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Upcoming Events:

April 1, 2014
IDOT-DPIT New Procurement Practices Training, Springfield
April 2-3, 2014
RTAC Spring Conference, Springfield
April 26, 2014
12th Annual Roadeo, New Berlin

On-Site Driver Training and Classroom Driver Training
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RTAC Notes

Welcome to the new Program Compliance Oversight Monitors (PCOMs). I vividly remember my first days and months in the rural transit environment, overwhelmed at the acronyms and wishing I knew someone who could help me figure out where to start. At your February training you received a packet of information with a list of available resources including the Rural Transit Assistance Center (RTAC). Please contact us, we are glad to help you get acclimated. Those of us that have been around for a while started from the same place as you, our learning curve greatly diminished by reaching out to others.

RTAC holds an annual conference, a day and a half long, in Springfield at the start of April. Normally the conference consists of a variety of short trainings, but this year the entire first day will consist of an introduction to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) bus safety oversight program, a new initiative. This leaves only the final morning for traditional conference sessions, which this year is designed to introduce you to our world.

The first session of that final morning consists of updates from the IDOT Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation (DPIT) staff members and the Illinois Public Transportation Association (IPTA) executive director. Following their presentations we’ve allotted time for questions and answers. I encourage you to ask anything and everything, but if you have questions about PCOM issues, please hold off until the final session of the morning, which will be devoted strictly to your concerns.

The second session will introduce you to what we call the Illinois Rural Public Transportation Mobility Index, a multi-factored set of performance factors for rural transit grants. We will present the FY13 Index, its data reflecting the operating period beginning July 1, 2012 and ending June 30, 2013. If you are wondering why we are reporting on FY13, it takes time for grantees to report operating data to DPIT, for DPIT to collect and verify information, for DPIT to forward that information to RTAC, and for RTAC further verify data and input the information into the Index. That time delay is further complicated by the fact that some grants still do not provide all of the information that DPIT requests. But each year we get a better set of information than the prior year, and get closer and closer to having enough operating and financial data to accurately assess grantee conditions.

The final session is designed for you! We’ve titled it, “PCOM and Provider Relationship: Structure, Expectations, Best Practices, Questions,” but we are leaving it wide open for you to comment on any aspect of PCOM. If you attended the February 25th training but still don’t understand why a PCOM is needed, you are concerned about how you interface with the grant operator, you have questions...

—RTAC Notes continued on page 10

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IPTA Notes

Congress and the Illinois General Assembly are both in full swing. There are a number of significant issues in play for IPTA at both the Federal and State levels. It is as important as ever to pay attention to the issues and communicate regularly with your Congressmen and Legislators about these issues and the important work you are all doing in your areas. I have provided an update of vital issues that will be in play in the coming months both in Springfield and Washington. I encourage you all to use this information to educate yourself and talk to your elected officials.

Federal Affairs Update

With the Fiscal Year 2014 budget resolution and omnibus appropriations bills now complete, the second session of the 113th Congress should see increased activity on the MAP-21 reauthorization front.

FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations: Final FY 2014 transportation appropriations legislation provides $50.856 billion - $3.2 billion less than the Senate reported bill but $6.8 billion more than the House legislation. In addition, the bill includes $53.471 billion in contract authority for transit, highway and airports – matching the levels recommended in the surface transportation (MAP-21) and aviation laws of 2012. Other details include:

- Mass Transit: The legislation funds Formula and Bus Grants at $8.595 billion (MAP-21 authorized level) and provides $1.943 billion for Capital Investment Grants/new starts.
- Rail: Amtrak Capital Grants are funded at $1.050 billion and operating subsidies at $340 million for a total of $1.390 billion. However, as with the prior 2011, 2012 and 2013 transportation appropriations measures, both high speed rail and intercity passenger rail received zero funding.
- TIGER: The Omnibus provides $600 million for TIGER surface transportation projects.

MAP-21 reauthorization. Much of the focus on the upcoming MAP-21 reauthorization (expiring September 30, 2014) will be on the condition and sustainability of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). Without Congressional action, HTF revenues will not be able to support current investment levels beyond FY 2014. MAP-21 hearings began this week in the Senate Banking Committee on MAP-21 transit issues and the House Transportation Committee where Chairman Shuster indicated his desire to have a bill to the floor by the August recess. The focus by transportation stakeholder groups on Congress during the reauthorization process should continue to be on timely passage of MAP-21 and on stressing the need for additional funds beyond current gas tax receipts. The Highway Trust Fund will run out of money at the end of this summer, so it is more important than ever for Congress to identify new revenue for transportation.

Upcoming Congressional Activity. In addition to MAP-21, current transportation-related committee activity over the next several months will focus on completing the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) which continues in conference committee and the reauthorization of Federal passenger rail and freight rail safety programs.

Congress failed to extend tax credit legislation before the end of 2013. It is largely anticipated that these “extenders” – such as those for alternative fuels and the commuter credit – would likely be dealt with in the context of tax reform legislation. The possibility of tax reform continues as the tax-writing committees continue to hold internal discussions about how to best proceed and what any draft legislation would entail. In the fall of last year, the Senate Finance Committee requested Senators to defend any tax credits that they currently advocate. Supporters of a particular tax credit should contact Senator Durbin and Kirk and the Congressional delegation to stress the need and continuing importance of it.

— IPTA Notes continued on page 10
National RTAP Releases New Toolkits, Technical Brief, and Directory

National RTAP has released five new products for the rural and tribal transit community:

Three Toolkits:

**How to Find Anything** is an online toolkit designed to connect rural and tribal transit stakeholders to free and low-cost information on a variety of topics. Navigate through sections on Peer and Technical Assistance, Information and Best Practices, Online Forums, Conferences, Technology Tools and more. The toolkit also includes a step-by-step guide to searching online for transit-related information. National RTAP Director Patti Monahan says, "Our new toolkit won't be much help if you misplace your car keys, but it's packed with tips and resources for finding information on any transit topic."

The **Transit Manager’s Toolkit** was designed to give new transit managers the information they need from day one to ensure their agencies are in compliance with the FTA regulations tied to Section 5311 funding. Information is easy to find on the website, and content is divided into three categories: 1) Administration and Compliance, 2) Operations, and 3) Tribal Transit. Each content page contains links to relevant regulations, circulars and helpful resources produced by National RTAP and partner organizations.

The Transit Manager’s Toolkit addresses the following topics:

- Mission and Leadership
- In-house vs. Contracted Management/Operations
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- 5311 Federal Grant Management Requirements
- Drug and Alcohol Programs
- Civil Rights
- Procurement
- Human Resources
- Safety and Security and Emergency Management
- Coordination and Mobility Management
- Service Planning and Evaluation
- Tribal Transit Planning and Management
- Tribal- Working with State DOTs
- 5311 and the Tribal Transit Program

The **Bus Roadeo Toolkit** was created to help transit agencies, transit associations, non-profit social service agencies and state departments of transportation plan for and implement a bus roadeo. The toolkit should help ensure consistent judging throughout the roadeo obstacle course and can be used as a training tool for potential contestants. It is divided into three sections: 1) Work Group, 2) Tasks and 3) Budget. Included in the toolkit is a 22-minute video, recorded at the 2013 Connecticut Bus Roadeo. The video provides details on setting up and judging ten common obstacles and other non-obstacle items and can be viewed online or ordered through National RTAP’s Resource Library.

- The toolkit includes:
  - Video of an actual bus roadeo
  - Measurements for each obstacle
  - Guidance on scoring contestants
  - Scoring sheets for each obstacle
  - List of tasks to be completed for a successful bus roadeo
  - A number of templates to be used throughout the process
  - An Excel file to assist with compiling scores and choosing winners

— National RTAP continued on page 12
"Mobility Management" is a term that is often debated amongst researchers and professionals. Regardless of the differences in opinion, individuals practicing mobility management generally agree that to provide mobility management is to provide innovative solutions to better meet rider needs in the face of limited resources.

Between May 2010 and April 2012, Phase I of MY TRIP was introduced. It was a two year mobility management pilot project made possible through a Federal Transit Administration United We Ride grant awarded to the Illinois Department of Transportation. Staff at Bi-State Regional Commission, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, and the Rural Transit Assistance Center (RTAC) worked as a collaborative team to develop and pilot a toolkit for mobility management efforts in rural areas. In June 2012, the MY TRIP Toolkit was published and distributed. This document included a collection of tools and resources that laid a foundation for mobility management. It is utilized by transit systems, transportation planners, and public officials. The toolkit consists of the following:

- Stakeholder Contact Tools;
- Service Information Sheets;
- Mobility Management Questionnaires;
- Rider Surveys;
- Marketing Plan Checklist; and
- Rural Travel Trainings Curriculum.

While MY TRIP Phase I created and tested a rural mobility management toolkit, Phase II will focus on shaping the original tools so that they can be used more effectively in the comprehensive planning process. Phase II is being conducted by the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission and will establish a process that HSTP Coordinators can more easily implement throughout their regions and/or in a particular county; it will take into account the existing conditions and the history of transit services available.

Several HSTP Coordinators have begun utilizing the various resources developed in Phase I. In Regions 1 and 3, resources such as the “Stakeholder Contact Tool” and the “Local Agency Questionnaire Template” were utilized in the development of the Human Service Agency Transportation Study which was completed in December 2013. This study has been foundational to the development of the Region 3 Advisory Committee. In Region 2, the “Rural Travel Training Curriculum” has been used at a number of public transportation outreach events to educate new or prospective riders of the rural transportation options in their area. In Region 8, the “Marketing Plan Checklist” has been used on numerous occasions to improve marketing and information sharing of available transportation resources. In Regions 9, 10, and 11 the “Mobility Management Questionnaires” have been used to assess the training needs of perspective trainees. The “Rural Travel Training Curriculum” has been used to train riders, potential riders, mobility managers, human service agency staff and others on transit use and services.

All of the resources developed by MY TRIP are meant to be practical and useable by anyone interested in providing a higher degree of transportation service to the individuals they serve. HSTP Coordinators can provide assistance in the use of these items. Anyone interested in downloading or obtaining more information about these resources can visit https://sites.google.com/site/mytripillinois.
Maintenance Safety Training Part Two
By Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD)

This is the second in a series of maintenance/safety tips culled from presentations by the Springfield Regional Maintenance Center (RMC) at the annual maintenance workshops sponsored by RTAC. The Springfield RMC operates out of Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) Maintenance Facility.

Maintenance superintendent Earl Amos leads the nineteen technicians at SMTD who have a combined 268 years of experience. All of the techs are trained on SMTD mainline buses as well as the para-transit buses. Anytime a vehicle is worked on, whether it is SMTD’s or not, SMTD is responsible for the safety of that vehicle. If a safety issue is found on an outside agency’s vehicle, SMTD either fixes it or the agency signs a waiver. The SMTD techs don’t know when they will see that vehicle next, so they want it to be 100 percent right when it leaves the shop.

Part Two, begins with coach interior preventive maintenance inspections by technicians Tony Shultz and Brett Cole. The inspection starts with the seats. Starting with the seat in the down position, make sure there are no rips and tears, and that the seat is locked in position. Next, raise the seat to the stowed position.

You should be able to lift the seat with ease. If not, the assist shock (top arrow) needs replaced. If the shock is leaking oil, it should be replaced. The seat should lock in the up position and the manual safety latch (lower arrow) should be set. Also check the safety latch for damage. We have seen several come in bent because someone tried to pull the seat down without moving the safety latch first.

Next check the seat belts. Obviously they should buckle together securely and release, but we also check for cut or frayed belts, broken buckles or retractors, or any other damage. Even though a seatbelt still buckles together, if the housing is damaged or broken, it could fail. Seatbelts should always be replaced as a set, meaning that both the male and female parts should be replaced together.

—SMTD continued on page 7
The following pictures are of some of the things you should be looking for when inspecting the seatbelts.
Transit Movers recognizes people in Illinois transit who have been promoted, changed responsibilities, moved to a different transit agency, etc. If there are people within your agency who fall into these categories, contact the RTAC staff at 800.526.9943, e-mail rtac@wiu.edu or fax 309.298.2162. Please include pictures!

Bob Bugger is the new defensive driving trainer for the Rural Transit Assistance Center (RTAC). Bob is originally from the St. Jacob area of Madison County. He majored in engineering studies at Bellville Junior College, and began his career, working as a mechanic and trouble shooter for 15 years before moving to the rural Effingham area in 1975, where he has remained with wife, Nancy, his son and daughter, and five grandchildren.

Bob began working in the human service transportation industry in 1977. He started at a school district as apart time mechanic/helper/driver, and soon became the transportation director. In 2000 Bob became the transportation coordinator for the Central Illinois Public Transit (CIPT) and Head Start programs. In 2010 Bob was promoted to transportation maintenance and safety manager for CIPT and the new Effingham County Public Transportation program. Bob retired from CIPT the end of February 2014.

Bob and Nancy enjoy volunteering at the RTAC Roadeo, refurbishing and using old vehicles and equipment, touring on their motorcycles, and watching dirt track auto racing. He plans to fabricate a dirt track at his home, as a place to play with the kids and grandkids.

Leon Haslett accepted the transportation maintenance and safety manager position in January 2014 with Central Illinois Public Transportation (CIPT). Leon has been in the bus maintenance and repair field since 1986. In 2005 he started his own part-time business, J and L Auto Service in Vandalia, while still working at Southern Bus and Mobility in Breese. In 2007 he was able to expand his business to full time operation.

Leon has years of experience working with wheelchairs lifts, occupant restraint systems, installation and repair of air conditioning units related to the vans, along with routine maintenance and repairs. Leon has performed maintenance and repairs for CIPT and CEFS Head Start at his personal business for the past seven years.

Leon is a retired St. Elmo volunteer firefighter, where he served as assistant fire chief, and also served on the Brownstown Fire Dept. He was an EMT for May Ambulance Service, receiving his Illinois EMT certification at Lakeland College, Mattoon.

Leon and his wife Jo have five children, Tricia, Chad, Jason, Jacy, and Josh, and five grandchildren, Kaden, Lizzie, Emma, Reese, and Bryn. They enjoy family time, especially camping. They are members of International Brotherhood of Motorcycle Campers, hosting an annual motorcycle campout in June at Ramsey State Park.

— Transit Movers continued on page 9
Leanna Guill has been promoted to program director of the Transit Reservation Information Program (TRIP), sponsored by the Coles County Council on Aging. Leanna has worked part time with TRIP since August of 2011, and served as the assistant director of TRIP since December of 2011. Leanna was a “newbie” when she attended the fall conference in Galena her third day on the job!

Leanna has attended IDOT, IPTA and RTAC sponsored conferences, actively participated in the HSTP process, created extensive public relations materials for TRIP, and assisted in research and development activities for TRIP. In addition to her TRIP responsibilities, Leanna is active in several of the program sponsor’s annual community events, such as United Way auction, Senior Expo, Holiday Luncheon, Public Celebration, and public relations events. Leanna also volunteers her time and talents to assist with Special Olympics, Big Brothers/ Big Sisters, Relay for Life, and walking in memory of our service men and women.

On a personal note, she loves spending time with her seven year old daughter, her fiancé and soon to be three step children and grandson! She is an excellent cook, and loves to garden. Leanna graduated fall 2011 from Lake Land Community College in Mattoon, IL with an associate in applied science degree in human services with a concentration in psychology.

Leanna looks forward to the continued growth and development of TRIP: this area’s Mobility Management Program. TRIP’s service definition: a service for individuals regardless of age, needs or circumstances that A) provides individuals with information and referral on transportation opportunities and related services available within their communities; B) assesses the transportation problems and capacities of the individuals, C) links the individuals to the opportunities and services that are available; D) establishes adequate follow-up procedures based on the individual’s needs; and E) coordinates trips for individuals with transportation providers.

Adam Lach is the procurement coordinator for Rides Mass Transit District (RMTD). Adam’s responsibilities include preparing materials for all formal procurements, and acting as the primary contact for National Transit Database (NTD) reporting. He has recently been appointed as Program Compliance Oversight Monitor (PCOM) for Rides.

Adam graduated from Southern Illinois University Carbondale with an MBA. Before joining Rides, he worked at SIUC as a business analyst. Adam enjoys golfing, and spending time with his fiancé and stepdaughter.

Jeff Stark is the new director of training for South Central Transit (SCT). Jeff recently concluded 22 years in pastoral ministry, but also has over 25 years of experience in the transportation industry, including driving everything from a minivan to a tractor trailer plus three years as a dispatcher. Jeff was a driver for SCT for a year before accepting his new position in June of 2013. He has been married to Debbie for 31 years and they have four children. In his spare time Jeff enjoys working on computers and learning new software.
about any of the materials presented at the training, or if you want a mini-rural transit 101 explanation, this is your post-training chance to ask questions.

Likewise, this final session is a chance for operators to discuss their expectations, concerns, support, non-support, and other feelings about the PCOM initiative. I personally feel the PCOM was sorely needed and will eventually result in more efficient, accountable, and standardized rural transit service delivery environment.

--- IPT Notes continued from page 3

State Legislative Update

IPTA is pursuing the following Legislative Agenda during the spring session, as well as monitoring all issues related to transit that arise.

**HB 5728 - Changes to the Downstate Operating Assistance Program**

- Provides that for Fiscal Year 2013, all funds remaining in the Downstate Public Transportation Fund after the payment of the fourth quarterly payment to participants in each fiscal year shall remain in the Downstate Public Transportation Fund (instead of being transferred to DTIF). In Fiscal Year 2014 and thereafter, an amount equal to the difference between the appropriations from the Downstate Public Transportation Fund in the preceding fiscal year and the moneys deposited into that Fund in the preceding fiscal year shall be transferred from the Downstate Public Transportation Fund to the Downstate Transit Improvement Fund.

- Removes automatic 10 percent increase. Provides that for Fiscal Year 2015 and thereafter, a percentage increase over the maximum established for the preceding year equal to the percentage increase in the net revenue realized under the Use Tax Act, the Service Use Tax Act, the Service Occupation Tax Act, and the Retailers’ Occupation Tax Act in the preceding fiscal year, except that if there is a decrease in the net revenue realized under these Acts, the maximum established shall be equal to the maximum established the preceding year.

- Provides that a participant in the fund can apply for Downstate funds on behalf of other participants with which they have an intergovernmental agreement.

- Clarifies that payment of unfunded pension liability is an eligible expense.

- Clarifies that payment made for debt service (including principal and interest) on publicly owned equipment and facilities is an eligible operating expenditure for ALL participants in the fund. And provide that procurements by participants using bonds, for which Downstate operating reimbursement will be requested on the debt service, shall not be subject to the Department’s procurement process, but shall be subject to a locally approved procurement process, which complies with all federal procurement standards.

- Deletes all reference to out of date sections of federal funding, and replaces that language with generic language referring to federal public transportation funding.

**HB 5513 - New Language in Local Mass Transit District Act.**

- Adds language to the Local Mass Transit District Act that allows Board composition of transit districts to be determined by the local jurisdictions that make up the district. Provides that if no determination is made at the local level, the board composition will be set according to current law.

Laura Calderon
Check all of the wheelchair tie downs as well. They should not be cut or frayed. Depending on the style of tie downs you have, ratcheting mechanisms may need to be lubricated. When using a ratcheting style tie down, always pull the slack through before tightening. If you don’t, the slack can roll up in the ratchet and bind it up and it won’t tighten. Wheelchair tie downs should always be stored in the overhead compartment or other designated location. Do not leave them in the floor tracks. Tie downs left in the floor track will collect dirt and moisture causing corrosion. Corrosion can make it difficult or impossible to get the tie downs out of the floor track and will eat away at the track itself, rendering it unsafe. Floor tracks should be swept out daily. Replacing them is a very labor intensive and expensive process.

Also in the interior of the bus, you should check all of the stanchions or grab rails to see that they are mounted securely. Open the roof hatch to see that it works properly and check the seals on it. Ninety percent of water leaks are found in the roof hatches. Check all of the door seals on the bus. Bad seals can let outside air in and impair the heater or air conditioner. Check all of the side windows. Check the emergency windows to make sure they open properly and latch tight. If the window is loose after it has been latched, the latches need to be replaced. Newer buses also have an alarm on the emergency windows that goes off anytime the window is opened. The back door of the bus also has two alarms. One goes off if the door is opened, and the other goes off if the door is locked. The back door should never be locked when the bus is in service. In the event of an emergency, this door may need to be used not only to get people out, but by rescue personnel needing to get in.

Next, check the floor and the steps of the bus for any soft spots, rips or tears in the material, lifted flooring and most importantly, any tripping hazards. This is a good way to avert a lawsuit in the future.
Last but not least is cleanliness. Customers don’t want to ride in a dirty, trashy vehicle, but that doesn’t have anything to do with safety. However, as discussed earlier, dirt and moisture can corrode the floor tracks and render them unsafe, and it doesn’t stop there. It can rot or rust the floor and the steps. It can corrode wiring, and in extreme cases can cause structural damage to the vehicle. The following pictures are of a 2008 Chevy Uplander Entervan with 20,000 miles on it. The first photo was taken inside the van, looking down at the area below the driver’s door. The seats and carpet had been removed. The area where the floor and the side meet is completely rusted through. The second picture is a close up of the same area. The arrow is pointing to the bracket that the seat belt mounts to. There is rust all around this bracket and if this vehicle were to get in an accident, there is a good chance that the seatbelt wouldn’t hold. This vehicle was taken out of service and sent back to the factory to be repaired.

You can find all three of the toolkits by going to the National RTAP website, www.nationalrtap.org, and clicking the ‘Find Anything’, ‘Transit Manager’s Toolkit’ and ‘Bus Roadeo Toolkit’ links under the ‘Toolkits’ tab in the top toolbar.

Two more new products:

**Grant Writing Made Easy**: How to Write a Successful Grant Application is National RTAP’s newest technical brief. The grant writing process can be a daunting task, but it is imperative to write a compelling and competitive application in order to acquire funding on the first attempt. This tech brief addresses how to plan and write a successful grant proposal. It provides tips on searching for grant opportunities, covers the essentials of submitting and following-up on your application, and provides a list of helpful resources. Available at: http://demopro.nationalrtap.org/emailResource.aspx?fileid=898&design=1&org=a2GSpnDbrul=

**Directory of Trainers** is an online source for finding and hiring trainers across the country. The list includes trainers who teach a variety of topics and are active at the local, regional, or national levels. Trainers voluntarily submitted their information to info@nationalrtap.org, and new entries will be added on an ongoing basis. If you or a trainer in your organization is interested in being listed in the directory, email info@nationalrtap.org with contact information, region covered, and training topics taught. Access directory at: http://webbuilder.nationalrtap.org/ResourceLibrary/DirectoryofTrainers.aspx