

Customer Service Annual Report

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION • 2018

MDOT
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OF TRANSPORTATION

HARRY R. HUGHES
BUILDING





The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and its Transportation Business Units (TBUs) accomplish a great deal when you consider there are more than 110 million trips on state and local buses, over 60 million vehicle miles traveled on roadways, almost 12 million vehicle and driver transactions, and the movement of more than 10 million tons of cargo and 26 million airline passengers.

At the heart of this activity is you – the customer. The commitment of Governor Hogan and Transportation Secretary Pete Rahn to customer service is the driving force behind MDOT’s every decision, project, program, and service. Every day is customer service day at MDOT, and our employees make that happen 24/7, 365 days a year.

Just look around Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI Marshall). The MDOT Maryland Aviation Administration (MDOT MAA) has provided rocking chairs so weary travelers can grab a few relaxing minutes. Nursing mothers now have designated stations. And returning military members are greeted day after day at Operation Welcome Home, receiving a hero’s welcome at international arrivals.

CUSTOMER SERVICE IS BUILT ON THE COMMITMENT AND EXCEPTIONAL ATTITUDE OF OUR WORKFORCE.

It's the reason why Tina Billips, working for the MDOT Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) for just a year, left her family on a Friday evening to return to work and retrieve a package that had been delivered to the wrong terminal so a cruise ship crew member could replace his broken eyeglasses.

Another notable improvement? MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA), where wait times have been reduced by the launch of MVAonline, which now provides Marylanders the convenience of using their mobile devices or computers to handle many tasks that once required a trip to the local MDOT MVA branch office. And it is employees like Barbara May, who went above and beyond during a busy time to make sure the MDOT MVA fulfillment area delivered driver's licenses and ID cards without interruption.

On a broader scale, the MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) and the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) are on the move, focusing efforts to improve travel on Maryland's roadways. The ambitious Traffic Relief Plan targets

The MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) commitment to serving its customers shows up in less visible, but no less critical, ways. When an engine dynamometer was purchased to test new and rebuilt bus engine assemblies before being installed on the bus fleet, a problem was detected. The new dynamometer was not capable of testing the older models that make up a quarter of the MDOT MTA fleet. The manufacturer tried to solve the problem. So did larger agencies like WMATA (DC) and SEPTA (Philadelphia), but no luck. It was MDOT MTA engineers Brian Miller, Dennis Rafferty, Brendon Rafferty, and Matthew Kohajda who created the necessary adapter and software that solved the problem.

MDOT is working hard for you everyday — whether you travel Maryland's roads, fly in and out of BWI Marshall Airport, ride the new BaltimoreLink system, renew your driver's license, breeze through a toll booth using *E-ZPass*, or set sail on a cruise from the Port of Baltimore.

That is the result of a department of passionate team members delivering on its promise to citizens; a department that has mobilized its

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known trouble spots and choke points throughout the state, including I-270, the Capital Beltway, the Baltimore Washington Parkway (MD 295) and Baltimore's I-695 and I-95, bringing innovative thinking and out-of-the-box solutions to clogged thoroughfares essential to economic prosperity.

MDTA employees Mark LaRue, Henry Plum, Peter Mulligan, and Jeff Standiford went above and beyond to keep a Maryland traveler safe by blocking traffic after seeing a woman try to flag down assistance after an incident with her vehicle. These employees safely escorted her out of harm's way and notified the appropriate police and emergency agencies.

workforce to focus on what matters; a department that is committed to getting the very best return on hard-earned tax dollars by:

- Getting you to your destination;
- Helping ensure a safe and comfortable journey;
- Providing efficient and innovative services;
- Guaranteeing a quick and courteous response; and
- Supporting a thriving economy.

We Strive So You Arrive



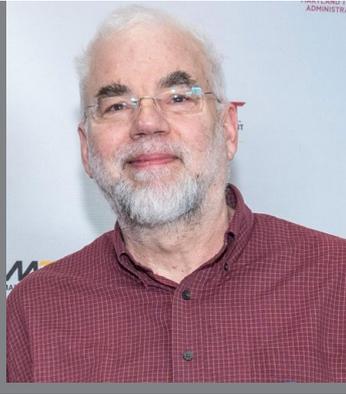
The Purple Line will connect to the WMATA Orange, Green, and Red Metrorail lines; MARC Train's Brunswick, Camden, and Penn lines; and Amtrak at New Carrollton.

Nearly \$10 Billion to Reduce Congestion

In keeping with his promise to reduce congestion in and around the Baltimore and Washington suburbs, Governor Hogan and Secretary Rahn announced the Traffic Relief Plan (TRP). The TRP will reduce congestion for hundreds of thousands of motorists and mark the beginning of a transformative effort to change the landscape of Maryland's roads and highways for years to come. The \$10 Billion TRP consists of improvements to the Washington area I-495 and I-270, the Baltimore TRP of I-695 and the Baltimore Washington Parkway (MD 295), as well as express toll lane extensions and smart signal technology to help keep traffic moving. The smart signal technology uses real-time traffic conditions and computer software to adjust the timing of traffic signals, synchronize the entire corridor and effectively deploy artificial intelligence to keep traffic moving. Even though crashes, construction and special events all contribute to congestion, with this innovative smart signal technology, those factors are quickly assessed, and the software adjusts the timing of the signals accordingly. Harnessing the latest in technology, cutting-edge smart signals will be expanded to improve traffic operation and ease congestion for approximately 700,000 drivers per day on 14 major corridors across the state..

Getting the Word Out

When BaltimoreLink was first announced, it was up to MDOT MTA Print Shop Supervisor Steve Wimbrow to make sure all materials were printed and ready to go. Through his efforts, the agency printed thousands of route books, system maps, brochures, and 1.4 million BaltimoreLink schedules. He was awarded the 2017 Administrator's Award from MDOT MTA.



who have been negatively affected by years of traffic congestion.

Making It Easier to Reach the Beach

If you are a Maryland resident whose summer does not start until your first Thrasher's fry, then improvements being made by MDOT SHA and MDTA are the right ticket to make it easier for you to reach the beach. MDOT SHA completed numerous improvements including adding a fourth eastbound lane on the US 50 Severn River Bridge to get you there faster by helping to reduce congestion. MDTA has established the 1-877-BAYSPAN hotline for 24/7 Bay Bridge traffic conditions and Baybridge.com remains a popular information source, with more than 446,000 visitors accessing the website during 2017. Another important connection for the upper shore was MDOT SHA replacing the MD 331 Dover Bridge with a high-level, fixed span structure. The new bridge is 2,020 feet long with two 12-foot lanes, and two 8-foot shoulders and. Another important aspect for Maryland's roadways is the efforts by MDOT SHA and the MDOT MVA Highway Safety Office (MHSO) to provide information and reminders for all road users (motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists) to drive, walk and ride safely by not drinking and driving, always using a safety belt, paying attention, and not driving aggressively. Maryland has adopted Toward Zero Deaths as a goal.

Improved Connections for Baltimore Residents

One of the major changes in Maryland is BaltimoreLink, which delivers a more efficient and reliable bus network by creating a grid of high frequency routes that connect to other modes including Metro SubwayLink, Light RailLink and MARC. It is a complete overhaul and rebranding of the core transit system operating in and around Baltimore City. MDOT MTA is also installing transit signal priority (TSP) traffic signals along select corridors in Baltimore City, which will enhance transit reliability.

BaltimoreLink has improved the entire bus network which allows transit riders to reach their ultimate destination more efficiently and effectively throughout the area.

An Easier Commute in the Washington Area

To make it easier to get around the Washington suburbs, MDOT is

constructing the Purple Line, which will connect to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Orange, Green, and Red Metrorail lines; MARC Train's Brunswick, Camden, and Penn lines; and Amtrak at New Carrollton. Construction is underway on the 16-mile east-west light rail line project, which operates inside the Capital Beltway. Since the project broke ground in August 2017, utility relocation, earthwork, and tunnel excavation is ongoing to reach construction goals.

The overall MDOT SHA I-495 and I-270 Public Private Partnership (P3) will include improvements for over 70 miles of interstate in Maryland.

Maryland has the second-longest commuting times in the country, and the National Capital Region is the most congested region in the nation based on annual delay and congestion cost per auto commuter. The Traffic Relief Plan is critical to spurring increased economic development and restoring quality of life for countless Marylanders



MDOT SHA is completing a number of roadway improvements and completed the widening of MD 404 to help connect residents to the Eastern Shore safely.



Easing Your Journey

BWI Marshall has improved amenities and airport appearance, implementing a number of improvements including better seating in the airport gate areas.

When You Fly, Make It BWI

As important as the roadway is to MDOT’s customer service vision, the facilities used by air travelers are equally important. BWI Marshall continued to be the “airport of choice” in the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area, drawing in the plurality of the region’s market. To keep that ranking, the airport has improved amenities and airport appearance, implementing a number of improvements that were generated by airport users through the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) survey including better seating in the airport gate areas, improved access to the airport’s rental car facility with 60 new Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and electric buses, valet parking service, expansion of check-in kiosks, new food and

retail outlets offering preferred national and local brands at competitive prices, water bottle filling stations, and a passenger quiet area on Concourse D.

An Improved MDOT MVA Experience

MDOT MVA has also improved the appearance and operation of many of its facilities, including displaying local photography, using new station numbers to match the popular Maryland Proud license plate, new modern paint schemes and seating, and new signage at the flagship branch to help customers better navigate the large campus.



Being a Good Neighbor

An example of being a good neighbor is MDTA Procurement Supervisor Janile Scott, who organized and executed several outstanding events including local paint nights, bus tours, clothing drives, and volunteer opportunities in multiple locations throughout Maryland. For her efforts, she was awarded the Harry H. Bain Distinguished Service Award from the Maryland Public Purchasing Association (MPPA).

Meeting the Demand for Transit

A new station is replacing the temporary facility at Camden Station that will complement the historic Oriole Park Camden Yards, and MDOT MTA is also replacing the Kirk Bus Facility in Baltimore and the Bus Transfer Facility in Ocean City. To meet the demands of the state's increasingly aging population, MDOT MTA is providing funding to paratransit operators throughout the state so they can meet expanding demand. In addition, there are annual purchases of fuel-efficient buses to replace those that have neared or surpassed their useful lives. The same replacement or overhaul effort is also being done for MARC trains, the Metro SubwayLink fleet, Light RailLink, and MobilityLink.

For a Cruise, Choose Maryland

The popularity of Baltimore as a cruise location continues to grow. MDOT MPA has added several new features that enhance the overall customer experience, including new check-in stations, carpeting, restrooms, a VIP lounge, traffic flow and a public address system. A comfort bus is also available for customers to wait for their pick-up rides in air conditioned or heated surroundings upon their return.



MDOT MVA has improved the appearance and operation of many of its facilities including modern seating and new signage at the flagship branch to help customers better navigate the large campus.



Enhanced Services to Fit Your Needs

Putting \$46 Million Back into Marylanders' Wallets

Governor Larry Hogan announced that the MDTA would permanently eliminate the \$7.50 *E-ZPass* Maryland transponder fee for all new customers, putting \$46 million back into Marylanders' wallets over the next five years. Free transponders eliminate \$6 million in fees and provide new *E-ZPass* Maryland customers \$40 million in toll discounts over the next five years. Customers using *E-ZPass* Maryland save 25 percent or more on Maryland tolls. At the Bay Bridge, the savings increases to 37.5 percent, or \$2.50 for an *E-ZPass* customer versus \$4 using cash. In addition, the MDTA will replace nearly 400,000 aged transponders that are currently in circulation at no cost to customers. Anyone who bought a transponder in 2018 will be issued a credit of \$7.50 as long as the account is registered and in good standing.

Answering the Call for Help through Emergency Traffic Patrols/CHART Patrols

MDOT keeps travelers safe and keeps traffic moving with emergency traffic patrols, staffed by Emergency Response Technicians (ERTs). These patrols assist drivers of disabled vehicles with gasoline, flat tires and other minor repairs, minimizing the risk for crashes and congestion from stopped vehicles – a necessity for facilities without roadway shoulders like bridges and tunnels. Approximately 50 percent of all congestion is caused by traffic incidents and a nimble response reduces the chance

of secondary crashes. The specialized team reached a major milestone this year – assisting the one millionth person since the program began in 1989. Vehicle Recovery Units are now equipped with Automated External Defibrillators (AED) in the event a customer, contractor or employee has a cardiac event. Often in the role of first responder, ERT personnel are trained to use the AED units and to perform CPR.

MDOT SHA's CHART (Coordinated Highway Action Response Team), which is sponsored by State Farm®, provides 24/7 emergency traffic patrol coverage and assistance to motorists in the heavily traveled Baltimore and Washington regions. CHART handled 152,482 events in 2017, including incident responses, assistance with disabled vehicles, and traffic management operations for special and weather-related events.

Getting You Through Winter Storms

January 2018 opened with Winter Storm Grayson, a blizzard that covered most of the mid and lower Eastern Shore counties with 20 inches of snow. To quickly restore travel lanes, MDOT SHA plow and salting crews worked tirelessly around the clock. Operations along US 50 became more urgent after the very premature delivery of a tiny infant, who required emergency transport to a specialty hospital in Washington, D.C. A snow plow trekked through nearly a foot of fallen snow along US 50, ensuring a safe path to advanced neo-natal care. Defeating the odds, the baby, named Grayson, survived, and eventually went home with his family.

Offering a Helping Hand

A CHART customer sent in thanks for MDOT SHA employee David Pettis, who stopped to help. *David Pettis appeared out of nowhere. He immediately began to help me and my family. His coworker showed up and began to help also. David was heaven sent. After replacing my tire, he said, "Don't let this ruin your vacation."*



Making Hauling in Maryland Easier

If you are amazed at how quickly a package can get delivered, then you have experienced the Maryland One Hauling Permit System, which has reduced overweight hauling permit processing from days and weeks to hours, and eliminates review fees. Maryland began using the Maryland One automated truck permit process for state, toll and Baltimore City roads, which eliminated manual paper processing. With this automation, the trucking industry has 24/7, immediate access to initiate, revise and update permits as needed.

Using Technology and Upgrades to Improve Travel

In keeping with the times, MDOT is using technology to help ensure customers get the information they need quickly and efficiently — especially through mobile devices. MDOT MTA has partnered with Transit App, Inc. to use the GPS data to support a mobile app that provides real-time arrival information, simple trip planning, step-by-step navigation, and more. Customers will now be able to receive highly accurate location and arrival information for every CityLink,

LocalLink, and Express BusLink bus in the BaltimoreLink fleet. The app is free and available for both Apple and Android devices. MDOT MTA is also introducing mobile ticketing for all modes, along with improved customer service, a new website for managing smart card accounts, and an expanded point-of-sale network for loading smart cards. In addition, MDOT MTA plans to introduce new reduced fare identification cards so eligible cardholders can use them for payment on MDOT MTA services. MDOT MTA bus stop signs were also redesigned as part of the BaltimoreLink project and now display route destinations, frequencies, and real-time tracking information in a single location. More than 4,000 bus stop signs through the system have been updated and replaced.

“A New Way to MDOT MVA”

There is no longer a need to go to a branch office to conduct any driver licensing or vehicle registration tasks. Instead of traveling to the facility, waiting in line to conduct business, and driving back home, your MDOT MVA business can be conducted in a matter of minutes. Through the launch of the “New Way to MDOT MVA” campaign, MDOT MVA has made numerous

services that customers typically came into a branch to complete conveniently available online. More than 60 percent of MDOT MVA customers are now completing transactions through alternative methods as opposed to the traditional experience at an MDOT MVA branch counter. Improvements were also made to enhance the in-person customer service experience at branch locations. Now, when customers visit an MDOT MVA branch office, they are greeted by an employee with a handheld tablet who personally determines what services they need and directs them to the appropriate place.

MDOT MVA is now also offering TSA Pre-Check and Transportation Worker Identification Credential cards as well as Department of Natural Resources services at several MDOT MVA branch offices. MDOT MVA customers can now obtain an E-ZPass device and boat registration renewal through MDOT MVA's website, enhancing convenience and customer service.

Stand-alone vision screening stations have been installed inside MDOT MVA branch offices, giving customers who need to complete a vision test an opportunity to do so without going to a counter. Once complete, they can finish the transactions at a self-service kiosk or complete the transaction from the convenience of their home.

Aiming for a Quick and Courteous Response

Strike Team Focuses on Customer Service

What makes every program, project, or service successful is the courteous and professional manner of MDOT employees. The greatest program in the world is only as good as the people who implement it, and MDOT is fortunate to have an exceptional workforce to match its exceptional customer service. Some of the things employees are doing to improve customer service include the Customer Service and External Communication Strike Team at MDTA, which focuses its efforts on identifying and implementing strategies that improve customer service and communication to external customers and/or any party directly impacted by the MDTA's operations. These operations may include, but are not limited to, adjacent landowners to MDTA properties, potential and current contractors, vendors and/or consultants who perform work for the MDTA.

Award Recognizes Outstanding Customer Service

A Premier Customer Service Award was established by MDOT MVA to recognize team members who are "caught in the act" of demonstrating Premier Customer Service. This means to go above and beyond the minimum job requirements, to creatively and compassionately assist customers in navigating the MDOT MVA process so that the customer leaves feeling both informed and appreciated.

Project Green Light Salutes Innovation

MDOT SHA has established Project Green Light, the Administration's version of the popular television series, *Shark Tank*. MDOT SHA employees are encouraged to identify problems and implement their own original solutions, while a panel reviews the staff's presentations. Presentations have featured: ideas for a road surface report that would require contractors to measure lane heights after construction projects/paving jobs as a reference; an application to track utility coordination, timelines, and links; RSS feeds for the MDOT SHA Internet pages with design criteria and standards updates for contractors and consultants to use to keep abreast of updates or changes, and; a contractor/subcontractor ratings database for all District offices to use.

Collaborating to Solve Issues at the Port

The Port of Baltimore (POB) uses QChat as a forum for all customers and stakeholders involved in the automobile supply chain to gather, communicate, collaborate and collectively solve problems that result in an improved quality of services. It's a metrics-based performance measure. The POB community developed a quality initiative for automobiles, then it was expanded to include High & Heavy Roll-on/ Roll-off cargo and was expanded once again to include containerized cargo.

A Well Trained Workforce to Meet Customer Demand

At MDOT MAA, the entire workforce received customer service training in FY 2018. In FY 2019, MDOT MAA will establish a new customer service training initiative that will further enhance the customer experience at BWI Marshall Airport.



Every Day Is Customer Service Day at MDOT



MDOT has big plans for next year, starting with using websites and online technologies to improve the customer experience. MDOT MTA, for instance, will be updating its website so it not only includes route and schedule information that's current with the click of a button, but riders will experience a fully ADA-compliant layout that allows them to see all times for all stops, plan their trips, view trips on a map, and even get real-time bus arrival information for their trips.

MDOT MVA will share through its social media efforts customer testimonials. They want to highlight those customers who had great customer service experiences at the MDOT MVA—whether that's acknowledging a stellar employee who assisted them or cutting their trip time due to the numerous customer service enhancements implemented for the customers' convenience.

MDOT SHA is embarking on a new, bold commitment to customer service and a new culture based in delivering an overall exemplary customer experience. Beyond customer response, the customer experience is defined as our customer's perception of how we serve them, care about their concerns and perspective, and deliver. Each employee personally embraces that role as ambassador and acknowledges "I am the customer service experience."

Leading the charge across the agency are Customer Care Coordinators (CCCs). The CCCs were exposed to advanced customer service training that emphasize MDOT SHA's ambitious customer service standards, communication, conflict resolution, and leadership. Inspiring a customer-focused approach amongst their peers, the CCCs are helping to deliver positive change to the people of Maryland – one project and customer interaction at a time.

Whatever improvement, service or update is planned, MDOT will ensure the focus remains on Marylanders and anyone who uses Maryland's transportation network. MDOT is committed to **Connecting You to Life's Opportunities** whenever and wherever you need it, and we honor that commitment 24/7, 365 days a year.

Saving Customers Time and Money

Natasha Jones at MDOT MVA received the One Step Ahead Award for her efforts to reduce unnecessary work for the customer. Her research found customers

were being asked to do something that was unnecessary. Her finding led to MDOT MVA discontinuing the practice, saving the business unit time and cost. Since implementation, her unit has experienced tremendous reduction in overall turnaround time to process information for the customer, and a reduction of almost 50 percent in the cost of scanning documents. Additionally, customers are no longer required to complete and submit a secondary form, reducing accidental errors that cause delay and frustration. Drivers can now expect to see updates to their records within a few days.



Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor



Larry Hogan
Governor



Pete K. Rahn
Secretary of Transportation

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