

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DC TAXICAB COMMISSION**



Open Government Report 2014

To institutionalize a culture of transparent and open government, accountability, and to expand opportunities for resident participation and collaboration, this Report describes how the DC Taxicab Commission has and will continue to develop and enhance transparency, public participation, and collaboration. In accordance with Mayor's Order 2014-170, this report addresses the following topics:

Transparency

- The DC Taxicab Commission (DCTC) communicates with the public through reports, testimony, press releases, letters and online posts as well as through media outlets and industry stakeholders. Interaction and engagement with customers, media and other agencies to provide updates and critical information ensures a thorough understanding of DCTC services, procedures and rulemakings. In addition, DCTC maintains the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) acknowledgements and responses; files research, collects data and reviews records and performs redaction as warranted to fulfill the legal responsibilities to provide feedback to inquiries and act in an ethical manner to represent DCTC and the Mayor of the District of Columbia.
- The District is committed to a transparent, open form of government. DCTC makes certain records available online to the public (if those records exist). In cases where these records exist but are not yet available online, DCTC is working to provide them as soon as possible. Records available online include the following: employee salaries; budget information; minutes of public meetings; taxi driver Face IDs; DCTC regulations; DCTC purchases and contracts; organizational chart; DCTC performance plans; methods to submit feedback; and District-wide FOIA reports. The FOIA Officer can be contacted for further questions. To understand the process of submitting a FOIA request, please see foia.dc.gov.
- Access to most information sought by the public can be found on the DCTC website. Inquiries can be made online, by phone, standard mail, or by walking in to speak with a customer service representative.
- DCTC is undertaking serious consideration of the most cost-effective means to webcast live and archive commission meetings. This initiative is targeted for FY 2015.
- DCTC is working closely with the Office of the City Administrator (OCA) and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to identify a significant number of datasets that OCA and OCTO expect to publish online

later this year. If no dataset from DCTC is selected in this 2014 release, work will continue to determine if there are appropriate datasets to publish in 2015. In the future, requirements for open data reporting will be provided by the Chief Data Officer.

Public Engagement and Participation

- The public is encouraged to provide feedback at regular General Commission Meetings and Public Hearings on regulatory matters. The agency website encourages feedback by having a direct link to “Ask the Director” questions, and offer opinions or suggestions. In addition customer feedback includes compliments, complaints, observations and suggestions.
- Most comments pertain to industry-related issues regarding regulations, and the clarification of rules and procedures. In addition customer feedback includes compliments, complaints, observations and suggestions. Proposed rulemaking is modified to respond to comments as warranted. Information is also shared through community meetings, public hearings and online.
- The mission of DCTC is to provide the citizens of the District of Columbia and its visitors a safe, comfortable, efficient and affordable taxicab experience in well-equipped vehicles operated by highly qualified individuals who have knowledge of the District's streets, boundaries, history and tourist destinations, as well as the basic tenets of high quality customer service. The Commission strives to provide taxicab owners and operators with a system of rules and regulations that are fair and transparent and that allow for technological advancements to be introduced to the industry and for properly qualified individuals to participate in the industry. At the same time, the Commission has the statutory responsibility to preserve the economic viability of the District's public vehicle for hire industry.
- As the regulatory agency with the responsibility to oversee the public vehicle for hire industry it is our statutory duty to maintain open lines of communication with the public as well as industry stakeholders. There is great emphasis on public engagement and participation to better inform proposed rulemaking.

Collaboration

- DCTC collaborates with several governmental agencies as well as both public and private entities. The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) assists DCTC Public Vehicle Enforcement Inspectors with identifying illegal actions, operators and vehicles. The Office of Human Rights (OHR) investigates complaints to determine if the cause is due to discrimination. The DCTC Legal Department works with the Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs (OPLA) and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to prepare rulemaking.

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is a close partner that issues vehicle license plates. The Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) handles all solicitation for the services of outside vendors. In addition to managing the DCTC budget, the Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) also collects the passenger surcharge which is the primary means of funding DCTC operations. The Office of Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) oversees and manages all District government websites and technical services. DCTC also engages with non-governmental agencies including: attending quarterly meetings of the Transportation Committee of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG); the monthly lunch meetings with the Hotel Association of Washington; the annual marketing presentation of Destination DC; and the distribution of the Events DC event calendar to the public vehicle for hire industry.

- Every effort will be made to continue the excellent cooperation between organizations. Yet, in order to better serve customers three new features are being introduced. DCTC, working with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), has developed the CAPS-DC program to offer an alternative to MetroAccess that provides an option for customers to ride in a standard taxicab without multiple stops and make a reservation one hour in advance. Another new communication mechanism is the Taxi Notification System. The recently implemented system provides a means for specific venues to alert on-duty taxis of the need for service for large groups. We expect to see a significant improvement in response times and vehicle loads. Lastly, in conjunction with the Office of Unified Communication (OUC) safety devices will be installed in all taxicabs licensed by DCTC for both the drivers and riders. The safety device will allow police, medical or DCTC Public Vehicle Enforcement Inspectors to respond immediately to calls for assistance. This platform should be fully operational by June 2015.