

Project ACTION Study

Status Report on the Current Use of Wheelchairs and Other Mobility Devices on Public and Private Transportation

While the initial work on transit accessibility spans at least three decades, the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) spurred an increased focus on the issues facing operators and wheelchair users. During the past four years in particular there has been a significant increase in research conducted in this area. However, the findings of this research have not been universally circulated or accepted by some of the key stakeholders, including the transit industry, wheelchair suppliers, and customers, who could all benefit from such knowledge. In addition, the development of new policies and procedures would be greatly enhanced by this information.

The goal of this project is to create a resource that will ultimately enhance the ridership experience of people with disabilities, particularly wheelchair users (and users of other mobility devices) while ensuring their safe transport by transportation providers in the public and private sectors. The key objectives for achieving this goal include:

- Document the research that has been conducted to date on the subject;
- Document the perspectives of a variety of key stakeholders; and
- Produce a user-friendly report that can be widely disseminated in a variety of sectors.

Nelson\Nygaard has assembled a team of experts in the accessibility field, including a nationally recognized researcher, a former transit manager, and an ADA operational policy expert who also uses a wheelchair. The project will work closely with an advisory committee which represents transit, people with disabilities, regulatory bodies, national transportation associations, wheelchair suppliers and applied research. The team will collectively develop an outline of the report and a study methodology. The preliminary approach includes a literature review, stakeholder interviews, survey of individuals with disabilities disseminated through national organizations, and a policy roundtable.

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