



NEW YORK CITY TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION

Accessible Dispatch Program Update

August 7, 2008
Commission Meeting

Accessible Dispatch Program



Program Goal:

- Match wheelchair accessible taxis with wheelchair users
- Determine demand for non-subsidized wheelchair service
- Determine best practices for for-hire wheelchair service

How It Works



- Passengers that use wheelchairs call 311 to request service.
 - On-call or reservation service is available
- 311 connects the passenger to the dispatcher.
- Dispatcher links passenger with a vehicle

Training Update



- Drivers are trained in dispatch technology and passenger assistance/sensitivity training
 - Executive Charge provides dispatch training
 - Easter Seals and United Spinal provide passenger assistance/sensitivity training
- To date 141 drivers have received all trainings
- Drivers must be trained by the middle of August
- Trainings are ongoing

Pre-launch Testing



- 20 passengers that use wheelchairs signed an agreement to be system testers
- Testing began July 14
- Testers agreed to take a minimum of 2 rides over a two week period and provide the agency with feedback

Tester Feedback



- Testers filled out an online passenger survey or are contacted by TLC staff for their feedback
 - From one tester: “My experience was excellent...I could not have been happier with the service provided.”
- A few users have expressed dissatisfaction with side entry vehicles
- Users that made reservations have had shorter waiting times than those calling on demand
- During the testing period, many non testers called 311 and have received rides

Dispatch Activity During Testing Period



- To date, there have been 91 dispatches
- 5 were cancelled
- Most passengers have received rides in less than 30 minutes
- The longest wait times were during evening rush hours
- Reserved rides had shorter wait times than on demand calls
- Rides have been mostly from Manhattan to all boroughs but Staten Island

A Learning Curve



- Some drivers have had difficulty understanding how to use the dispatch technology
- Not all drivers are logging on to the system each day – so a small number of drivers are taking most of the rides
- The Constituent Affairs office has been in close contact with many drivers and passengers and are helping them navigate the system
- There is a learning curve in understanding how to use technology

Correcting Dispatch Issues



- TLC staff are in frequent contact with Executive Charge and 311
- Testing period has worked well to identify “problems” and iron-out operations
- Dispatch Web site is constantly being updated

Next Steps



- Driver training will continue
- Publicity and Marketing campaign targeted at all potential users starting later this month
- Exploring incentives for drivers – MOPD, NYC & Co and advocacy groups continue to seek them
- Ongoing passenger and driver survey
- Continued monitoring of dispatch activity and reporting to Commission

Other Dispatch Questions

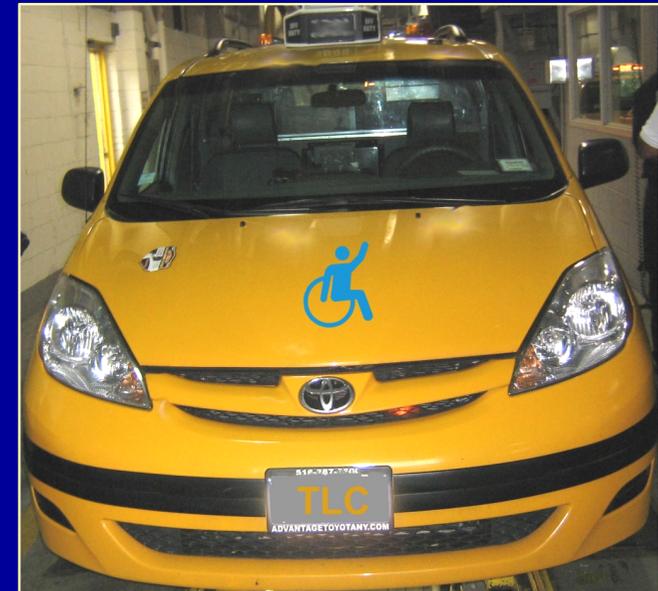


- There are no wheelchair accessible FHV's participating in the program
- The meter requirement may be discouraging FHV's from the joining the program, thus staff is recommending the elimination of the meter requirement.



Accessible Vehicle Logo

- Staff recommends the addition of a larger, more visible logo on wheelchair accessible vehicles
- User feedback prompted this addition
- Requires Commission vote





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