
SUBJECT: OPERATIONS UPDATE

PURPOSE

This update on the operating activities in the Victoria Region is provided to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the “Commission”) for **INFORMATION**.

SUMMARY

BC Transit continued to deliver a high standard of service reliability throughout the winter schedule. Not including the three snow days in February, scheduled service delivered exceeded our target of 99.8 per cent. Schedule reliability, in terms of on-time performance, observed 61.1 per cent of timing points being met within the parameters of -1 to +3 minutes to the scheduled time. In March, we experienced two weeks with new highs for on-time performance of 62.8 per cent and 62.7 per cent respectively. A major contributing factor may have been the lower vehicle traffic and ridership during Spring Break. We remain focused on identifying opportunities to enhance this metric.

While we have maintained a capacity aboard our buses at the equivalent of a seating load to a maximum of 66 per cent of normal capacity, we continue to realize a relatively small percentage of just over 4 per cent of trips reaching this threshold. We are seeing some evidence in the very recent weeks of a slow increase in ridership and the number of trips pushing this threshold closer to 5 per cent. Despite this, the number of pass-up events remains relatively low at a little over four per day with an estimated average of 51 impacted passengers per day. In some cases, we have been able to deploy overload service to mitigate the impact to our customers at known times and locations of systemic pass-up occurrences.

Our focus currently has been preparing for the anticipated full return of post-secondary students in the fall. Similar to our approach last fall, our strategy is to maximize our nimbleness to respond to where demand is realized. To achieve this, we have worked collaboratively with the Planning and Scheduling teams to increase the amount of flexible service that can be deployed daily. The greatest risk to service reliability may be the allowable capacity of our buses by the fall. To best prepare for this, we have utilized historical data to project where capacity constraints will be at the greatest risk. This will allow us to direct overload services in the short term to these routes while we observe new patterns of ridership demand.

Our customer service team has made some significant progress in recent months. We have continued to see a decrease in total customer contacts over the past few months as COVID related enquiries fall. We have utilized the lower volumes to focus our efforts on continuous improvement and taking on other initiatives. To expand our reach to customers, our customer relations team approached Social Media from an operational perspective in the first week of April. This team now responds to customer questions and concerns via social media as well as post customer advisories to Next Ride, the Transit App, and Twitter in addition to our website. These major steps forward will allow us to better interact with customers as we continue to build subscribers over these platforms.

Recently, we have trialed a new initiative to enhance our customers’ perception of safety by increasing the presence of our Transit Supervisors at exchanges and “hot spot” locations across

the system. The initial response has been very positive. We are complimenting this with a Customer Ambassador role to be on the street interacting with customers to identify improvement opportunities. We will continue to explore more opportunities to be more present to our customers on the road over the Spring and Summer.

WINTER SERVICE SUMMARY

Conventional Transit Service January 6 to April 5

- 99.01% of scheduled service delivered (99.81% w/o 3 snow days)
 - 0.07% of cancellations due to Operator Availability
 - 0.08% of cancellations due to Bus Availability
 - 0.84% of cancellations due to On Road Conditions (ie. Congestion, Weather)

Custom Transit Service January 1 to March 31

- Total trips delivered 37,886 vs
 - Prior year was 66,928
- 99.71% of requested trips delivered
 - Prior year was 97.78%
- 0.29% Unmet Trips, 112 in total
 - Prior year was 2.22%, 1,523 in total
- 1.21 Rides per hour
 - Prior year was 2.20
- 39 Trips provided by Taxi Supplement
 - Prior year was 3,978

CUSTOMER SERVICE INFO

- January 2021 – March 2021
 - 936 complaints vs 1,440 last year
 - Jan 302 vs 557 for the same period last year
 - Feb 329 vs 526 for same period last year
 - Mar 305 vs 357 for the same period last year
 - 131 schedule adherence complaints
 - Average 43 /month vs 104 /month for the same period last year
 - 26 Lack of Service complaints vs 166 for the same period last year
 - 143 customer pass up complaints
 - Average 47 /month vs 61 /month for the same period last year
 - 9 overcrowding vs 24 for the same period last year

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission receive this report for **INFORMATION**.

Respectfully,

Kevin Schubert
General Manager, Victoria Operations