

PATH Riders' Council Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, January 24, 2018 – 6:00 PM

PATH Transportation Control Center (PTCC)

Meeting Agenda:

- I. Welcome
- II. Port Authority Police Department (PAPD) – Security Awareness
- III. Transportation – Customer Service Everyday Issues/Concerns
- IV. PRC November Meeting Survey Results
- V. PATH Mobile App Development/Testing Feedback
- VI. Updates: In-Station PATH Maps, Future Site Visits to Harrison Car Maintenance Facility
- VII. Questions & Answers (Q&A)/Next Steps/Adjournment

ATTENDEES (PRC MEMBERS):

1. Lewis Battista
2. Dorothy Benson
3. Margalit Edelman
4. Dave Ho
5. Terry Karney
6. Haley Klausmeyer
7. Anthony Lupena
8. Stewart Mader
9. Thomas Miller
10. Andrew Nathanson
11. Rahul Pathak
12. Maribel Ruiz
13. Sridhar Shankar

ATTENDEES (STAFF):

1. Keith Armonaitis (Principal Business Systems Analyst, Port Authority of NY & NJ)
2. Ayanna Davis (Project Coordinator – Customer Relations & Mktg. Division, PATH)
3. Linda Doss (Principal Marketing Analyst – Customer Relations & Mktg. Division, PATH)
4. Adrienne Holmes (Superintendent –Transportation Division, PATH)
5. Sgt. Steven Krapf (Police Sergeant – Port Authority Police Department)
6. Jessica Mills (Manager - Customer Service & Marketing Programs, PATH)
7. Lorraine Orosz (Station Supervisor – Transportation Division, PATH)
8. Juan Rojas (Government & Community Relations, Port Authority of NY & NJ)
9. Philip Silvestro (Associate Customer Service Representative, PATH)
10. Michael Sisak (Trainmaster – Transportation Division, PATH)
11. Geoffrey Walano (IT Project Manager, Port Authority of NY & NJ)

I. PATH – Welcome

- **Adrienne Holmes** welcomed the PRC and thanked them for their continued support and dedication to helping make PATH better.

II. Port Authority Police Department (PAPD) – Security Awareness

- **Sgt. Steven Krapf** presented the PRC with an overview of PATH Police Command operations. He discussed the general operations of the PAPD on the PATH system and PATH-NY/NJ security initiatives including:
 - Enhanced homeless outreach initiatives
 - Operation Clean Sweep-JSTC / Quality of Life
 - Security Awareness Program
 - RAD Detection
 - Operation FEED (fare enforcement)
 - CPOP/Community Policing meetings
 - Operation Safe PATH (ongoing)
 - Christopher Street Initiative
 - PAPD/NJTPD/JCPD Joint Operations

PATH-Enhanced Homeless Outreach Program:

- There is an increased presence on the trains specifically in the overnight hours
- Increased police contact with PATH operations to improve communication
- Support NJ & NY homeless outreach providers with police escorts on trains
- Dedicated officers on all tours with sole concentration of Homeless Outreach
- New PATH rules and regulations – 1 Seat, 1 Fare, 1 Ride
- Increased platform sweeps in areas of concern (14th, 9th Streets)
- Analysis of homeless outreach reporting to address trends within the community
- Work in concert with the city and state agencies in NY and NJ to address homelessness
- Try to get homeless on the system - shelter, medical, and food, where necessary
- Create contact poster for homeless outreach and how to give to local charities

PATH-HSP Team-Heightened Security Initiative:

- Rapid Response Units to an active shooter incident
- Critical Infrastructure Checks
- Heavy Weapons Detail
- Plain Clothes Anti-Terror/Anti-Crime Operations

- Multi Agency Joint Operations
- Multi Agency Super Surge Operations
- Bag/Bus Check Operations
- Mobilization/Mutual Aid
- General Crowd Control/Special Events
- Specifically trained and equipped unit to provide counter terrorism services to PA facilities
- Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) operates at the PATH Command, system wide
- Emergency Service Unit (ESU)
- Enhanced Homeless Outreach Program
- Active shooter defense
- Critical infrastructure checks
- Surge initiatives to prevent homeless, criminal, and drug activity

Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU):

- Specifically trained and equipped unit to provide counter terrorism services to PA facilities
- CTU operates at the PATH Command, system wide
- Emergency Service Unit (ESU)
- Enhanced Homeless Outreach Program

K-9 Unit:

- Bomb detection

III. Transportation – Customer Service Everyday Issues/Concerns

- Trainmaster, **Michael Sisak**, presented to the group on the operations of the control center at the PTCC. He informed the group that he has been working with PATH for 30 years and has been a Trainmaster for the last 17 years.
 - He explained how the passenger assistance phones are operated.
 - He also explained the role of the Tower Operators, who control and manage the current signal system, and monitor all train activities via the electronic system maps. He indicated the portion of the system that will eventually become the new Positive Train Control (PTC) signal system once it is fully implemented online, and how that system will be managed and monitored. In addition, he detailed the power section that manages and monitors power distribution to the entire system.

- Michael also described the communications system that provides riders with information when there is an issue with service or delays, and he gave examples of different issues that can arise.
- He conveyed that, often times, it is difficult to provide accurate information in real time when there is an issue with service, because it cannot always be determined exactly what the problem is until staff can be deployed to the field and assess the situation on site.
- **Jessica Mills** commented that it is very helpful for the PRC members to have a better understanding of the challenges that the Trainmaster faces when there is an issue.
- A **PRC member** asked what it means when there is a “broken rail.” Michael explained that a “broken rail” means that one of the running rails actually snapped or is broken. Broken rails tend to occur more during this time of year because of the cold weather.
- An incident can initially be reported as a signal problem, but once PATH staff arrive on the scene out in the field, they can determine if it is actually a broken rail or if it is something else.
- **PRC members** asked questions related to how messages are communicated to riders. Michael then explained the order in which the updates are communicated. When an issue occurs, the Trainmaster will inform the communications staff so that they are aware of the problem. The communications staff will then proceed with sending out a PATHAlert to customers, which will then generate a message that will be sent out on Twitter. In some cases, an official press release will be sent out to customers as well to help explain a significant occurrence.
- A **PRC member** asked a question as to how much snow is cause for concern on PATH. Michael explained that once there are 3 inches or more, PATH will run special “Scrapper Trains” and “Glycol Trains” in between regular service trains - to help keep the running rails clear of snow – in addition to spraying anti-icing glycol solution onto the 3rd rail. Generally, PATH should be able to run trains in up to about a foot of snow accumulation.
- A **PRC member** asked what type of announcements train conductors should be making when riders are stuck on a train during a service outage. Michael explained that conductors are kept informed and updated as much as they can as to what is happening. Conductors are supposed to keep riders on the train apprised of updates as they have them. **Jessica Mills** mentioned that PATH is in the process of enhancing the protocols for communications and announcements that conductors should be making to riders on the train.

IV. PRC November Meeting Survey Results – PATH/PRC

- It was agreed that this agenda item would be tabled until the next meeting

V. PATH Mobile App Development/Testing Feedback – PATHAlerts Messaging on App

- **Keith Armonaitis** and **Geoffrey Walano** provided the PRC with an update on the PATH Mobile App. Keith indicated that the new Executive Director has been instrumental in helping move forward the development and launch of the PATH Mobile App.
 - Keith announced that the PATH Mobile App actually went live and is available in the App Store as of this evening. They encouraged the PRC members to download it and begin using it.
 - Keith explained that the version that is now available is the minimal version of the app in terms of functionality. There are currently many additional features that are planned to be added during the next year in subsequent updates.
 - They thanked the group for both their patience and participation, as well as everyone else who participated in the testing of the app. They encouraged the PRC to provide as much feedback to PATH as possible.
 - They also discussed some of the features that will be coming in the near future.
 - Keith asked the members of the group who were able to download and test the app to describe any features that they felt it lacked or could benefit from.
 - A **PRC member** commented that on the “General Information” page, they all go to the live links, but if you are in a station and you do not have access to Wi-Fi, you are not able to access the information.
- **Stewart Mader** commented that he felt that they did a fantastic job on the mobile app. He suggested that in a future upgrade of the app, that PATH should consider integrating the fare collection system into the app, and incorporate a SmartLink functionality so that the fare can be read on your phone as you go through the turnstile.

He also suggested, regarding the section of the app where customers can provide feedback, that the app be enabled to allow picture uploads that can be shared with PATH.

- **Keith Armonaitis** explained that quarterly updates to the app will be available with on-going improvements and additional features.
- **Jessica Mills** informed the group that there are plans underway to install up to 20 interactive kiosks throughout PATH stations by the end of this year.
- **PRC member** asked when PATH is going to roll out a marketing campaign to help get the word out to PATH riders to let them know about the availability of the app.

- **Geoffrey Walano** responded that PATH will be discussing a marketing campaign about a week from the soft launch of the app to inform riders that this app is now available. He also expounded on the following points:
 - iOS app went live in the App Store on 1/24/18; it is titled, “RidePATH”
 - Android app will be launched after a credential issue is resolved, likely by 1/30/18
 - Version 1.0 is a “minimum viable product”
 - New features will be added over the next two years with quarterly updates and new functionality (in addition to typical bug fixes and security updates)
 - Uses beacon technology; however, the WTC is not included since Oculus beacons have not been installed there at this time. New beacons should be installed by the end of January or early February
 - External links under “General Information” will work in stations once data services are enabled – likely by year’s-end (i.e. Wi-Fi, cell phone access)
 - Ticketing on app is being explored and is very much desired, but has much longer implementation term given required turnstile and ticketing infrastructure upgrades
 - SmartLink card maintenance and provisioning is likely more longer-term as well, due to 12-hour cycle batch processing that is needed on the back end -- something that they would like to introduce
 - There will be a better designed interactive map implemented in the future
 - Other features discussed were:
 - likely to incorporate GPS
 - prioritize real-time information vs. fit and finish
 - feedback gathering
 - app can track user behavior which will help prioritize enhancements
 - need to keep app size around 20 MB
 - PRC played an important role in troubleshooting bugs and functionality improvements prior to live launch – an invaluable resource

VI. Update: In-Station PATH Maps, Future Site Visit to Harrison Car Maintenance Facility

- There will be a future site visit scheduled for the Harrison Car Maintenance Facility
- In-Station PATH Maps has been tabled for the next meeting in March

VII. Questions & Answers/Next Steps/Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM