

On September 2, 2003...
***The STM's Paratransit Service
will be transformed!***

Indeed, on September 2, the STM will launch a new computer information system, known as ACCÈS 5 and provided by the Montreal firm GIRO, a new interactive voice response system (SRVI), as well a new, single telephone number to reach all our services. In essence, it represents the end result of a long transformation process, which will enable the STM to significantly improve certain aspects of the services provided to paratransit users.

Such a challenge was inspired by the needs and expectations expressed by paratransit users, and the resulting changes bear witness to the efforts, creativity and perseverance of a team of employees, consultants and suppliers. And let us not forget about the invaluable consultation process that allowed us to make the most of contributions from user representatives and several other partners. September 2 will be the culmination of many months of sustained effort.

You will be directly affected by these changes if you are already a paratransit user, or a parent or caregiver that must communicate more or less often with the STM's Paratransit Service.

You will be directly affected if you are a healthcare or social services provider whose clients use paratransit services. Indeed, the transformation undergone by the STM's Paratransit Service will, among other things, allow those involved in requesting transportation (regular, occasional or in advance) or in charge of follow-ups (late vehicles, confirmations and consultations) to save precious time.

We are convinced you will appreciate these changes, although some of them will require that you change some of your ways, even break a few long-standing habits ! Rest assured, the effort you put into adapting will be well

worth it, and the transition will go smoothly. We know how important paratransit is to you, so we trust you will take the time to carefully read this special issue ***Transport Contact***.

Consider this ***Transport Contact*** and the enclosed updated version of the *User's Guide* as tools that will help you find your way, step by step, in this new environment, evolving in response to your needs. We have also enclosed a sticker for your telephone to help you remember our new telephone number.


***Changing
to serve you
better***

Improved services and innovations

**EASIER, MORE ACCESSIBLE AND FASTER...
PLUS A FEW INTERESTING INNOVATIONS**

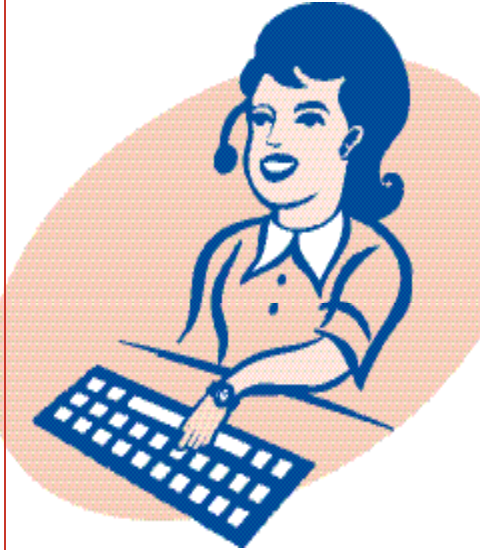
Easier with 514-280-8211

Long-time paratransit users had, of course, gotten used to our many telephone numbers, each one dedicated to a specific use. However, there were so many different numbers, that occasional, less familiarized users could sometimes barely find their way!

Add to that the mounting frustration felt by clients if they had dialed the wrong number and their call could not be transferred. Callers had to dial another number and often had to wait all over again, this time in the Reservations Centre's call queue, before an agent could answer them. It was all rather aggravating at times!

Basically, there were too many numbers: two for transportation requests, two others to notify us of late vehicles, one for Customer Service, another for fax requests. The inconvenience of having to deal with so many different numbers will soon be over.

resulted in the switchboard being tied up. Since that bottleneck has been virtually eliminated, those endlessly busy telephone lines should become a thing of the past.



**As of September 2,
a single telephone number to remember:**

514-280-8211

More accessible

As of September 2, it should be much easier to reach the Reservations Centre. Thanks to ACCÈS 5, the new computerized information system, processing transportation requests will be fully automated. This major improvement will be particularly noticeable during periods of heavy demand, such as the annual back-to-school rush in the fall.

Again, long-time users were well-aware of the problem. For years, during these busy periods, the exhaustive searches and schedule programming performed by Reservations Centre agents often

Faster

Also, as of September 2, you will notice how our new tools will enable us to process your transportation requests much faster and more efficiently than before. The new automated reservations process will definitely expedite matters. Of course, paratransit users should expect a certain "breaking-in period", but overall, we are convinced that from September on, you will admit the STM's Paratransit Service is easier to use, more accessible and faster than ever before.

Access Codes

**Our Automated Services
are undergoing some
important changes**

The current *Interactive Line* (280-7400) will no longer be available as of September 2, 2003. However, those of you who often use the Automated Services will still have access to the same services, and a few new ones, when you call 280-8211 and select Option 3.

In order to protect the confidentiality of your dealings with paratransit, two preliminary steps are still necessary before you can access the services menu.

The first step is identical to the one required to use the *Interactive Line*.

Step 1 (before September 2)

- ✓ Enter the **five-digit file number** and validate the **name associated with that number**.

Interactive Line users will notice a major change in **the second step**.

The order in which you had to enter the numbers "spelling out" your birthdate, forming your access code, will have been **inverted**.

Therefore, until the new system is implemented, *Interactive Line* users will continue to first enter the two numbers representing the day, followed by the two numbers representing the month of their birthdate.

For example: April 17 = 1704
December 4 = 0412

After the new system is implemented, the second step will **still** consist in entering your four-digit access code. However, remember, the order will have changed: first, the two numbers representing the month, then the two numbers representing the day.

For example: April 17 = 0417
December 4 = 1204

Once these steps are completed, simply select whichever one of the options suits your needs.

Interesting innovations

A new SRVI to replace the Interactive Line

The services provided until now through the *Interactive Line* will be replaced by the new interactive voice response system (SRVI), beginning next September 2. **All telephone calls made to 514-280-8211 will be processed by the SRVI.**

The SRVI will offer five options for service.

• Option 1

Services provided by an agent of the Reservations Centre

- ✓ Requests for regular transportation
- ✓ Advance transportation requests
- ✓ Requests to modify a confirmed trip
- ✓ Requests for occasional transportation

• Option 2

Services provided by an agent of the Reservations Centre

- ✓ Notify us of a late vehicle
- ✓ Confirm or consult transportation times
- ✓ Cancel transportation



To find out the Reservations Centre's business hours, please read **Module 1 - General Information** of the new *User's Guide*

• Option 3

Automated Services

- ✓ Notify us of a late vehicle
- ✓ Cancel transportation
- ✓ Confirm or consult transportation times
- ✓ Request occasional transportation¹
(available before the end of 2003)

¹ Before requesting occasional transportation through our Automated Services for the first time, users must contact an agent at the Reservations Centre to activate this function in their computer file. It would also be most useful to carefully read the "Request for occasional transportation" section contained in **Module 5 - Automated Services** of the *User's Guide* and to fill out the suggested data sheet.

• Option 4

This option will put you in touch with a Customer Service agent*.

- ✓ New admission request or admission follow-up
- ✓ Information about our services
- ✓ Comments or complaints
- ✓ All other subjects

* During Customer Service's business hours

• Option 5

This option will allow to listen to general information messages

Automated Services Innovations that will be appreciated

The Automated Services provided through Option 3 were designed to be as user-friendly as possible. Nevertheless, should you encounter any difficulties using the system during the Reservations Centre's business hours, it will be possible for you to speak with an agent who can help you.

Those who used the *Interactive Line's* services to cancel their transportation or consult their transportation schedule can continue to do so. Please note, however, that as of September 2, these services will be included in the Automated Services.

The Automated Services will also provide you with new, interesting services

Beginning September 2, you will be able to:

- ✓ Rapidly notify us of a late vehicle, without having to speak with a Reservations Centre agent. You will be able to interact directly with the new SRVI.

In addition, during the Fall of 2003, you will be able to:

- ✓ Submit your requests for occasional transportation through the Automated Services option, 24 hours a day.



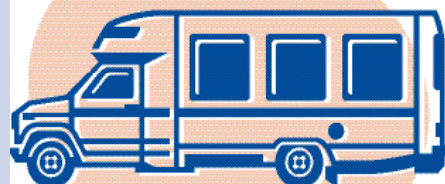
Are you uncomfortable with this type of technology? Do you consider this type of system too complicated to use? Have no fear, you have not been forgotten. During the Reservations Centre's business hours, you will always be able to speak with an agent for all your transportation requests, modifications or to notify us of a late vehicle.

These changes will undoubtedly raise several questions from paratransit users. So we have attempted to anticipate them... and answer them accordingly!

CHANGES AFFECTING ALL REQUESTS FOR TRANSPORTATION

*With the exception of group transportation, all requests for trips and any changes will have to be made **by telephone only**.*

*Special arrangements are available to those paratransit users who have major speech impediments or verbal communication limitations, in order to facilitate their contacts with our services. **For more information, please contact Customer Service.***



What are the changes affecting the procedure for regular transportation requests?

In the past, it was not unusual for clients to have to wait for weeks before obtaining a confirmation of their regular transportation schedule for school, work or leisure activities. Well, we certainly have some positive changes in store for them! With the new system, it will be possible to submit a request for regular transportation and obtain a confirmation in a single telephone call!

Thanks to automated processing, a user will no longer have to call as often. For example, in the past, regular trips could often not be confirmed by the required date; confirmation could sometimes take a few weeks. During this period, users who were starting a new job or a new term at school had to submit requests for occasional transportation for each required trip until the regular schedule could be confirmed. This inevitably generated countless telephone calls during the back-to-school period in the fall and ended up tying up the telephone lines.

What will happen with requests for regular transportation made by fax?

Given that it will now be possible to request regular transportation and receive confirmation with a single telephone call, the fax will become virtually obsolete.

All requests for regular transportation will have to be made by telephone only.

Remember that, despite using a fax, clients still had to call to obtain a confirmation so this new procedure presents a definite advantage. Users will no longer have to fax their requests or worry whether or not they have been received. They will simply have to telephone. Users will quickly see that with automated request processing, the Reservations Centre will

be a lot more accessible than in the past. Users will no longer have to deal with lines that are always busy or lost time caused by the old procedures for handling transportation requests.

It is doubly advantageous to handle requests only by telephone. Interaction with the person making the request is very useful. It will also eliminate errors that result from using the fax and the loss of time inherent in checking the data or in confirming receipt of the documents.

The person making the request will be able to do so at any time, as soon as trip requirements have been clearly established. Very often, users will have confirmation long before their regular trip schedule begins. All in all, everyone wins. The client saves time, and the STM can free up its resources to deal with other tasks.

What changes will affect requests for occasional transportation?

As of September 2, it will be possible to request occasional transportation one day earlier than before.

Users will be able to make such requests three days ahead of time. Of course, it will still be possible to submit a request two days prior, the day before or even the same day.

They will still be handled on the basis of available resources at the time of the call. But that's not all !

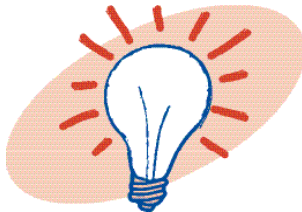
It should also be noted that before the end of the Fall of 2003, users will be able to request occasional trips via the Automated Services.

Will a lack of available places at the time of the request automatically result in a refusal of transportation?

When conditions allow, the agent may suggest that you put your trip request on a waiting list. You will then simply have to wait for someone to call you back at an agreed time to advise you on the status of your request. You will not even have to call back. In addition, thanks to the advantages offered by ACCES 5, the system will very often be able to find you a place. It goes without saying that there will be no waiting list offered when there are insufficient resources available.

Why is it now possible to put a trip request on a waiting list?

That's easy. The ACCES 5 system works 24 hours a day to make the maximum use of available resources. This makes it possible to provide users with the maximum number of places. For example, ACCES 5 can find and use places that become available due to cancellations recorded each day. This was not easy to do before, because these operations had to be done manually and required a lot of time. ACCES 5 can do this work much more quickly and efficiently. It's what is known as optimization - the maximum use of available resources.



Are there any changes that affect advance trip requests and requests for a medical appointment?

- ✓ From now on, an advance request for transportation and a trip for a medical appointment will be subject to the same conditions.
- ✓ A trip for a medical appointment becomes one of the accepted reasons for an advance trip request.
- ✓ The other accepted reasons for advance requests for transportation remain the same.

What are the new procedures?

- ✓ Advance requests can only be made by telephone through an agent at the Reservations Centre.
- ✓ An advance request for transportation will have to be made as of seven days before the date of the trip, not before.

For example, for a trip planned for Monday, the 17th of the month, a user will be able to make an advance request for the trip as of Monday the 10th, up until the day of the trip itself.

Will those who make a medical appointment a long time in advance have to wait until seven days before their appointment to make their request?

Yes! The STM is well aware that this is an inconvenience. It is, however, largely compensated for by the fact that it will not be necessary to call back to obtain a confirmation as the user will receive confirmation at the time of the call. In addition, users retain the privilege of being able to submit their request at an earlier date than requests for occasional trips.

This rule stems from one of the features of the ACCÈS 5 system, as it only allows confirmation to the client as of seven days before the date of the trip. The seven-day in advance requirement therefore becomes necessary to avoid needless telephone calls for confirmation.

Users or their caregivers will have to make a habit of posting a reminder on the calendar seven days before a medical appointment: Call in advance for my transportation request.

Can you list once again the reasons justifying an advance request for transportation?

- ✓ a medical appointment
- ✓ a job interview or exam
- ✓ a board meeting for a member
- ✓ a court appearance
- ✓ a show
- ✓ a trip to or from Dorval Airport, the downtown bus terminus or Central Station

What changes will affect requests for group transportation?

There are no changes as such.

However, group trips that are repeated at the same time and to the same location every week will from now on be considered as regular transportation requests.

In order to handle these requests more smoothly, given the number of users involved, the person responsible for organizing these activities and submitting trip requests will be put in touch with the person responsible for handling demands from institutions and organizations. Their request will then be processed, and the sponsor with the partner organization will be informed of the procedures for following up on the request and the accompanying rules for use.

Will the efficiency of the system lead to budget cuts?

No! Because the demand is too great. Rather, the gains in productivity should result in more trips using the available financial resources.

• PARTNERS •

The new Partners feature introduces the readers of Transport Contact to the organizations who work closely with the STM's Paratransit Service to improve the services provided to users. Always from the point of view of the partnership, this page will enable readers to follow the developments regarding certain key issues.

RUTA

Upon reading these lines, you will see that it was natural for the Regroupement des usagers du transport adapté (RUTA) of the CUM* to be the first partner highlighted in this new feature.

The RUTA groups are officially recognized by the government of Quebec. As well, RUTA of the MUC is the principal voice on the territory of Montreal for disabled persons who use the various transportation services provided for them. Whether it's Paratransit, accessibility to buses, the métro or commuter trains or the link by autocar between certain cities in Quebec, RUTA makes a significant contribution as much in the area of development of these services as by assuming the legitimate role of watchdog for the interests of users.

RUTA: a leader in the consultation process

By creating and coordinating the transportation issues committee since 1983, RUTA has assumed a leadership role in channelling the points of view and interests of numerous organizations concerned with the transportation problem.

A little history

Since its first steps in 1979 and its incorporation in October 1980, RUTA of the MUC had been involved in the movement that led the government of Quebec to recognize the rights of the disabled. This recognition was formalized through the passage of Law 9. Among other things, it required transit companies in Quebec's large cities to provide an adapted transport service on their respective territories. As this was an exclusive mandate, in 1980 the STM took over from brothers

Jacques and Jean-Marc Forest, founders of adapted transportation in Quebec and of Minibus Forest. Since that time, expansion has taken place while attempting as much as possible to keep up with the phenomenal rise in the demand for service. In 2003, close to 1.5 million trips will be taken.

A lot of work in numerous dossiers

RUTA has been closely associated with and has often been the initiator of numerous dossiers that have led to evolutions in the services provided to users. From recognition of paratransit as an essential service to the creation of the adapted taxi service in 1984, from learning how to use the regular bus system to having attendants on trips, from implementing paratransit service between Montreal, Laval and Longueuil to implement accessible service by taxi, from adapting the regular transit system and métro to ensuring accessibility aboard the commuter train system, and finally from the implementation of the new computer system to the current transformations of the STM's Paratransit service, RUTA has always made a major contribution.

RUTA: a grouping of organizations

RUTA is located at 3800 Radisson in Montreal.

Users of the STM's Paratransit service can take advantage of numerous services offered by this organization by becoming members. Five of the nine members of the board of directors are elected during the annual general meeting; the remaining four members are named by the issues committee. For more information, simply call 255-0765, Monday to Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Either Linda Labrecque, the office clerk, or Caroline Roussy, coordinator, will be pleased to answer your questions.

* With the creation of the new city of Montreal, RUTA of the MUC should soon be changing its name to become RUTA of Montreal.

User-Carrier Committee

In Montreal, the expertise and the close ties between RUTA, the STM and the network of organizations representing the disabled enables the STM's User-Carrier Committee to carry out its role as official consultant effectively.

This committee has been in existence since 1983. It includes user representation based on the principal types of disability (motor/organic, visual, intellectual/psychological, language and speech), and senior citizens are also represented. In addition to the Paratransit management team, organizations such as RUTA, Office des personnes handicapées, Regional Board for Health and Social Services and the Taxi Bureau of Montreal also participate in the committee's work. The committee sits five times per year and is presided over by the head of the Administration and Client/Partner Relations Section.





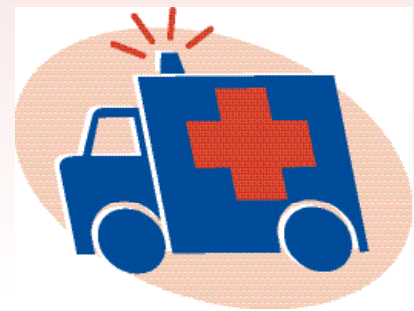
The new *User's Guide* for the STM's Paratransit Service



IN CASE OF AN ACCIDENT

Road accidents are a reality with which any paratransit organization must occasionally cope. However, the key is knowing how to react under the circumstances.

Should an accident occur during transportation, the STM will take every step to contact the passengers' next of kin. This is only one of the reasons we ask that you provide us with the name and number of the person we should contact in case of an emergency.



Of course, Customer Service will provide the necessary information to any paratransit user or family member who wishes to submit a claim.

Finally, bear in mind that all motor vehicle passengers are covered by the public automobile insurance plan, administered by the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec, which provides compensation for physical injuries sustained in a car accident, regardless of who is at fault. The public plan is funded through insurance premiums levied directly from the cost of car registrations and drivers' licences. To submit a claim for compensation, you must absolutely obtain the compensation request form from the SAAQ. In Montreal, you can reach the SAAQ by calling 514-873-7620, where you will be provided with all the details regarding procedures.

• USEFUL NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES •

Telephone

Only one number to remember

514-280-8211

Our mailing address

**STM Paratransit Centre
3111 Jarry St. East
Montreal, Québec, H1Z 2C2**

Requests for group
transportation only

Fax: 514-280-5317

E-mail: groupe.ta@stm.info

Teletype (TTY)

514-280-5308

Only for paratransit users unable to verbally communicate
Special arrangements are available to those paratransit
users who have major speech impediments or verbal
communication limitations, in order to facilitate their con-
tacts with our services.

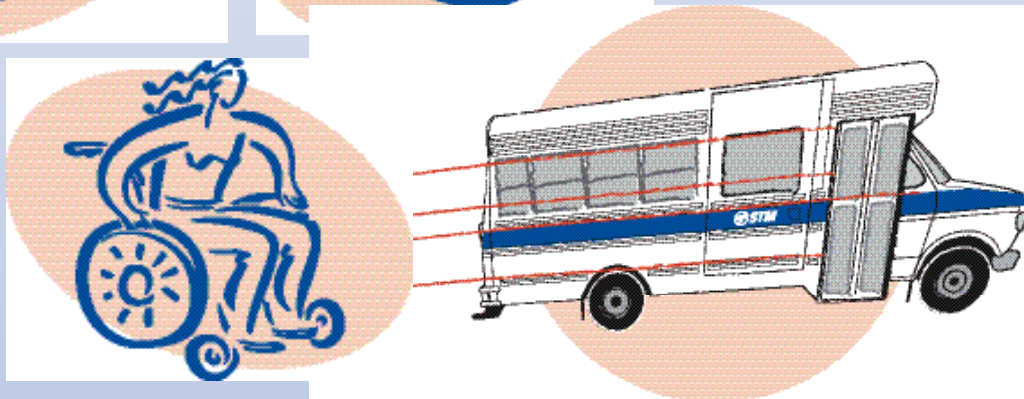
For more information, please contact Customer Service.

Website

www.stm.info

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