

Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy Guidelines

Province of Alberta

(Version 0.5- September 7, 2011)

Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy Guidelines

Province of Alberta

1) Background

Transit systems are growing and expanding outside of the municipality in which they are based. With this expansion, there are new risks facing passenger transportation.

Alberta Transportation wants to ensure that transit providers contemplate these risks and develop strategies to provide safe and efficient transportation. Therefore, municipalities (and their partners in providing these services) are now required to prepare and submit a Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy to Alberta Transportation for acceptance.

The Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy is a document that will be publically available. This will allow people to see the ways in which transit operators provide a safe ride for passengers and made aware of how they are being protected.

The Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy is meant to ensure that municipalities have systems in place to protect passengers but, at the same time, is not intended to be prescriptive as to how they must operate their transit system. Alberta Transportation acknowledges that there is no one right way to ensure passenger safety. Further, it is acknowledged that every transit system is unique and will require a uniquely tailored strategy to ensure safety. Alberta Transportation will review the Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy to ensure that general concerns have been contemplated and risk mitigation measures are in place. The type of mitigation measures will remain within the discretion of the transit provider to determine, as the regional public transit service providers are ultimately responsible for the operation and safety of their regional public transit service.

2) Definitions

A “municipal public transit service” means a transportation service owned or managed by a municipality, operating within its municipal boundaries, which is available to the public using vehicles designed for use by multiple individuals with fares, schedules, and routes planned and available in advance.

A “Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy” is a risk management based review of a regional public transit service to ensure passenger safety, recognize passenger safety issues, and enables a regional public transit service provider to allow, control, or limit standees on a bus used in the provision of a regional public transit service.

A "regional public transit service provider" means a municipality, or group of municipalities, or municipalities in partnership with private carrier(s), created and organized as one corporate entity,

and approved by the Minister for the purposes of providing regional public transit within a region as described in their Operating Authority Certificate.

A “regional public transit service” means an extension of a municipal transit service outside of its municipal boundaries, or a transit service owned and operated by a regional public transit service provider, or a public transit service designated by the Minister as a regional public transit service.

A “transit bus” means a bus under the management of a municipality operated within its municipal boundaries at regular intervals, in accordance with a set time schedule or over a specified route, but does not include a handi-bus. For more information see the definition of transit bus located within Alberta’s *Vehicle Inspection Regulation*.

3) Developing a Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy

A Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy is required for *all* regional public transit service providers, including when allowing, controlling, or limiting standees on a transit bus.

Each regional public transit service provider may have different needs and concerns. There are potentially many different approaches which may be taken to achieve an equivalent level of safety expected by all Albertans.

Regional public transit service providers have the expertise to determine what system and operational adjustments can be made in the establishment of their passenger risk mitigation strategy.

A Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy ensures regional public transit service providers are aware of the passenger safety issues, are encouraged to take a risk management approach to ensure the safety of passengers, and there has been due diligence when addressing passenger safety concerns on their high-speed regional transit service routes.

A regional public transit service provider must make its passenger risk mitigation strategy available for its ridership; this can be accomplished by posting the strategy on an operator’s website. Also, the strategy must be distributed to all drivers on a regional public transit service route.

The process used to develop a passenger risk mitigation strategy:

- Identifying potential passenger safety risks.
- Develop strategies to mitigate the risks.
- Establish corporate policies, procedures and management plans to ensure passenger safety.

The Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy is required to ensure that both the provider and the registered owner is complying with existing standards and is consistent with legislative and operational requirements, and to demonstrate the regional public transit service provider has considered passenger safety issues.

4) Issues a Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy Must Consider

A regional public transit service provider needs to consider many issues in developing a Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy. These include, but are not restricted to:

- Standees
- Objects brought onto the bus
- Passenger Accessibility
- Driver Training
- Passenger Security
- High Speed Operation
- Mechanical Issues
- Vehicle Choice

These issues are very broad and there are many concerns and risks involved with each issue. A regional public transit service provider must address what they are doing to protect passengers on each of these issues. The following are some questions to help guide municipalities to understand what they may consider to include in their strategy:

Standees

- Does your municipality allow standees on your buses?
- What equipment is on the bus for standee safety?
- Do you make passengers aware of the safety features of the bus they are on?
- Where are standees permitted on a bus?
- Are the numbers of standees restricted?
- Do you have policies or procedures around when additional standees may be permitted if there are dangerous weather conditions?

Objects brought onto the bus

- Are passengers restricted on the types of things they can bring onto a bus?
- Are passengers restricted from the amount of things they may bring on a bus?
- Do you have guidelines or procedures on where and how these objects are to be placed or kept while a passenger is riding on the bus?
- Do you have any securement measures for these objects and how are they used?
- Do your drivers assist with the placement or removal of objects from the bus?

Passenger Accessibility

- What kind of equipment is on the vehicle to help persons with accessibility issues load and unload the bus?
- What standards does the vehicle comply with to ensure safe transportation of persons with disabilities?

Driver Training

- What kind of training do your drivers go through when they are hired?
- What kind of credentials are you looking for in drivers?
- How do you ensure your drivers are following their training and safely operating the bus?
- Do you have remedial training procedures?
- Do you train your drivers on driver fatigue and recognizing risks to safe operation?
- Do your drivers receive refresher courses or ongoing training?
- Are your drivers trained on how to ensure safe operating conditions?
- Are your drivers trained on how to interact with clients and possibly defuse situations?
- Are your drivers trained on how to handle an emergency situation involving passengers on the bus?

Passenger Security

- What kind of procedures have you implemented to ensure passengers are safe from other passengers?
- Do you have any policies or procedures on how to respond to a passenger security issue on a bus, for instance if a passenger becomes violent?
- What are your procedures for contacting emergency services?

High Speed Operation

- Can your vehicles travel at an appropriate speed for all roads they operate on?
- Are there any designated bus stops on roads with speeds of 80 kilometres per hour or higher?
- What process did you use for selecting the roads you travelled on?
- Why were high speed roads chosen?
- Is there satisfactory time when entering high speed roads to safely and properly bring the vehicle up to speed and merge with traffic?
- How was the route determined?
- Have you driven the proposed route to identify issues with the route?

Mechanical Issues

- If there is a bus breakdown what are the procedures to ensure the bus is safely identified to prevent collisions?
- Where are passengers expected to wait until a repair is made or a substitute bus arrives?
- What procedures do you have in place to ensure safe unloading and loading of passengers roadside?
- How does a driver signal a problem with their vehicle and request aid?

Vehicle Choice

- What type of vehicle have you chosen for your regional routes?
- Why have you chosen this type of vehicle?
- Are there high backed seats on this bus?
- Is the seating on the chosen vehicle different than the ones on your regional routes?
- Does this vehicle have proper tires for the speed and load on this route?

5) Other requirements

A Passenger Risk Mitigation Strategy must identify the municipality and/or regional area to which it applies.