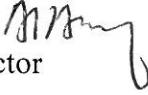




14700 Potomac Mills Road  
Woodbridge, VA 22192

March 4, 2010

TO: Chairman May and Commissioners

FROM: Alfred H. Harf   
Executive Director

RE: Most Recent Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

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The most recent survey results were received too late for inclusion in the March 2010 Board package mail-out, so they are being furnished on a “blue-sheeted” basis. They are very encouraging.

For those who are new to the Commission, PRTC and First Transit conduct customer satisfaction surveys approximately once every few months. That’s unusually frequent as transit satisfaction surveys go, but a practice that PRTC and First Transit have adopted because it yields very useful insights on a time series basis for management examination. Surveys this frequent enable management to look for trends or changes of a negative sort that warrant immediate management attention, so such trends or changes are not allowed to fester.

A simple questionnaire is used asking riders to evaluate satisfaction from six perspectives, and to also evaluate the service on an “overall” basis (a seventh perspective). Commuter bus service customers are surveyed by email, while local bus service customers are surveyed on-board the buses, a difference that has been present since the earliest stages of these satisfaction surveys. The difference in approach accounts for the fact that there are comparatively few local bus riders who are Rider Express subscribers.

The most recent survey was conducted right before the major snow storms on February 5<sup>th</sup> and the following week. So they were not skewed by the service interruptions stemming from the storms, which is how it should be since we’re trying to gauge satisfaction under what might be termed “normal” conditions. A summary of the results is attached and, as I stated earlier, they are encouraging. The summary shows “satisfaction” scores for each dimension on the most recent survey in relation to past surveys, allowing time series comparison.

Two general conclusions can be drawn from the most recent survey results:

Chairman May and Commissioners

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1. With the exception of OmniLink on-time performance, a substantial majority of OmniRide and OmniLink customers rate service “excellent” from all perspectives. The comparatively low “excellent” rating for OmniLink on-time performance (42%) has been on management’s “radar” for some time, and was the subject of a presentation to the PRTC Board Operations Committee in early fall. This issue has been targeted for special analysis as part of the transit development planning exercise now underway.
2. OmniLink ratings showed marked improvement comparing the most recent survey with the previous one conducted in September 2009. OmniRide ratings are holding fairly steady.

Attachment: As stated

