered into a maintenance log system.

The use of pre-trip documentation is outlined in the Metropolitan Council’s agreement with the City of Maple Grove for the use of its vehicles. Although pre-trip documentation is not specifically required by the FTA, the FTA does require that maintenance plans are enacted to ensure the maximization of vehicle life. Pre-trip inspections are required by state DOT but Metro Transit, as the operator, is exempt from those requirements. Without routine procedures for

documenting pre-trip inspections, vehicle condition maintenance issues can be missed or delayed resulting in vehicles not operating for a proper lifespan.

Recommendation:

1. City of Maple Grove should ensure that Metro Transit is using pre-trip documentation to properly process maintenance work orders.
2. Per the terms of the Master Lease Agreement with the Metropolitan Council, the City of Maple Grove should include pre-trip documentation as a requirement in future contractual agreements with Metro Transit and any other operators.

Maple Grove Transit Response:

Maple Grove fully recognizes the requirement that FTA funded assets must be well maintained and that the maintenance has to be adequately documented. Maple Grove will amend its operating agreement with Metro Transit that will require them to be fully compliant with the Master Lease agreement, including documentation of pre-trip inspections. Metro Transit management staff are actively assessing the best way to undertake the pre-trip documentation requirement. Maple Grove collects and reviews substantial maintenance records from Metro Transit monthly and is confident that the fleet is well maintained, but wholly agrees steps are needed to address issues found in this audit.

Procurement

None

Satisfactory Continuing Control

None

Security

None

Technical Capacity

None

Title VI

3) Finding: Title VI notification to the public.

While completing the on-site audits at Ruter Garage and Midwest Paratransit, Maple Grove had four out of fourteen randomly selected buses with no Title VI notification on the buses.

Standard affected:

Federal Transit Administration Triennial Review Workshop Workbook FY 2016, Title VI, pg. 5-5:

“Grantees should also post Title VI notices at stations or stops, and/or on transit vehicles.”

Maple Grove Transit’s policy regarding Title VI notification was clear. They state that Title VI posters, which they call “Commitment to Fairness” are to be prominently displayed in their revenue vehicles.

While completing the on-site audit, Midwest paratransit had one bus (6669) with no Title VI posting. A Title VI poster was placed in bus 6669, while we were still on-site at Midwest Paratransit. At Martin J. Ruter garage, three Maple Grove Transit buses (60068, 60088, and 60099) also lacked Title VI posting. The on-site garage manager at Martin J. Ruter garage stated these were all new buses and that they would consider why the new fleet buses did not have Title VI postings. The garage manager and Transit Administrator also stated they would remedy the situation.

By not having Title VI postings in all of their buses, Maple Grove Transit is limiting the dissemination of information regarding the public’s protections against discrimination afforded to them by Title VI.

Recommendation:

1. Post Title VI notices on all of Maple Grove Transit buses.
2. Have procedures in place that makes sure all new buses for Maple Grove Transit have a Title VI posting inside the bus.

Maple Grove Transit Response:

Maple Grove takes no issue with this finding. The missing stickers were isolated to new buses that were received in 2016. All buses in question now have the stickers in place. Title VI stickers have been added to the new bus check-in procedures.



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