

Meeting Summary

Following is a summary of issues discussed at the MDOT (MTA) Stat on April 1, 2011. Analysis is provided by StateStat and the Governor's Delivery Unit (GDU).

Follow-Up

- **Reduced Fares for LDSS Children.** At prior StateStat meetings, the panel and agency discussed the possibility of offering a discounted fare rate to children enrolled with the Baltimore City Department of Social Services (BCDSS) "Ready by 21" Program. "Ready by 21" assists children who are 14 or over and in foster care in preparing for independence when they reach age 21. After a series of meetings between the agency and Molly McGrath, Director of BCDSS, a tentative agreement has been reached to provide 250 MTA monthly passes at the discounted rate of \$39/pass to "Ready by 21" enrollees. The assistance comes in the form of education, development of job skills and management of personal finances, among other courses. A draft agreement has been prepared and is currently being reviewed by the agency's legal department, with the target of beginning the discount program on May 1.
- **Linthicum Light Rail.** The agency reported it had constructed a plan to address recent outcry from some in the Linthicum area that its light rail station should be closed. The immediate actions taken by the agency were to address security concerns, by adding 15 new CCTV cameras, a blue light post with a panic button, and removing a bench to deter loitering. Additionally, the agency has placed a safety kiosk at the station for agency police, cadets, security guards and other agency employees. Long term adjustments include a proposal to close the station at 8 pm, and a year-long study examining the feasibility and cost of closing.

Linthicum Light Rail Plan of Action

Communication

1. Maintain open communication with local elected officials, community leaders and citizens in area

Enhancements

1. Installation of 15 new CCTV cameras
2. A blue light post with a panic button to assist distressed light rail riders
3. Removal of a bench to deter loitering

Service Adjustments

1. Reduction of service hours by closing station at 8 pm (will require public hearing, tentatively set for mid-May)
2. Placement of a safety kiosk at station for MTA Police, Cadets, Security Guards, etc.

Long-Term Study

1. Conducting year-long study examining the feasibility and cost of closing, and assessing the strategic value of station

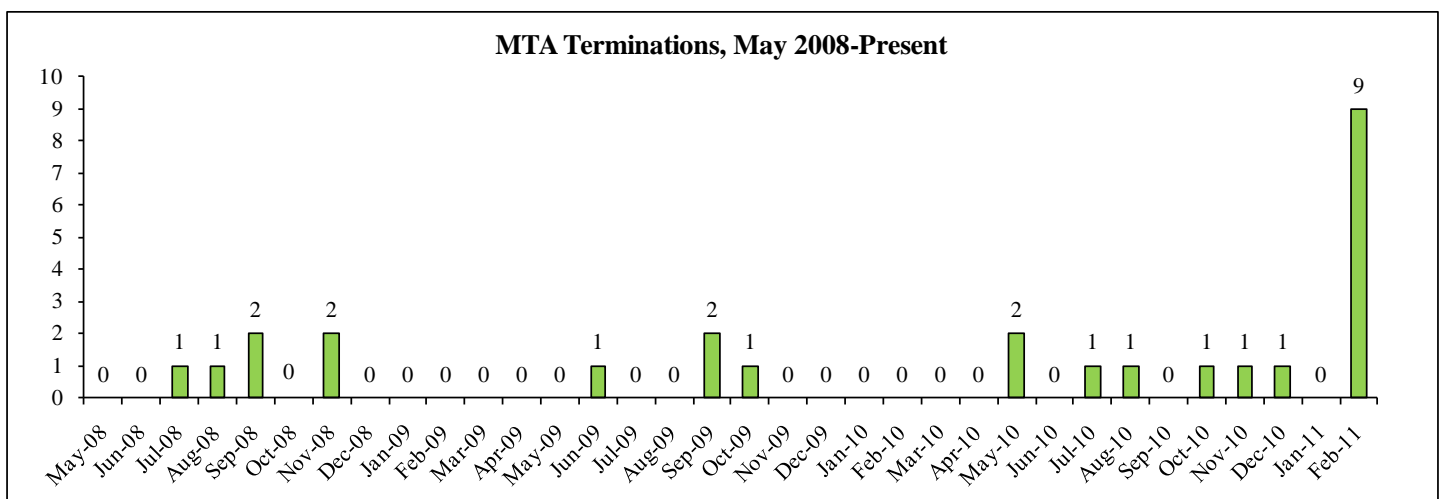
Employee Relations

- DPSCS Labor Management Practices.** At the February 4 StateStat meeting, the panel suggested that the agency contact the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) for assistance and best practice sharing regarding issues between labor and agency management. The agency reported that its labor manager, Denise Gregory-Wyatt, met with John Flynn, Executive Director of Human Resources at DPSCS on March 21st. The agency pointed out that there are differences between the MTA and DPSCS LAMP (Labor and Management Partnership) process. Most notably, DPSCS LAMP meetings are driven by union submitted issues, whereas MTA LAMP meetings are driven by management items (though the agency requests union agenda items before each meeting). Additionally, unlike DPSCS, MTA isn't permitted to discuss grievances, arbitration or contractual issues during LAMP meetings. The agency concluded that it had exchanged contact information with Mr. Flynn, and that he would remain a resource for consultation on management of labor issues.
- Staffing Changes to Improve Union Relations.** The agency has made a few staffing and other changes in order to improve labor management relations, which are listed below. The panel may wish to ask the agency to comment on how the agency envisions these changes improving communications with its unions.

MTA Changes to Improve Labor Management Relations

1. Disciplinary decision-making is being centralized, and former ATU President Dee Bridges has been hired to lead this effort.
2. Chris Blake has been hired as a Special Assistant to the Administrator with key task of improving labor relations.

- Collective Bargaining Agreement.** At the last StateStat meeting, Chief of Staff Matt Gallagher requested that the agency provide copies of the agency's collective bargaining agreements to union members and post the agreements on its website. The agency reported that the collective bargaining agreement has been added to the agency website.
- Terminations.** Data submitted by the agency to StateStat indicated that the number of terminations accumulated in February were significantly higher than any month on record over the last several fiscal years. The agency reported that data on terminations were unusually high due to a tracking mistake. The agency tracks both 'withheld pending termination' and 'terminations' on the StateStat template. Both terms essentially mean the same thing, but are distinguished only by the fact that some agency supervisors use the term 'terminations' and others use the term 'withheld pending termination.' A change in personnel caused an employee to place more individuals in the 'terminations' category than in the 'withheld pending termination' category. The agency is reporting that they will list all termination activity as 'withheld pending termination' from this point forward.



Service Improvement Initiatives

- **Next Vehicle Arrival Signs.** Among service quality improvements targeted in the Governor's Delivery Unit (GDU) plan to double transit ridership was the installation of next vehicle arrival signs at key bus waiting locations. The agency recently reported that this project was cancelled in an effort to make the agency's upgrades more cost effective. The next vehicle arrival sign project was replaced with an initiative to provide predictive bus time arrival to customer PDA's. The agency is ramping up efforts toward implementing a system to provide predictive bus time arrivals, and is making plans to advertise a procurement for this project in the coming months.
- **CCTV Expansion.** Another key initiative of the agency is expanding coverage of its existing CCTV network, by installing additional cameras and connecting them to the agency's central police monitoring facility. The agency reported that Phase 2 of its CCTV expansion efforts had been completed. CCTV cameras that CCTV cameras have been installed at all 14 Metro stations, at 5 of 33 Light Rail stations, and at 1 MARC station, and the agency further reported that installation of additional cameras is currently underway.
- **Halethorpe Station Groundbreaking.** The agency reported that a groundbreaking for its MARC Halethorpe station replacement project was confirmed and set to occur on April 4. The agency is launching a \$21 million project to construct a new station facility at Halethorpe. The new facility should speed up and ease the commute for the average of 1,300 MARC riders that use the Halethorpe station on each weekday. Features of the new Halethorpe station include two high-level station platforms; two stair and elevator towers with a connecting pedestrian bridge; and a Kiss & Ride facility with accessible sidewalk/ramp connecting with the northbound platform.

Bus Service

- **Fare-Box Collection.** Media reports in the Baltimore Sun previously indicated that agency and some MTA bus riders believed that bus operators were not collecting fares in some instances. The agency reported that in the spring of 2010, it assembled a bus video review team to investigate the possibility that operators were not collecting fares from passengers. The bus video review team used data from the agency's treasury office to identify operators with significant zero-revenue collection time. Once identified, the bus video review team studied tapes of these operators in operation. Of the 28 tapes reviewed, the agency found that just 2 operators were found to be violating fare box policy (in both cases, the violators had stuck objects into the bill slot). Further, the list of operators with significant zero-revenue collection time was smaller than anticipated, leading the agency to conclude that the practice of bus operators not collecting fares was not nearly as pervasive as originally thought. The agency is continually reviewing its treasury office reports and monitoring video of bus operators with significant zero-revenue collection time, but at this point doesn't believe that the practice of operators not collecting fares is widespread.