

# INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON TRANSIT COORDINATION

March 25, 2008

Hiway Federal Credit Union Administration Building

## MEETING NOTES

### Members Present

Tim Henkel, Chair  
Bob Fischer, MN Department of Education  
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council  
Doug Benson, MN Department of Health  
Robert Johns, University of Minnesota  
Mary Koep, MN Board on Aging  
Joan Willshire, MN State Council on Disabilities

### Members Absent

Bonnie Elsey, MN DEED

### Guest

Becky Ellinghuysen, Mn/DOT Office of Motor Carrier Services

### Others

Paul Bridges, MN DEED  
Bob Ries, MN Department of Human Services  
Noel Shughart, Mn/DOT  
Diane Contreras, Mn/DOT

### Welcome

Tim Henkel welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### State Coordination Model: Florida

Noel Shughart made a presentation on the Florida Transportation Disadvantaged Program. This Commission is an independent state agency and is administratively housed within the Florida DOT. Their mission is to ensure the availability of efficient, cost-effective and quality transportation services for transportation of disadvantaged persons. Transportation of

disadvantaged persons are defined as those that are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation because of physical or mental disability, income status or age. In 2006 they considered 6.6 million persons as transportation disadvantaged and they are expecting those numbers to increase in 2010 to 7.34 million and 2015 to 8.25 million.

The Commission contracts with 49 entities to carry out the provision of transportation service in all 67 counties in Florida. They receive funding from 11 agencies/sources, such as the Florida DOT, Department of Education, Department of Elderly Affairs, fare box, local government, etc. Trip purposes are medical, employment, education/training, nutritional and life-sustaining/other purposes. Funds were also used in the hurricane efforts. To maintain consistency among the providers the Commission developed a rate calculation model that everyone must follow when billing for reimbursement.

What makes this program different is that it funds trips that aren't sponsored by any other agency and the rate of reimbursement is partly based on a performance formula (total trips, total miles, square miles of county and population of county). Unfortunately there are some unmet needs, 749,308 denied trips were reported in FY 2005 due to lack of fixed routes, limited operating hours and county line limits.

This program has received recognition and achievement awards from the FTA, USDOT and CTAA. It exceeds the national standard of 100,000 miles between roadcalls and is considered a safe and reliable system.

The ICTC members requested more information on the Commission staffing levels needed to carry out this level of statewide coordination.

Noel noted at the next meeting, April 22, 2008, he will do a presentation on the State of Kentucky.

### **Special Transportation Service Regulations**

Becky Ellinghuysen, Mn/DOT Office of Motor Carrier Services, defined the difference between Motor Carriers of Passengers and Small Vehicle Passenger Service. Both are for-hire transportation of passengers, but motor carriers of passengers are allowed to transport 8 or more passengers, including the drivers, and small vehicle passenger service can

transport no more than 7 passengers, including the driver. Special Transportation Service (STS) is a transportation provider who receives state or federal funding to assist in providing transportation that is designed primarily or exclusively to serve the elderly or disabled.

All vehicles registered by the Office of Motor Carrier and operated in Minnesota must be inspected annually by a person certified by the Minnesota State Patrol. Operators must systematically inspect, repair and maintain all vehicles subject to their control. A maintenance file is required on each vehicle that a carrier controls for 30 consecutive days or more. This file must identify the due date and nature of maintenance to be performed; a record of inspection, repairs, and maintenance. Bus files should also contain a record of tests conducted on pushout windows, emergency doors, and emergency door marking lights. Carriers records may be audited periodically. If they do not meet STS requirements, they have a specific time frame to comply. If they do not comply in the specific time frame, their license could be revoked. Carriers caught operating without a license could face civil or criminal charges.

Becky distributed a copy of the 2007-2008 Guide to Minnesota Commercial Truck and Passenger Regulations booklet to attendees. She noted that if any one would like further information they can contact her.

### **State Agency Guidelines: Coordinated Planning**

Paul Bridges reported that a small subgroup of committee members met to work on developing guidelines for local planning. The subgroup's work followed the format the Federal Council on Access and Mobility had used to implement the Presidential executive order on coordination. Their work focused on five key recommendation areas; coordinated planning, vehicle sharing, cost sharing, performance measures and evaluation, and demonstration grants.

The subgroup is hoping that the developed guidelines will encourage local organizations/agencies that are in the business of providing service to participate in coordination planning. Paul noted that agencies that provide 5310, 5316 and 5317 service are required to participate in coordination planning, however, a lot of agencies/companies that provide Human Service transportation are not required to coordinate.

Paul reviewed the two options identified under Planning Process Certification and State Agency Guidance and solicited feedback on the group's preferences. Bob Ries and Mary Koep both gave examples of organizations/programs not willing to coordinate under current local planning efforts. Mary suggested that if one agency was in charge of funding for transportation coordination, it would force organizations/programs not willing or required to coordinate to coordinate. The ICTC recommended that the subgroup discuss the issues addressed today and develop a workplan for addressing the five key recommendation areas.

### **Insurance Summit**

Noel reported that he will attend the April Risk Management Seminar in Mankato, St. Cloud and Bemidji and bring back information that can be used at the proposed Insurance Summit. He noted that the Department of Commerce has committed two staff persons for the summit. With the support of DHS and the Board on Aging, the summit will be available to interested persons by video conference at DHS videoconference sites around the state.

### **Member Agency Reports on Transportation**

Doug Benson, MN Department of Health, reported that health care reform legislation is being presented to the Legislature.

Bob Johns, University of Minnesota, reported that they continue to research transitways.

Bob Ries, MN Department of Human Services, reported that legislation has been written eliminate MnNET. He noted that DHS is meeting with rural transportation providers. Some providers are proposing to increase their fares from \$1 to \$2 due to gas prices.

Mary Koep, MN Board of Aging, reported that they are putting together their guidelines for its next grant cycle.

Joan Willshire, MN State Council on Disabilities, reported that they will host a Transportation Town Hall Meeting on Tuesday, April 8, 2008, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at 444 Lafayette Road, Room 5137 in St. Paul. Persons can also

participate through video conferencing and web streaming at 13 locations throughout the state. Senators Steve Murphy and Scott Dibble, and Representative Shelley Madore will be in attendance.

Noel Shughart, reported that the Mn/DOT Office of Transit, as the recipient of New Freedom funds in Greater Minnesota, is requesting proposals for Small Urban, New Freedom projects. Eligible applicants include state or local government authorities; private, non-profit organizations and operators of public transportation services, including private operators of public transportation services and are not necessarily metropolitan planning organizations or small urban (population between 50,000 and 199,000) transportation providers.

The New Freedom FTA Section 5317 Program was created to provide “new” public transportation services and transportation alternatives beyond the minimum requirements of ADA. For the purpose of New Freedom “new” service is any service or activity that was not operational or funded as of August 10, 2005.

**Next Meeting Date**

April 22, 2008  
1 to 3 p.m.

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