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Veronique Hakim  
Interim Executive Director



# Metropolitan Transportation Authority

State of New York

February 2, 2017

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Building Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Honorable Thomas P. DiNapoli ✓  
Office of the State Comptroller  
59 Maiden Lane, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10038

Re: Response to Report #2015-S-17 – Selected Aspects of the Paratransit  
Call Center Operations

Gentlemen:

On November 3, 2016, the Office of the State Comptroller issued the above referenced audit report. As required by Section 170 of the Executive Law, I am providing you with the attached response which addresses the recommendations contained in the report.

A copy of the final audit report is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Veronique Hakim  
Interim Executive Director

**RECEIVED**  
EXECUTIVE CORRESPONDENCE

FEB 10 2017

OFFICE OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER  
THOMAS P. DINAPOLI  
COMPTROLLER

c: Donna M. Evans, MTA Chief of Staff  
Michael J. Fucilli, Auditor General, MTA Audit Services

Attachments

*The agencies of the MTA*

MTA New York City Transit  
MTA Long Island Rail Road

MTA Metro-North Railroad  
MTA Bridges and Tunnels

MTA Capital Construction  
MTA Bus Company

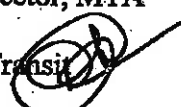
# Memorandum



## New York City Transit

**Date** February 1, 2017

**To** Veronique Hakim, Interim Executive Director, MTA

**From** Darryl C. Irick, Acting President, NYC Transit 

**Re** Selected Aspects of the Paratransit Call Center Operations Report  
(OSC Report No. 2015-S-17) 90 Day Response

In response to the requirements of Section 170 of the Executive Law to respond 90 days after receipt of the above-referenced audit report from the State Comptroller, we hereby provide you with the steps taken by MTA New York City Transit ("Transit") to implement the recommendations outlined in the audit report, and, where recommendations were not implemented, the reasons are set forth below.

Transit is committed to providing high quality, safe and cost effective service to our customers. Transit's Department of Buses, Paratransit Division ("Paratransit") operates Access-A-Ride ("AAR"), and in 2015, AAR provided over 6.3 million trips, supplying enhanced mobility to more than 144,000 residents of New York City. Paratransit has a contract with Global Contract Services ("GCS") to operate the Paratransit Call Center, and also has a robust monitoring plan to ensure excellent customer service and compliance with all applicable regulations.

### OSC's Recommendation 1:

Process the credits of \$395,925 against GCS for the period of April 2013 to May 2015, when the error rate exceeded the .01 percent limit in the contract. For periods subsequent to May 2015, assess credits when the error rate exceeds the .01 percent limit as provided by the contract.

### Transit's Response to Recommendation 1:

Transit is currently assessing Credits for Performance Deficiencies (CPDs) against GCS. For the months of June, July, and August 2016, Transit assessed credits of \$28,925, \$21,200, and \$21,775, respectively. Per the terms of the parties' contract, GCS appealed these assessments to Transit's Dispute Resolution Officer, who denied their appeal. GCS indicated that it intended to pursue an Article 78 action, which was filed with the State Supreme Court on January 24, 2017 and received by Transit on January 25, 2017.

Transit also reviewed GCS's performance for the period from April 2013 through May 2016 and identified a total of \$639,025 in CPDs which should be claimed (inclusive of the \$395,925 cited in the audit). Transit has not processed this credit pending the Article 78 action.

**OSC's Recommendation 2:**

Review the contractor's performance for call handling/service level in consultation with the MTA Office of Auditor General and, based on call data and other records, make a final determination, and document the results including credits to be assessed for the period April 2013 to May 2015.

**Transit's Response to Recommendation 2:**

Paratransit continuously works with the MTA Office of the Auditor General to improve contract review management practices and to determine meaningful performance benchmarks. Paratransit and the MTA Office of the Auditor General reviewed GCS's past and current performance and concluded that the contractor has satisfactorily fulfilled its contractual requirements. Paratransit will continue to monitor GCS's performance and make recommendations as needed.

**OSC's Recommendation 3:**

Compile complete call data, determine if the contractor has been in compliance each day, and document the results, including all events that materially impact performance for each day.

**Transit's Response to Recommendation 3:**

Paratransit has, and will continue to monitor call center data for compliance with the contract on a monthly basis and, in addition, Paratransit maintains appropriate documentation. It would be impractical to monitor the data on a daily basis because it does not align with the monthly billing cycle, which is the basis for assessing CPDs in accordance with the contract.

**OSC's Recommendation 4:**

Track the cost of services to AAR Customers due to the contractor's errors and recover the amounts from payments to the contractor.

**Transit's Response to Recommendation 4:**

Beginning in June 2016, Paratransit started tracking the cost of services to AAR Customers due to the contractor's errors and is seeking credits from GCS as provided for in the contract.

**OSC's Recommendation 5:**

Require the contractor to comply with the QA terms in the contract and to document such compliance.

**Transit's Response to Recommendation 5:**

Paratransit requires GCS to comply with the Quality Assurance terms in the contract and maintains appropriate documentation.

**OSC's Recommendation 6:**

Require the contractor to: ensure that all newly hired Associates attend all training and that staff receive recurring training, as needed; and document training by including the training sign-in sheets in the contractor's monthly invoice package.

**Transit's Response to Recommendation 6:**

As part of its monthly invoice, GCS provides copies of the training sign-in sheets and separate spreadsheets delineating the date specific training occurred for all newly hired Associates. Paratransit has also assigned a Command Center Analyst to review the spreadsheets to ensure newly hired Associates receive 15 days of training. Recurring training and counseling for recurring errors are also documented.

**OSC's Recommendation 7:**

Require the contractor to:

- Document the matching number of Associates required to handle the calls with the Associate's work schedules to demonstrate efforts made to address Call Center staffing needs and maintain documentation of the actions taken daily to adjust staffing;
- Provide, in writing, the number of work stations required for Associates to carry out Call Center activities; and
- Submit the required non-disclosure agreement form to Paratransit's Project Manager for all current and active employees, prior to accessing customer information.

**Transit's Response to Recommendation 7:**

GCS provides sufficient staffing for Call Center operations. As noted above, there is a limited business benefit for GCS to document daily actions taken to adjust staff schedules because it does not align with the monthly invoicing process. Staffing documentation is readily available for analysis if there are any concerns regarding Call Center response times.

As previously indicated in our preliminary response, Paratransit has already reconfigured Call Center seating for Associates, creating 120 additional seats, for a total of 381 available seats. The peak GCS seating requirement is currently 350, which has been provided by Paratransit.

Finally, GCS employees will continue to sign non-disclosure forms prior to accessing customer information. As part of their monthly invoice package, GCS provides a listing of all employees who began employment and their respective non-disclosure forms. Paratransit is performing quarterly audits of GCS records to ensure these forms are maintained.

**OSC's Recommendation 8:**

Monitor, review, and approve all managerial staffing changes and maintain appropriate documentation of such changes. Document how each person met the qualifications for the position, particularly if they did not meet the education requirements.

**Transit's Response to Recommendation 8:**

Paratransit has, and will continue to monitor, review, and approve managerial staffing changes. GCS maintains documentation on each person meeting the qualifications for a position, including candidates who did not meet the education requirements, and GCS is required to provide such information to Paratransit upon request.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let us know.

cc: S. Vidal  
S. LoPiano  
R. Picarelli  
Z. Lateef