

TRANSPORT CONTACT

June 1999

Communication and information bulletin for paratransit services users

New vehicles purchased

At its meeting of April 14th last, the Board of Directors of the STCUM authorized the purchase of 17 new adapted minibuses. These vehicles (Gardin MB-4 model) will be equipped with a hydraulic tailboard which will be 2 inches wider than current models. Other features will allow us to provide services better suited to the changing needs of our clientele.

The two key features of this new minibus relate to its versatility and increased interior space. Its versatility will enable us to easily and quickly modify

the interior space based on the needs of ambulatory as well as wheelchair-bound clients. Thus, it will be possible for us to transport, at one time, 16 ambulatory clients and 2 in wheelchairs. Another will be designed to accommodate up to 6 clients in wheelchairs, and 4 ambulatory clients.

Replacing vehicles purchased in 1994, these minibuses were chosen further to a review of criteria for the selection of vehicles based on our clients' changing needs. Finally, if this news item were to be featured on the television show "The Price is Right", you could be asked to answer the following question:

What is the net cost of each of these vehicles (including customization)?

\$71,000.00
\$86,000.00
\$103,000.00

If you answered \$86,000.00, you win!

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Interesting changes

A great cooperation from clients...

We invite you to read this issue of Transport Contact attentively. It provides information on changes to our services, which we hope will please you. From the articles presented here, you will soon realize that the satisfaction of our clients and partners is our major concern.

Reading through this issue, you will find out how, as a visitor, you can benefit from paratransit services throughout Quebec, and how we make our services available to visitors to our area. You will also learn that the pilot project that allows you to travel to Laval and the South Shore has been extended.

In order to serve you better, changes have also been made to our transportation schedule on statutory holidays.

You will also discover that, in March, we handled 122,000 trips, setting a new monthly record. As well, as of the fall, part of our fleet of minibuses will be replaced by new models which will enable us to serve you with greater efficiency than ever.

Several of the articles you will find herein inform and/or remind you of procedures to be followed, if you're going on vacation, moving, or planning for the fall period.

Finally, you will also realize how the cooperation of our users can allow us to improve our services so we can go further...together!

Happy reading!



July 1st is right around the corner. Every year, many of our clients move. If this is the case with you, avoid problems. Notify us of your change of address!

This is all the more important if you have a regular, daily transportation schedule. You must know that most changes of address require us to cancel the programmed schedule, and develop a new one from the new address.

There are two ways in which you can do this.

The first requires that you register your change of address using the Interactive Line. You simply have to dial 280-7400. After selecting Module 3 (Modifying a Personal File) at the request of the system, you punch in your file number and personal access code (consisting of the day and month of your birth: if your date of birth is April 1st, you punch in 01-04). Pressing 1 will give you access to the change of address voice mail. The system will provide the information you need to record your message. You can then listen to your message and confirm the information provided therein. It's easy. You'll see!

The second way of registering your change of address is to contact our Customer Service Department directly at 280-5341, Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The agents who take your call will note your new address and

ensure that your trips will be programmed from there, as of the requested date.



During summer vacation Cancelling regular transportation

You're going on vacation and you've got a regular transportation schedule? Don't forget to contact us to cancel trips you won't be needing during this period.

You can cancel trips for up to 8 weeks. After the cancellation period, your regular schedule will be automatically reinstated. If you will be away for a longer period of time, however, it will be necessary for you to cancel your regular schedule altogether.

These cancellations are most important. Not only do we avoid sending you a driver when you're absent, but we can also make your seat available to a user in need of occasional transportation.



Traffic : Winter 1999

From January to March 1999, we handled 38,414 more trips than the corresponding period in 1998. However, as the following table shows, the Adjusted Difference is the index that best reflects the traffic increase for Winter 1999. This difference shows an increase of 0.8% over Winter 1998.

In fact, before comparing traffic data for the winters of 1998 and 1999, we must take into account the ice storm of 1998, which resulted in 36,000 fewer trips.

Furthermore, we note a drop in the use of minibuses by ambulatory clients. This particular resource is used mainly by the network providing services to the intellectually challenged. Some factors related to the restructuring of services to these individuals (fewer trips to sheltered workshops, the move away from group residential facilities, etc.) have compelled us to change the way in which we serve this particular clientele.

On the other hand, the demand for regular taxi service was so strong that the taxi industry had a hard time providing enough vehicles (especially during rush hours).

During the winter, it was necessary to develop and implement a number of measures allowing us to respond more adequately to the needs of this clientele. These measures allow for greater use of

the fleet of adapted minibuses. The positive repercussions of these measures were felt in March.

It should be mentioned that the traditional paratransit clientele (those who must use adapted minibuses for all trips) was not affected by these measures.

We should also note the cooperation of many clients who

Finally, the proportion of regular trips versus overall traffic figures was 72.3% while the cancellation rate stood at 25% (see other article on this subject). The refusal rate during Winter 1999 was 1.6%, as opposed to 2.1% in 1998.

Cumulative trips, January to March 1999				
	ACTUAL 98	ACTUAL 99	ACTUAL DIFFERENCE	ADJUSTED DIFFERENCE
Minibus (wheelchair)	33 237	33 290	0,2%	--
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Total	279 417	317 831	13,7%	0,8%

agreed to have their trips scheduled outside peak periods. This type of cooperation allowed us to accommodate a larger number of users.

Record set in March

This more efficient use of resources, combined with favorable weather conditions enabled the STCUM's Paratransit Services to handle a record number of trips (122,000) in March. The previous record was 118,000.

Use of Paratransit Services by visitors

The latest version of the *Paratransit Eligibility Policy*, issued by the ministère des transports du Québec (Quebec's Department of Transport), stipulates that: "If you are a handicapped person approved for paratransit services by your local committee or by a designated eligibility committee, you can, on occasion, use any paratransit service in Quebec, as a visitor. You do not need to prove, once again, your eligibility when calling on the services of a paratransit organization other than the one with which you are registered."

Reservations

If you are going on a trip and would like to benefit from this service as a visitor, you should know that:

- You must reserve yourself, with the organization whose services you would like to use.
- For the name, address and telephone number of its carrier and the list of municipalities it serves, you can call us Monday to Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., or you can call Quebec's Department of Transport at XXX-XXXX.
- In addition, you must generally reserve at least 24 to 48 hours prior to your trip, depending on the time frame prescribed by the paratransit

organization whose services you will be using as a visitor. Some organizations also accept same day reservations.

- An organization can refuse your request, due to a lack of resources at the time of reservation. Modifications could be made to your trip, based on the needs of the organization providing the service.

Information requested

- When you make your reservation, all information needed to provide you with the proper service will be requested.

Escorts

- If some form of public transportation is available on the territory where you would like to travel, and your disability is one for which an escort can compensate (ex.: orientation problem), transportation could be denied to your escort. In the event that an escort is optional, the escort will be authorized, providing there is space in the vehicle.

Fares

- Fares charged by the paratransit organization whose services you wish to use as a

visitor should be the same as those charged to that organization's disabled users who reside on the territory it serves.

Finally, when using the service, make sure you have your eligibility card with you, so you can present it to the driver, upon request.

Visitors to the MUC

Visitors (as defined above), who wish to use the STCUM's Paratransit Services, are asked to contact our Customer Service Department at 280-5341, Monday to Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

A Paratransit Services agent will handle your request and provide all pertinent information.

Furthermore, the STCUM offers its services to all disabled individuals visiting the MUC from outside Quebec and who use a wheelchair. To avail themselves of these services, they need only follow the procedure outlined above.



NOTEPAD

Reminder to Summer camp organizers

The following points are important to consider when planning group transportation for a summer camp. You must:

- Send us the group reservation at least 10 days in advance
- Validate the complete list of individuals using our services as soon as possible
- If necessary, make all required cancellations as soon as possible, before the date of departure
- See to it that luggage which cannot be handled by clients is transported to the destination by a vehicle other than that provided by Paratransit Services

Going further...

TOGETHER!

For a variety of valid reasons, users of our paratransit services must often cancel their trips. In this regard, over the past two years, we have noted two special problems linked to cancellations. In an effort to counter these, we have implemented a campaign to raise awareness among clients, seeking the cooperation of many of them.

By and large, the response has been positive. In fact, we have contacted specific clients in writing or by phone. Once they have been made aware of the negative effects of the sporadic use of a regular transportation schedule, and the impact of a last-minute cancellation, these individuals have altered habits acquired over a period of years.

Convinced that greater discipline benefits everyone, these users have often agreed to cancel an underused regular schedule, replacing it with occasional transportation requests as needed. Whenever possible, they have cancelled a scheduled trip on the eve or earlier.

As well, these individuals have benefitted from invaluable advice. Many were not aware of how easy it is to cancel by calling 280-6325

after 6 p.m., or via the Interactive Line at 280-7400 (for further information on this subject, see the information pamphlet produced for this purpose, or contact our Customer Service Department at 280-5341).

This discipline has allowed a larger number of clients to benefit from a regular transportation schedule. Also, thanks to those who have cancelled early enough, we have been able to accommodate a larger number of requests for occasional transportation.

Results have encouraged us to continue in this direction. We would like to extend our sincere congratulations to those who adopt a positive approach. This will allow us to go further...together!

Intershore service Extension of the pilot program

The STCUM is pleased to pursue its association with the STL, the STRSM and the AMT, extending the current pilot program until December 1999. This intershore service gives clients of each public transit corporation access to the MUC, Laval, and the South Shore. A progress report on this project is to be presented to the Board of Directors of the STCUM some time in May.

Changes to reservation waiting time

When opening a file, there is always a 5-day waiting period before the first trip.

In addition, the STCUM advises all those who use the intershore service that all transportation requests subsequent to the opening of the client's file are now accepted 2 days prior to the trip, BEFORE NOON.

Fall 1999 Planning regular transportation

When fall draws near, the number of requests for regular transportation rises, which is why it is important for you to get your request in early. This year, you can request a regular schedule for your fall transportation as of July 15th. This will allow us to plan our work and the resources needed for the 5,000 trips we handle daily on week days.

By forwarding your request early, your chances of receiving confirmation of your schedule before it is to start are much better. Note that, until such time as a regular schedule has been confirmed, you must make occasional transportation requests. You can avoid repeated calls by requesting a regular schedule early.

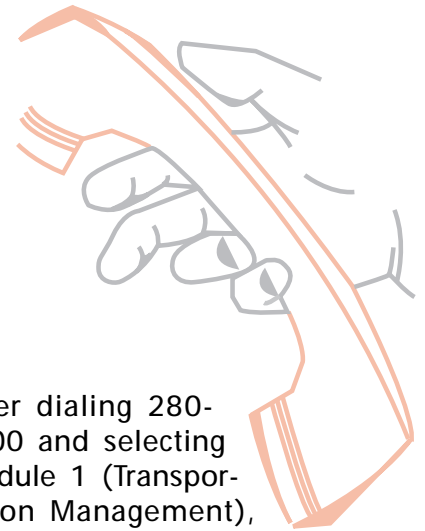
You can send us your request by mail or by fax at 280-6313. Obviously, you can also call the reservation number — 280-5445 (taxi) or 280-5353 (minibus).

The *Interactive Line*: it works!

The following will be of particular interest to those who must make a number of schedule requests on behalf of others.

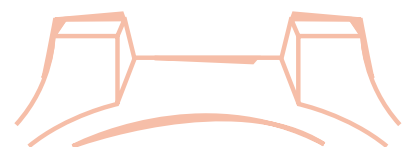
You can request a regular transportation schedule using the Interactive Line. Use it! You'll see how fast and efficient it is!

Reminder of the procedure



After dialing 280-7400 and selecting Module 1 (Transportation Management), you enter the file number and 4-digit access code consisting of the day and month of the user's birth (ex: August 7 = 07 08 or October 23 = 23 10). Then, let the system guide you to the voice mail for regular transportation requests.

You must mention each day of the week to which your request applies. The boarding point and destination as well as the arrival and return times you specify will apply to each day of your request. If these parameters vary from day to day, you must make a separate request for each day.



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Statutory holidays: schedule changes

As part of our ongoing quest to better serve the needs of our clients, we have made a number of changes to schedules for weekday statutory holidays.

	First boarding	Last drop-off
Services hours Monday to Thursday (including statutory holidays)	6:30 a.m.	12:30 a.m.
Friday (including statutory holidays)	6:30 a.m.	1:30 a.m.
Saturday	8:00 a.m.	1:30 a.m.
Sunday	8:00 a.m.	12:30 a.m.

These changes apply only to the times of your trips.

The hours when you can contact our Call Center for reservations remain unchanged:

- Monday to Friday : 6 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.
- Saturdays, Sunday and statutory holidays : 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Handy Numbers

Requests for regular or occasional transportation ----- and reservation changes:	(Minibus) 280-5353 (Taxi) 280-5445
Interactive Line : -----	280-7400
Teleprinter (TTY) : -----	280-5308
Info-Retard, On-call Return Trips : -----	(Minibus) 280-5313 (Taxi) 280-5444
Cancellation: -----	280-6325
Customer Service : -----	280-5341
Web site : -----	www.stcum.qc.ca
Address : -----	3111, Jarry St. East Montreal (Quebec) H1Z 2C2



STCUM

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3111 Jarry St. East
Montreal, Quebec
H1Z 2C2

<http://www.stcum.qc.ca>

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