

Emergency Management

The Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT), as directed in RCW 47.06B.30 (4), represents the needs and interests of persons with special transportation needs in statewide emergency planning efforts. Since 2007, ACCT has collaborated with the state Emergency Management Council (EMC), enabling both councils to raise awareness of special needs transportation in emergencies.

Advise Emergency Management Council

Supporting the new relationship between the two councils, ACCT staff participated in monthly EMC planning meetings at Camp Murray. These meetings introduced ACCT staff to emergency management and conversely emergency planners to the challenges, needs and practical considerations of public transportation planning.

ACCT members and representatives from transit agencies presented a “State of the State” of special needs emergency planning. The presentation focused on how special needs transportation providers are developing response plans and responding to emergency situations. In addition to WSDOT staff, Pierce Transit, Community Transit, and Rural Resources participated to represent a cross section of public transportation providers . This provided the EMC an overarching perspective on the needs, capabilities and challenges that people with special needs face in emergency scenarios.

Produce Technical Assistance Materials

ACCT staff produced a briefing paper on emergency transportation for people with special needs. Written for a public transportation community audience, including drivers, driver trainers and management, the paper described what a person with special needs might face during an emergency situation, how they may respond in times of crisis and how transportation providers can most proactively assist them. The briefing paper included a list of best practices based on the experiences of agencies responding during emergencies and recommendations from the Federal and State Transportation Administrations. The paper is available on the ACCT web site.

Participate In Emergency Planning Response

ACCT staff participated in statewide emergency response during both the 2008 winter storms and the 2009 Howard Hanson Dam failure. ACCT staff advised state, county and local jurisdictions on the transportation concerns of special needs populations.

During the Howard Hanson Dam response, ACCT staff, along with council members representing transportation providers throughout the region, continues to coordinate with state and local emergency management to ensure sufficient consideration for people with special needs. ACCT provided technical expertise on special needs transportation and sheltering issues and acted as a facilitator for cross-jurisdictional coordination of resources and planning. ACCT council members from Community Transportation Association of the Northwest, Washington State Transit Association, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Transportation Brokers and others collaborated to find solutions to the transportation challenges presented during the planning of potential flooding in the Green River Valley.