

RIVERSIDE TRANSIT AGENCY
1825 Third Street
Riverside, CA 92507

February 23, 2006

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THRU: Larry Rubio, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Vince Rouzaud, Director of Purchasing and Materials Management

SUBJECT: Discuss Implementing a Policy Requiring the use of Child Passenger Restraints on Agency Dial-A-Ride Vehicles

Summary: RTA currently operates 64 paratransit vehicles in its Dial-A-Ride/Paratransit operations. On October 12 2005, the Board authorized staff to procure 22 minivans equipped with wheelchair ramps as replacement vehicles for a portion of this fleet.

In reviewing operational differences between traditional paratransit cutaways and minivans, a question came up as to whether the Agency should implement a new policy requiring the use of child safety seats since the minivans are much smaller vehicles than traditional cutaways.

Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) Vehicle Code 27360 requires all children transported in a motor vehicle be properly secured in a child passenger restraint system, unless the child is one of the following:

- (A) Six years of age or older.
- (B) Sixty pounds or more.

On average, RTA transports 70 passengers per month in the "child" fare category. This fare category includes all children under 46" tall; not all would require the use of Child Safety restraints by DMV standards.

Staff conducted a survey of local transportation providers to determine what other Agency's requirements were, and found the following:

OmniTrans – requires compliance with DMV standards for Child Safety seats on all paratransit vehicles.

Access Services – requires compliance with DMV standards for Child Safety seats on all paratransit vehicles.

Riverside Special Services – requires compliance with DMV standards for Child Safety seats on all paratransit vehicles.

OCTA – does not require Child Safety seats but indicated the issue had not come up yet. They indicated they would be watching RTA to see

how we handle the situation.

Corona DAR – encourages the use of Child Safety seats but does not require them.

Given the increased risk of an unrestrained child in a minivan, staff recommends implementing a policy requiring the use of seat belts and child safety restraints as required by the Department of Motor Vehicles on all paratransit vehicles. Staff recommends an implementation date of May 1, 2006, following a marketing campaign to allow sufficient time to advise clients of this change in policy.

The Agency will purchase twelve (12) Booster Seats and twelve (12) Convertible Car Seats that will be available upon request to customers traveling with a small child. As part of the trip scheduling process, riders will be asked if a child will be traveling with them, and, if so, the equipment will be included in the vehicle.

Fiscal Impact:

The cost for the Booster Seat is \$13.99 each and the cost for the Convertible Car Seat is \$69.99 each. The total cost for both of the child restraint systems will not exceed \$1,085.86. Sufficient funding is available in the Agency's FY 2006 operating budget.

Committee Recommendation:

This item was discussed at the Board Operations Committee meeting of February 1, 2006. The Committee members directed staff to purchase and make the cars seats available to customers as part of the scheduling process. With that modification, the Committee unanimously approved recommending this item to the full Board of Directors for their consideration.

Recommendation:

Authorize staff to implement a policy requiring the use of child safety restraints as required by the Department of Motor Vehicles on all paratransit vehicles.