



**June 13, 2019**

**To:** Transit Committee

**From:** Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

**Subject:** Bus Operations Performance Measurements Report for the Third Quarter of Fiscal Year 2018-19

### **Overview**

The Orange County Transportation Authority operates fixed-route bus and demand-response paratransit service throughout Orange County and into neighboring counties. This report summarizes the year-to-date performance of these services through the third quarter of fiscal year 2018-19. The established measures of performance assess the safety, courtesy, reliability, and overall quality of the public transit services provided.

### **Recommendation**

Receive and file as an information item.

### **Background**

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) operates a countywide network of local, community, rail connector, and express bus routes serving over 5,000 bus stops. Fixed-route bus (OC Bus) service operates in a 798 square-mile area, serving more than three million residents in 34 cities and unincorporated areas, with connections to transit services in Orange, Los Angeles, and Riverside counties. OC Bus service operated by OCTA is referred to as directly-operated fixed-route service (DOFR), while routes operated under contract are referred to as contracted fixed-route service (CFR). Using a contract operator, OCTA also provides OC ACCESS, a federally-mandated paratransit service, which is a shared-ride program available for people unable to use the OC Bus service because of functional limitations. Performance measures for both, OC Bus and OC ACCESS services, are summarized and reported quarterly.

***Discussion***

The report provides an update on the performance of the OC Bus and OC ACCESS services by presenting the current trends and comparisons with OCTA-established performance standards for transit system safety, courtesy, and reliability. OCTA counts preventable vehicle accidents to evaluate system safety, customer complaints to assess courtesy, and uses both on-time performance and miles between road calls (MBRC) to measure service reliability. The report includes year-to-date performance through the third quarter, January, February, March, of fiscal year (FY) 2018-19.

- Safety – Both OC Bus service and OC ACCESS continue to exhibit strong performance in this area, exceeding the accident frequency standard of no more than one accident per 100,000 miles traveled.
- Customer Service – Customer service is measured by evaluating the number of valid customer complaints received. During this quarter, DOFR and OC ACCESS services both performed above the standards of no more than one complaint per 20,000 riders and for every 667 riders carried, respectively. CFR service did not meet the standard for this reporting period. The rise in valid complaints on CFR service is directly attributed to the loss of service (driver shortage) related to the implementation of the February 2019 Service Bid.
- Reliability – On-time performance (OTP) for OC Bus and OC ACCESS services was below target. Fixed-route OTP rates can be attributed to several factors including vehicle reliability, driver behavior, high passenger loads, construction, and dynamic traffic conditions. Each service change provides staff with an opportunity to address changes in traffic patterns and impacts to service created by long-term construction projects through the scheduling process. To address other elements impacting OTP, corrective actions implemented to date include conducting route-level analyses to identify specific trouble points, conducting on-board evaluations, conducting on-site timepoint observations, communicating with drivers on problem routes, and coordinating with the various construction project teams as needed to identify impacts to OTP and minimize them during construction.

MBRC for OC ACCESS service exceeded the standard while OC Bus service operated below standard. The completion of the 98 near-zero engine repowers at the end of the second quarter of FY 2018-19 has helped vehicle reliability for both DOFR and CFR. Efforts to address vehicle reliability for CFR have continued, including the implementation of

additional maintenance training and the use of a more rigorous quality control process to improve vehicle repair procedures. The positive trend for MBRC for CFR OC Bus service is expected to continue through the fourth quarter with the continued corporate staff presence in the maintenance shop, and the recent hire of a new maintenance manager.

This report also reflects the impact of service delivery issues associated with the implementation of the February 2019 Bus Service Change. As previously reported, the contract fixed-route operator, First Transit, Inc. (First Transit), changed the way in which it schedules and deploys its drivers. In doing so, there was an increase in the number of operator assignments needed to deliver service assigned to the contractor. That coupled with an existing labor shortage, which is being experienced industry-wide, severely impacted First Transit's ability to deliver service. First Transit has been responsive to this issue, implementing several corrective actions which OCTA staff continue to monitor.

The report also includes:

- An assessment of the efficiency of OCTA transit operations based on industry standards for ridership, productivity, farebox recovery, and cost per revenue vehicle hour;
- A review of contractor performance for CFR and OC ACCESS services;
- A route-level performance evaluation that includes subsidy per boarding, revenue per boarding, and resource allocation (buses); and
- A status report on the service adjustments and strategies implemented under the OC Bus 360° Program, including OC Flex and the College Pass Program.

### ***Summary***

Through the third quarter of FY 2018-19, the performance of the OC ACCESS program exceeded the performance in the areas of safety, courtesy, and reliability (MBRC), but was below the standard for OTP. The performance of OC Bus service exceeded the safety standard but fell below the performance standard for courtesy (CFR) and reliability. OCTA staff continues to focus on continuous quality improvement in courtesy and reliability as detailed in the report. Service efficiency and route performance remain stable as OC Bus 360° implementation continues. In addition to tracking the established key performance indicators, staff will continue to manage the service contracts pursuant to contract requirements, and work to identify other strategies to improve overall system performance.

***Attachment***

- A. Bus Operations Performance Measurements Report, Third Quarter,  
Fiscal Year 2018-19

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