

WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C.

ORDER NO. 2624

IN THE MATTER OF:

Served October 31, 1984

Provision of Emergency Service for)
Commuters from Greenbelt, Md.)

Case No. MP-84-09

For several years the State Aviation Administration (SAA), a division of Maryland's Department of Transportation, has operated a bus service between Baltimore-Washington International Airport and the Capital Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C. These buses have served Greenbelt, Md., as an intermediate point and, inter alia, have been used by approximately 10 persons for commuter service between Greenbelt and Washington. 1/

At approximately 3 p.m. on October 30, 1984, the Commission's General Counsel was notified by an SAA official 2/ that SAA was ceasing operation of its BWI-Washington route effective today. Airline Baggage Carriers, Inc. (ABC), a Maryland corporation, 3/ has contracted with SAA to take over the route. However, ABC prefers not to provide commuter service; it prefers to confine its operations strictly to service to and from BWI. According to Mr. McGlone, approximately ten commuters would be stranded unless some alternative service is arranged. SAA has no statistics to show the times or frequency of travel for these commuters.

Obviously, a completely new service could not be instituted overnight because of the lack of data available for predicating times of service. It would make no sense to direct that service be rendered at times which do not meet riders' demands.

1/ Inasmuch as that service was provided by a state agency, it was exempt from regulation by us. See Title II, Article XII, Section 1(a)(2) of the Compact.

2/ Mr. Dennis McGlone.

3/ ABC is the parent company of The Airport Connection, Inc., which was recently certificated by WMATC as the primary ground carrier to and from Washington National Airport and Dulles International Airport.

Accordingly, a meeting was held this morning among counsel for ABC, the president of Freeway Interprises, Inc., and the Commission's General Counsel. All parties discussed the need of the Greenbelt commuters for service, how service could be offered absent information of the riders' demands, costs and rates for such service, traffic logistics and the potential for inconvenience to other riders. In particular, Freeway expressed concern about inconveniencing its current patrons because of the time and traffic difficulties involved in diverting its afternoon (northbound) buses from the Gladys Noon Spellman Parkway across an uncontrolled intersection at Greenbelt Road to the SAA terminal. 4/

The vehicles to be used by ABC are radio equipped. They would not stop at Greenbelt unless advised by the Greenbelt dispatcher that one or more passengers are awaiting transportation. Hence, any inconvenience to BWI-D.C. passengers can easily be minimized. The parties to the meeting therefore agreed that the public would best be served if ABC continued service to Greenbelt commuters until sufficient data can be gathered to serve as a predicate for a more permanent solution to this problem. The Commission will so direct. We will also direct that ABC do a traffic study and report back to the Commission so that this situation can be reassessed.

Finally, we recognize that the rates authorized below exceed those which Greenbelt commuters have been paying to SAA. 5/ This is because the SAA service was operated at a loss and was subsidized with taxpayers' dollars. Obviously, we cannot do an overnight rate case to determine what fare is appropriate. Under the circumstances we shall try to do rough justice. We are cognizant of the rate structure we recently approved for ABC's subsidiary for service to and from Washington National and Dulles International airports, and we believe the continuation of SAA rates would not be compensatory to ABC. Based on its cost per mile, ABC proposes a one-way fare of \$4.50. On the other hand, a jump in the round-trip fare from \$5 to \$9 could encounter such resistance as to frustrate our common objective of preserving ridership while we try to work out a long-term solution. As an interim compromise ABC has agreed to accept a round-trip fare of \$6.

4/ Freeway currently provides regular-route service between Laurel, Md., and the District of Columbia pursuant to WMATC Certificate No. 78. Greenbelt, Md., is an intermediate point between those termini. Hence, if it could be ascertained that Greenbelt commuters need service during the times when Freeway operates its schedules, supply and demand would naturally dovetail. Should such a dovetail occur, Freeway would be willing to provide service to Greenbelt at a one-way per capita price of \$2.50.

5/ According to Mr. McGlone, the one-way per capita charge has been \$2.50.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:

1. That, because the public convenience and necessity so requires, Airport Baggage Carriers, Inc., is hereby directed, pursuant to Title II, Article XII, Section 4(e) of the Compact, to transport passengers, in special operations, between the State Aviation Administration bus terminal near Southway, and Greenbelt Road, Greenbelt, Md., and the Capital Hilton Hotel, 16th and K Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C., from November 1, 1984, through November 30, 1984, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission.

2. That such service shall be provided, upon demand therefor, on all schedules operated by Airport Baggage Carriers, Inc., between Baltimore-Washington International Airport and the District of Columbia.

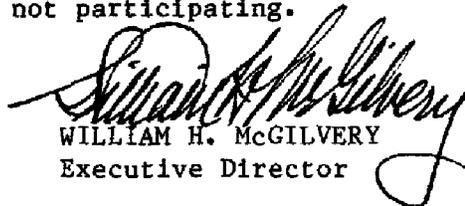
3. That Airport Baggage Carriers, Inc., is hereby directed to charge each person transported pursuant to this Order the fare of \$4.50 for one-way transportation or the fare of \$6 for round-trip transportation.

4. That Airport Baggage Carriers, Inc., is hereby directed to do a traffic analysis for the period November 1, 1984, through November 9, 1984, and determine (a) the number of passengers travelling between Greenbelt, Md., and Washington, D.C.; (b) the times at which these persons travel; and (c) to the extent possible, the names, addresses and telephone numbers of these persons, and to transmit that analysis to the Commission no later than Tuesday, November 13, 1984.

5. That, inasmuch as the State Aviation Administration has agreed to publicize the availability of the service directed by this Order through its dispatchers and by the distribution of notices at Greenbelt, Md., Airport Baggage Carriers, Inc., is directed to complement such advertisement in such ways as the carrier may deem feasible.

6. That the Commission retains full jurisdiction over this matter and shall enter such further orders herein as may be appropriate.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSION, COMMISSIONERS WORTHY, SCHIFTER AND SHANNON; Shannon, Commissioner, not participating.


WILLIAM H. MCGILVERY
Executive Director

