

Governments  
**SANBAG**  
Working Together

**FY 2009-2011  
Triennial Performance Audit  
of Victor Valley Transit Authority**

**Submitted to San Bernardino  
Associated Governments**

March 2013

**PMC**<sup>®</sup>  


 **CH2MHILL**

*PATTI POST & ASSOCIATES*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	i
Section I.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Overview of the Transit System .....	1
Section II .....	5
Operator Compliance Requirements .....	5
Section III .....	11
Prior Triennial Performance Audit Recommendations .....	11
Section IV .....	13
TDA Performance Indicators.....	13
Section V .....	21
Review of Operator Functions .....	21
Operations.....	23
Maintenance.....	28
Planning.....	30
Marketing .....	31
General Administration and Management .....	31
Section VI.....	34
Findings .....	34
Recommendations .....	35

## List of Tables and Graphs

Table I-1	Fare Schedule .....	3
Table I-2	Vehicle Fleet.....	4
Table II-1	Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix .....	5
Table II-2	Data Consistency .....	10
Table IV-1	TDA Performance Indicators Systemwide.....	13
Table IV-2	TDA Performance Indicators Fixed Route.....	14
Table IV-3	TDA Performance Indicators Demand Response.....	15
Table V-1	Vehicle Operations Performance Measures – Fixed Route .....	25
Table V-2	Vehicle Operations Performance Measures – Demand Response.....	26
Table V-3	Complaints per 100,000 Passengers .....	27
Table V-4	Maintenance Performance Measures – Fixed Route .....	29
Table V-5	Maintenance Performance Measures – Demand Response.....	29
Table V-6	Administration Performance Measures – Fixed Route .....	32
Table V-7	Administration Performance Measures – Demand Response .....	32
Graph IV-1	Operating Costs .....	16
Graph IV-2	Ridership .....	16
Graph IV-3	Operating Cost per Passenger.....	17
Graph IV-4	Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour.....	17
Graph IV-5	Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour .....	18
Graph IV-6	Fare Recovery Ratio .....	18

## Executive Summary

The San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) engaged the PMC consultant team to conduct the Transportation Development Act (TDA) triennial performance audit of the six public transit operators under its jurisdiction. The performance audit serves to ensure accountability in the use of public transportation revenue. This performance audit is conducted for Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) covering the most recent triennial period, fiscal years 2008-09 through 2010-11.

The audit includes a review of the following areas:

- Compliance with TDA Requirements
- Status of Prior Audit Recommendations
- System Performance Trends
- Functional Review

---

From the review, recommendations were developed to improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of VVTA.

### Compliance with TDA Requirements

VVTA has complied with most TDA requirements. Submittal of reports to the State Controller's Office, including the annual fiscal and compliance audits and the State Controller annual transit operator reports, were not on time. Responsibility for submittal of these financial documents lies with the SANBAG auditor, which operates independently of VVTA.

### Status of Prior Audit Recommendations

This section reviewed VVTA's actions to implement four prior audit recommendations. All of the recommendations from the prior audit were implemented.

### System Performance Trends

1. Operating costs systemwide increased by 14.4 percent over the past three years. Most of the cost increase was observed in FY 2009 when headways were reduced to 30 minutes on the most productive routes. Costs grew slowly or decreased in the succeeding years.
2. Ridership increased by 50.1 percent systemwide, with 56.2 percent ridership growth on fixed route but a 5.2 percent decline on demand response. Slight increases in ADA trips on demand response were offset by declines in subscription trips. VVTA reduced headways on key fixed routes which resulted in increased system ridership while drawing some passengers away from deviated services and demand-responsive service onto the bus. This reduction in demand response ridership with a correlated increase in bus passengers improves overall performance and cost efficiency.

3. The provision of vehicle service miles increased by 13.1 percent and vehicle service hours increased by 17.3 percent systemwide during the audit period, indications of a growing system.
4. As a result of stabilized cost and increased ridership and service hours, operating cost per passenger decreased by 23.8 percent and operating cost per vehicle service hour decreased by 2.4 percent systemwide. These performance measures indicate positive trends.
5. Passengers per vehicle service hour increased by 28.1 percent systemwide, also reflecting a positive trend in service effectiveness.
6. The fare recovery ratio for fixed route service increased from 17.9 percent in FY2008 to 22.9 percent in FY2011. The fare recovery ratio for demand response service decreased from 14.3 percent in FY2008 to 13.1 percent in FY2011. The farebox ratios for both transit modes exceeded their respective ratio requirements set by SANBAG.

---

## Functional Review

1. VVTA management staff was brought in-house as employees of the JPA in October 2010. As recommended in the previous performance audit, the Controller Finance function was transferred from a member jurisdiction (Victorville) to VVTA with the establishment of the Finance Director position which has improved the handling of financial and treasury related responsibilities. Bringing staff in-house was especially important because it allowed better management of the construction of the new operations facility.
2. Several recommendations of the 2007 Comprehensive Operations Analysis were implemented during the audit period. These include routes that have been restructured to make them more efficient and effective. Key routes increased service to provide 30 minute headways which resulted in significantly increased ridership on these routes. A new COA was underway after the audit period, starting February 2012.
3. VVTA applied for and received grants to support a Mobility Manager who works on a variety of projects including vanpools. Additionally, the Mobility Manager developed the FTA-required plan at the end of 2012 on how the agency intends to spend its Federal 5316 (JARC) and 5317 (New Freedoms) funds. VVTA had not spent these funds while awaiting approval for a mobility manager position and plan.
4. VVTA initiated a CMAQ-funded project (with funding for 3 years) in January 2011, the BV Link. The BV Link is a relatively new fixed route lifeline service that initially served between Barstow and Victorville operating 3 days per week, and serving medical facilities and shopping opportunities. Service to Fort Irwin began in May 2012. An

extension to the San Bernardino Valley (San Bernardino and Fontana) began in October 2012 to serve the Metrolink Stations and medical centers.

5. Although outside the audit period, VVTA constructed and moved into a new administration and operations facility beginning in November 2011, with all services moved by April 2012. The facility offers improved and expanded amenities and has the capacity to accommodate up to 100 buses which is more than sufficient for the current and near-term fleet. It is a green energy efficient building with photovoltaic shade structures that produce enough electricity for the facility as well as provide vehicle parking shade. Providing shade for vehicles reduces time needed to cool down vehicles thus reducing fuel consumption and emissions. The new facility also improved overall morale among the contractor employees.
6. Additional significant capital purchases were made during the audit period to improve operations and safety including Global Positioning Systems for improved dispatching plus real time bus location via the web; Automatic Passenger Counters; automated bus stop annunciators; and video surveillance.

## Recommendations

<i>Performance Audit Recommendation</i>	<i>Background</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
#1 Develop and Retain a Facility Maintenance Plan	VVTA recently moved into a new facilities building with more space and modern features. However, with noted construction issues identified by VVTA staff in some areas of the facility, a plan to maintain the facility should be retained and VVTA management staff given responsibility to implement the plan in efforts to control cost and maintain facility functionality.	High Priority
#2 Submit Separate Annual State Controller's Reports for Fixed Route and Direct Access	VVTA has been submitting a combined report to the State for both fixed route and paratransit. As Direct Access is a paratransit service exclusive for ADA passengers, State Controller Report instructions require the filing of separate reports between the two modes, one for general public service and another for exclusive service. The Controller's instructions state "...a separate report must be filed for each type of service provided: General Public Use Service or Specialized Service exclusive for elderly and/or handicapped..." These two reports	High Priority

<b><i>Performance Audit Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Background</i></b>	<b><i>Timeline</i></b>
	should be submitted within the timelines prescribed by the instructions.	
#3 Increase VVTA Administrative Staff	<p>VVTA has traditionally had a very small administrative management staff. To help ensure all administrative tasks and functions of a growing transit agency are covered and backed up, consideration should be given to increase the level of administrative management staff. Possible areas that could benefit from additional staff support include planning, government relations, grants and asset management, and accounting. Also, given that VVTA has a large student ridership, consideration should also be made to expand media relations to include digital content such as social media. An internship type position could be an appropriate measure for this need.</p> <p>Additional expansion of staff should be made in the context of the recent Consolidation Study and its findings.</p>	High Priority
#4 Plan for fare adjustment or increase as conditions warrant	The Operations and Growth Analysis completed in 2007 recommended a fare increase. VVTA held the required hearings to increase the fares but decided not to implement the fare increase in light of the economic recession. VVTA should continue its evaluation and planning for fare adjustments in light of improving economic and operational conditions.	Medium Priority
#5 Provide Systemwide Map	VVTA should develop a systemwide map depicting the fixed routes and paratransit service coverage areas. A systemwide map would provide improved customer service through visualization of route connections within VVTA and other transit systems. A digital system map should be first developed for the VVTA web site to coincide with the individual route maps. The digital version enables a low cost alternative and instant	Medium Priority

<b>Performance Audit Recommendation</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	<p>reach to passengers with digital access. Printing and distribution of a printed map may not be as cost effective, but should be considered for use based on the effectiveness and distribution of existing printed individual maps.</p>	

## Section I

### Introduction

The San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) engaged the PMC consultant team to conduct the Transportation Development Act (TDA) triennial performance audit of the six public transit operators under its jurisdiction in San Bernardino County. This performance audit is conducted for the Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) covering the most recent triennial period, fiscal years 2008-09 through 2010-11.

The purpose of the performance audit is to evaluate VVTA's effectiveness and efficiency in its use of TDA funds to provide public transit in its service area. This evaluation is required as a condition for continued receipt of these funds for public transportation purposes. In addition, the audit evaluates VVTA's compliance with the conditions specified in the California Public Utilities Code. This task involves ascertaining whether VVTA is meeting the PUC's reporting requirements and is endeavoring to implement prior audit recommendations made to the agency. Moreover, the audit includes calculations of transit service performance indicators and a detailed review of the agency's departments and organizational functioning. From the analysis that has been undertaken, a set of recommendations has been made for the agency which is intended to improve the performance of transit operations.

In summary, this TDA audit affords the agency board and management the opportunity for an independent, constructive and objective evaluation of the organization and its operations that otherwise might not be available. The methodology for the audit included in-person interviews with transit management, collection and review of agency documents, data analysis, and on-site observations. The *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities, September 2008* (third edition) published by the California Department of Transportation was used to guide in the development and conduct of the audit.

### Overview of the Transit System

VVTA was formed in 1974 as a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) between the Cities of Adelanto and Victorville, and San Bernardino County. Upon their incorporation in 1988, the Town of Apple Valley and the City of Hesperia joined the JPA. The JPA was updated in 2002 to change the percentages each jurisdiction pays for administrative services. In 2006, the percentages were finalized to 20 percent for each jurisdiction.

VVTA is overseen by a board of five members, one representing each member jurisdiction. The system is directed by a General Manager who is in turn supported by a small administrative staff. The administrative functions were performed through a private contractor until October 2010 when all administrative functions were brought in-house using VVTA employees. Operations and maintenance are contracted to a private transportation management company. Operations are also overseen by the VVTA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC is the working group for the VVTA Board composed of a staff member from each of the cities and the County who is generally appointed by the City Council/County Supervisors. The TAC takes direction from the VVTA Board to make recommendations on policy issues. In addition, TAC reviews monthly all

suggested Board agenda items and decides on what actions to recommend to the Board for approval.

Based on data from the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of the four subject cities is 306,976. The city of Victorville had 115,903 people, Hesperia 90,173 and Apple Valley 69,135. These three cities comprise about 90 percent of the total population. The remaining city of Adelanto and its 31,765 inhabitants make up the remaining 10 percent of the population. Transit is also provided to County residents covered within the VVTA service area.

Among some of notable changes during the audit period was that VVTA reduced headways to 30 minutes on key routes in FY 2008-09. This increased vehicle service hours and miles and produced a jump in fixed-route ridership. An Operations and Growth Analysis was completed prior to this audit period with most of the study's recommendations implemented over the last few years including the change in headways. However, others, like a fare increase, were delayed due in part to the economic recession. A new Comprehensive Operations Analysis has been underway which includes a separate study commissioned by SANBAG as an "add on" to the VVTA contract using the same consulting firm, AECOM, Inc. to evaluate the feasibility of consolidating the operations of VVTA, Barstow Area Transit and Needles Transit.

VVTA currently operates the following services:

*Regional Fixed Route:* Comprised of 11 routes that cover the urban areas of the Victor Valley. These routes meet at transfer points to enable riders to reach destinations such as shopping, medical, recreational and government facilities. Key fixed routes run on 30 minute headways, with the remainder running on 60 minute headways. The Saturday schedule is reduced by eliminating the first and last trips that run on weekdays.

*County Deviated Fixed Route:* Comprised of three routes that provide service to the County areas of Helendale, Lucerne Valley, Oro Grande, Pinon Hills, Phelan and Wrightwood. Some early morning trips do not operate on Saturdays consistent with reduced Saturday fixed route service. The Tri-Community route operates on 90 minute headways, with certain off peak hours increasing to two hour headways. The Lucerne Valley service operates on 90 minute to 2 hour headways for the full route departing from the Apple Valley Post Office. The Helendale service operates on 2 hour headways.

*Deviated Fixed Route:* Deviation routes are comprised of general riding public commingled with ADA certified riders within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of the deviated route. Passengers requesting a route deviation are charged an extra fee.

*ADA Paratransit Service:* Direct Access serves Adelanto, Apple Valley, Hesperia, and Victorville. Subscription service is also offered and has been primarily used to serve clients attending workshop centers for the developmentally disabled. The paratransit service area is divided into 3 zones defined by geographic distance from the fixed routes. Zone 1 comprises up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile band on either side of the fixed routes. Zone 2 is the band from  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles to 1.5 mile, and Zone 3 is beyond 1.5 miles. Boundaries for Zone 3 are determined for each community based on need for service and road accessibility.

Reservations may be made 1 day to 14 days in advance. Operators take reservations from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Sunday and an automated voice mail system accepts reservation requests at other times.

VVTA continues its Greyhound bus ticket subsidy program. The program sells Greyhound bus service from Victorville and Riverside to San Bernardino and Barstow at half price. This program came about as a result of the annual unmet needs hearings, and fulfills service gaps to the cities of San Bernardino, Riverside and Barstow.

VVTA buses operate from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturdays. There is no transit service on Sundays or the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. The current fare structure for VVTA transit service is shown in Table I-1:

**Table I-1  
Fare Schedule**

	<b>Fixed Routes</b>	<b>County Routes</b>	<b>County Deviated Service</b>
<b>Regular</b>	\$ 1.25	\$ 2.25	\$ 2.00
<b>Student</b>	\$ 1.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 2.00
<b>Senior &amp; Disabled</b>	\$ 0.60	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.00
<b>Children 5 &amp; Under</b>	Free	Free	Free
<b>Day Pass</b>			
Fixed Route Regular	\$ 3.50		
Fixed Route Student	\$ 3.25		
Fixed Route Senior & Disabled	\$ 1.75		
County Regular		\$ 5.50	
County Student		\$ 4.50	
County Senior & Disabled		\$ 2.75	
<b>31-Day Pass</b>			
Regular	\$ 50.00	\$ 75.00	
Student	\$ 40.00	\$ 65.00	
Senior & Disabled	\$ 25.00	\$ 35.00	
	<b>ADA Fares</b>		
<b>Direct Access</b>			
Zone 1	\$ 2.50		
Zone 2	\$ 4.50		
Zone 3	\$ 6.00		

By the end of the audit period there were 76 active vehicles in the fleet, 36 for fixed-route service and 40 for demand-response. The large fixed route buses are primarily CNG, while the smaller paratransit vehicles are both gasoline and CNG powered.

Table I-2 shows the transit fleet.

**Table I-2  
Vehicle Fleet**

Description/ Manufacturer	Yr Built	# Vehicles	Seats
CHEVY Low Floor Van	2008	1	3+1wc
DODGE caravan	2011	10	3+1wc
ELDORADO/Aerotech 240	2002	1	7+3wc
ELDORADO/CalTrans TypeVI	2002	7	11+2wc
ELDORADO/Aerotech 220	2005	15	12+2wc
ELDORADO/Aerotech 220	2007	2	12+2wc
ELDORADO AERO ELITE	2008	4	16+2 wc
ELDORADO AERO ELITE	2009	4	24+2 wc
BLUEBIRD/xcl 102	2003	1	27+0 wc
BLUEBIRD	2001	1	21+2wc
BLUEBIRD	2001	2	32+2wc
NABI	2002	2	33+2wc
NABI / 40LFW-29.02	2004	2	33+2wc
BLUEBIRD	2001	4	32+2wc
NABI	2002	2	33+2wc
BlueBird	2006	5	24+2wc
NABI / 40LFW-40	2008	7	33 + 2wc
NABI / 40LFW-40	2010	6	33 + 2wc
Total		76	

Source: VVTA. Fleet as of FY 2010-11.

## Section II

### Operator Compliance Requirements

This section of the audit report contains the analysis of VVTA's ability to comply with state requirements for continued receipt of TDA funds. The evaluation uses the guidebook, *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, September 2008 (third edition)*, which was developed by the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to assess transit operators. The updated guidebook contains a checklist of eleven measures taken from relevant sections of the Public Utilities Code and the California Code of Regulations. Each of these requirements is discussed in the table below, including a description of the system's efforts to comply with the requirements. In addition, the findings from the compliance review are described in the text following the table.

<b>TABLE II-1</b> <b>Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix</b>		
<b>Operator Compliance Requirements</b> (in order shown in <i>Performance Audit Guidebook</i> )	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Compliance Efforts</b>
<p>The transit operator submitted annual reports to the RTPA based upon the Uniform System of Accounts and Records established by the State Controller. Report is due 90 days after end of fiscal year (Sept. 28) for paper filing, or 110 days (Oct. 18) if filed electronically (internet).</p>	<p>Public Utilities Code, Section 99243</p>	<p>Completion/submittal dates (internet filing):</p> <p>FY 2009: January 28, 2010            FY 2010: October 18, 2010            FY 2011: October 19, 2011</p> <p>Reports were submitted after the specified deadline for two fiscal years during the audit period. The report for FY2009 was late in part because of a finding made by the fiscal auditor that took time to resolve. The report for FY2011 was late by one day.</p> <p>To note, the State Controller requires separate reports for transit services open to the general public and services exclusive to the elderly or handicapped. VVTA has filed only one report each year for both services. A recommendation is made to file separate reports.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Partial Compliance.</b></p>

**TABLE II-1  
Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix, continued**

<b>Operator Compliance Requirements</b> (in order shown in <i>Performance Audit Guidebook</i> )	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Compliance Efforts</b>
<p>The operator has submitted annual fiscal and compliance audits to its RPTE and to the State Controller within 180 days following the end of the fiscal year (Dec. 27), or has received the appropriate 90 day extension by the RTPA allowed by law.</p>	<p>Public Utilities Code, Section 99245</p>	<p>Completion/submittal dates:                       FY 2009: December 15, 2010                      FY 2010: June 7, 2011                      FY 2011: July 15, 2012.</p> <p>Reports were submitted after the specified deadline in FYs 2009, 2010 and 2011. According to VVTA staff, reports were late because of a delay by the SANBAG auditors in conducting the audits.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Not in Compliance.</b></p>
<p>The CHP has, within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim submitted by an operator, certified the operator's compliance with Vehicle Code Section 1808.1 following a CHP inspection of the operator's terminal.</p>	<p>Public Utilities Code, Section 99251</p>	<p>VVTA participates in the CHP Driver Pull Notice Compliance Program in which the CHP has conducted inspections within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim submitted by the Authority. Inspections were conducted at facilities in Hesperia. The inspections applicable to this audit were completed:</p> <p>March 4, 2009                      March 4, 2010                      March 4, 2011</p> <p>All inspections received satisfactory ratings.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Complied.</b></p>
<p>The operator's claim for TDA funds is submitted in compliance with rules and regulations adopted by the RTPA for such claims.</p>	<p>Public Utilities Code, Section 99261</p>	<p>As a condition of approval, VVTA's annual claim for Local Transportation Funds and State Transit Assistance is submitted in compliance with rules and regulations adopted by SANBAG.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Complied.</b></p>

**TABLE II-1  
Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix, continued**

<b>Operator Compliance Requirements</b> (in order shown in <i>Performance Audit Guidebook</i> )	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Compliance Efforts</b>
<p>If an operator serves urbanized and non-urbanized areas, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to the ratio determined by the rules and regulations adopted by the RPTA.</p>	<p>Public Utilities Code, Section 99270.1</p>	<p>VVTA is subject to a 15% farebox ratio for fixed route service and a 10% farebox ratio for demand response service, as granted by SANBAG in 1997. VVTA's farebox ratios using NTD data are as follows:</p> <p>Fixed Route                      FY 2009: 18.9%                      FY 2010: 19.7%                      FY 2011: 22.9%</p> <p>Demand Response                      FY 2009: 13.6%                      FY 2010: 13.5%                      FY 2011: 13.1%</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Complied.</b></p>
<p>The operator's operating budget has not increased by more than 15% over the preceding year, nor is there a substantial increase or decrease in the scope of operations or capital budget provisions for major new fixed facilities unless the operator has reasonably supported and substantiated the change(s).</p>	<p>Public Utilities Code, Section 99266</p>	<p>Percentage increase in VVTA's operating budget:</p> <p>FY 2009: 9.3%                      FY 2010: 3.7%                      FY 2011: 0.9%</p> <p>Source: NTD data</p> <p>Note: VVTA expanded its service significantly in FY2009, going from 60 minute headways to 30 minute headways on key routes.</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Complied.</b></p>

**TABLE II-1  
Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix, continued**

<b>Operator Compliance Requirements</b> (in order shown in <i>Performance Audit Guidebook</i> )	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Compliance Efforts</b>
The operator's definition of performance measures are consistent with Public Utilities Code Section 99247, including (a) operating cost, (b) operating cost per passenger, (c) operating cost per vehicle service hour, (d) passengers per vehicle service hour, (e) passengers per vehicle service mile, (f) total passengers, (g) transit vehicle, (h) vehicle service hours, (i) vehicle service miles, and (j) vehicle service hours per employee.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99247	VVTA performance measures are defined in accordance with PUC requirements.  <b>Conclusion: Complied</b>
If the operator serves an urbanized area, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to one-fifth (20 percent), unless it is in a county with a population of less than 500,000, in which case it must maintain a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to three-twentieths (15%), if so determined by the RTPA.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99268.2, 99268.3, & 99268.1	This is not applicable to VVTA, which is subject to an intermediate ratio as noted previously in PUC Section 99270.1.  <b>Conclusion: Not Applicable.</b>
If the operator serves a rural area, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to one-tenth (10 percent).	Public Utilities Code, Section 99268.2, 99268.4, & 99268.5	This is not applicable to VVTA, which is subject to an intermediate ratio adopted by SANBAG as noted previously in PUC Section 99270.1.  <b>Conclusion: Not Applicable.</b>
The current cost of the operator's retirement system is fully funded with respect to the officers and employees of its public transportation system, or the operator is implementing a plan approved by the RTPA, which will fully fund the retirement system for 40 years.	Public Utilities Code, Section 99271	VVTA management staff was brought in-house on October 1, 2010. Staff participates in the CalPERS program.  <b>Conclusion: Complied.</b>

<b>TABLE II-1 Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix, continued</b>		
<b>Operator Compliance Requirements</b> (in order shown in <i>Performance Audit Guidebook</i> )	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Compliance Efforts</b>
<p>If the operator receives state transit assistance funds, the operator makes full use of funds available to it under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 before TDA claims are granted.</p>	<p>California Code of Regulations, Section 6754(a)(3)</p>	<p>VVTA utilizes federal funds that are available to the agency, as reported in the annual State Controller reports.</p> <p>FY 2009: Operations (\$986,057) Capital (\$5,079,941)</p> <p>FY 2010: Operations (\$0) Capital (\$4,462,998)</p> <p>FY 2011: Operations (\$1,502,377) Capital (\$4,312,988)</p> <p><b>Conclusion: Complied.</b></p>

**Findings and Observations from Operator Compliance Requirements Matrix**

1. VVTA has complied with most TDA requirements. Submittal of reports to the State Controller’s Office, including the annual fiscal and compliance audits and the State Controller annual transit operator reports, were not on time. Responsibility for submittal of these financial documents lies with the SANBAG auditor, which operates independently of VVTA.
2. The State Controller requires separate reports for transit services open to the general public and services exclusive to the elderly or handicapped. VVTA has filed only one report each year for both services. A recommendation is made to file separate reports.
3. VVTA has received “satisfactory” terminal ratings at the Hesperia maintenance facility where the vehicles are maintained.
4. VVTA’s operating budget increased by less than 10 percent in each of the years of the audit period.
5. The farebox ratio increased for fixed route service during the audit period. The farebox ratio for demand-response service decreased slightly during that period but remained above the requirement. VVTA has complied with the minimum TDA farebox recovery ratios established by SANBAG.

**Table II-2  
Data Consistency**

TDA Statistic	Source	Audit Review Period		
		FY09	FY10	FY11
Total Operating Expense	FTA National Transit Database	\$8,771,557	\$9,097,256	\$9,177,112
	State Controller Report	\$10,455,197	\$10,733,218	\$9,131,646
	Audited Financial Statements	\$8,816,039	\$9,076,384	\$9,139,377
Farebox Revenue	FTA National Transit Database	\$1,527,217	\$1,636,073	\$1,842,622
	State Controller Report	\$1,398,124	\$1,477,353	\$1,697,047
	Audited Financial Statements	\$1,415,539	\$1,458,643	\$1,697,047
FTEs	FTA National Transit Database	NA	NA	NA
	State Controller Report (2,000 hrs/FTE)	147	160	166
	Audited Financial Statements	NA	NA	NA
	TransTrack (2,080 hrs/FTE)	127	154	159
	TransTrack (2,000 hrs/FTE)	132	160	166
Vehicle Service Hours	FTA National Transit Database	135,783	141,077	142,997
	NTD S-10 from TransTrack	135,783	139,711	142,997
	State Controller Report	135,784	141,077	142,997
	Audited Financial Statements	NA	NA	NA
Passengers	FTA National Transit Database	1,345,659	1,482,515	1,686,157
	State Controller Report	1,345,639	1,482,495	1,686,163
	Audited Financial Statements	NA	NA	NA
	NTD S-10 from TransTrack	1,345,659	1,482,555	1,685,904

Data consistency between the reports that VVTA prepares for external agencies shows minor differences in the statistics. Table II-2 shows the data reported by VVTA in its National Transit Database (NTD) reports, State Controller Reports, Audited Financial Statements, and in TransTrack. While most of the numbers matched or were close, there was improvement toward the end of the audit period.

New processes allow for comparing NTD information to financial information from the accounting system prior to reporting for each year. Since the accounting system is providing data for TransTrack, the State Controller's report, and the annual fiscal audit, these numbers should also be comparatively consistent. The annual fiscal audit is produced much later than either the NTD or the State Controller's report. Adjusting entries made by the fiscal auditor, such as for depreciation expense, would not be reflected in either of the earlier reports. Therefore, the annual audited financials may not match exactly with the NTD or State Controller's reports.

## Section III

### Prior Triennial Performance Audit Recommendations

VVTA's efforts to implement the recommendations made in the prior triennial audit are examined in this section of the report. For this purpose, each prior recommendation for the agency is described, followed by a discussion of the agency's efforts to implement the recommendation. Conclusions concerning the extent to which the recommendations have been adopted by the agency are then presented.

#### Prior Recommendation 1

##### Create Finance Officer Position

Actions taken by VVTA: The position of Finance Director was filled in October 2010. With a Finance Director, VVTA has been able to better separate the Treasurer and Controller functions. VVTA also acquired a new finance software package to assist with these functions. Allocation of expenses and revenues are accomplished by the software chart of accounts data being imported into TransTrack. These allocations underwent a major review in January 2011.

VVTA presents actual revenue and costs against budget during the mid-year budget review process.

Conclusion: This recommendation has been implemented.

#### Prior Recommendation 2

##### Review Operating Cost Allocation Between Vehicle Operations, Maintenance and Administration Functions

#### Actions taken by VVTA:

The cost allocation methodology was reviewed by the Finance Officer in January 2011. The cost allocation methodology is used to separate expenses among transit modes for the National Transit Database. Administration expenses are allocated on a 50/50 basis between fixed route and paratransit, while other operations expenses are allocated according to service hours by mode and maintenance costs by vehicle for each service.

Conclusion: This recommendation has been implemented.

#### Prior Recommendation 3

##### Actively Plan for Transition Into New Facility.

Actions taken by VVTA: VVTA constructed and moved into a new administration and operations facility beginning in November 2011, with all services moved by April 2012. The facility offers improved and expanded amenities and has the capacity to accommodate up to 100 buses which is more than sufficient for the current and near-term fleet. It is a green energy efficient building with photovoltaic shade structures that produce enough electricity for the facility as well as provide vehicle parking shade. Providing shade for vehicles reduces time needed to cool down vehicles thus reducing fuel consumption and emissions. The new facility also improved overall morale among the contractor employees.

However, according to VVTA management, there are construction problems with the facility which must be addressed. The construction contractor has withdrawn, leaving the performance bond company to resolve and pay for the needed repairs. VVTA should establish a facility maintenance plan to achieve cost effective means to ensure the proper long-term functioning of the facility, but which has been delayed by the construction problems and withdrawal of the construction contractor.

Conclusion: This recommendation has been implemented, with a recommendation to establish a facility maintenance plan.

#### Prior Recommendation 4

Investigate Potential Discrepancies in Reported Passenger Miles.

Actions taken by VVTA: The prior problems stemmed from having too many people from both VVTA and the contractor involved in the process. As a result, some required information was not collected. VVTA and the contractor have since dedicated specific staff to handle this function, the VVTA Clerk of the Board being one of them.

For fixed-route, the contractor prepares the list of trips and creates a smaller list of sample days and trips in compliance with FTA Circular 2710.1A. A specific person from the contractor ensures that the drivers collect the required detailed information on the trips to be sampled, a minimum of four per week. The VVTA Clerk of the Board will then enter the data into TransTrack. The TransTrack software program had been previously rounding the numbers which was reducing the data accuracy. This has since been resolved, according to VVTA staff.

VVTA has invested in automated passenger counters (APCs) that increase the reliability of the data while meeting the required sample sizes. During the testing period, VVTA staff conduct ride checks to validate the counts. Once the automated passenger counters on the vehicles have successfully completed their one-year test period and certified by FTA, the system will be used to collect passenger mile data.

Passenger mile data for demand-responsive service is gathered through the Trapeze software.

Conclusion: This recommendation has been implemented.

## Section IV

### TDA Performance Indicators

This section reviews VVTA's performance in providing transit service to the community in an efficient and effective manner. TDA requires that at least five specific performance indicators be reported, which are contained in the following tables. Farebox recovery ratio is not one of the five specific indicators, but is a requirement for continued TDA funding. Therefore, farebox calculation is also included. Two additional performance indicators, operating cost per mile and average fare per passenger, are included as well. Findings from the analysis are contained in the section following the tables.

Tables IV-1 through IV-3 provides the performance indicators for VVTA systemwide, fixed route and demand response. Charts are also provided to depict the trends in the indicators. Data in the tables and charts were derived from several sources, including National Transit Database (NTD) reports, Audited Financial Statements, State Controller Reports and the TransTrack data reporting system used by all the operators in San Bernardino County. This is noted in footnotes below the tables.

**Table IV-1**  
**TDA Performance Indicators**  
**Systemwide**

Performance Data and Indicators	Audit Period				% Change FY 2008-2011
	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Operating Cost	\$8,024,338	\$8,771,557	\$9,097,256	\$9,177,112	14.4%
Total Passengers	1,123,283	1,345,659	1,482,515	1,686,157	50.1%
Vehicle Service Hours	122,063	135,783	141,077	142,997	17.2%
Vehicle Service Miles	2,115,337	2,263,031	2,351,163	2,392,053	13.1%
Employee FTE's	107.5	132.1	159.9	165.5	54.0%
Passenger Fares	1,346,339	1,527,217	1,636,073	1,842,622	36.9%
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$7.14	\$6.52	\$6.14	\$5.44	-23.8%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$65.74	\$64.60	\$64.48	\$64.18	-2.4%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Mile	\$3.79	\$3.88	\$3.87	\$3.84	1.1%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	9.2	9.9	10.5	11.8	28.1%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.53	0.59	0.63	0.70	32.7%
Vehicle Service Hours per Employee	1,135.5	1,027.9	882.3	864.0	-23.9%
Average Fare per Passenger	\$1.20	\$1.13	\$1.10	\$1.09	-8.8%
Fare Recovery Ratio	16.8%	17.4%	18.0%	20.1%	19.7%
Consumer Price Index (CPI-Los Angeles)	3.5%	1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	-49.8%

Source: NTD and State Controller Reports

**Table IV-2  
TDA Performance Indicators  
Fixed Route**

Performance Data and Indicators	Audit Period				% Change FY 2008-2011
	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Operating Cost	\$5,481,125	\$6,250,622	\$6,576,584	\$6,551,629	19.5%
Total Passengers	1,011,566	1,241,185	1,378,597	1,580,298	56.2%
Vehicle Service Hours	84,182	98,564	103,939	105,041	24.8%
Vehicle Service Miles	1,458,200	1,667,559	1,760,771	1,788,906	22.7%
Employee FTE's	67.5	86.2	106.2	108.6	60.9%
Passenger Fares	\$983,854	\$1,183,358	\$1,295,060	\$1,498,363	52.3%
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$5.42	\$5.04	\$4.77	\$4.15	-23.5%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$65.11	\$63.42	\$63.27	\$62.37	-4.2%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Mile	\$3.76	\$3.75	\$3.74	\$3.66	-2.6%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	12.0	12.6	13.3	15.0	25.2%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.69	0.74	0.78	0.88	27.3%
Vehicle Service Hours per Employee	1,247.1	1,143.4	978.7	967.2	-22.4%
Average Fare per Passenger	\$0.97	\$0.95	\$0.94	\$0.95	-2.5%
Fare Recovery Ratio	17.9%	18.9%	19.7%	22.9%	27.4%
Consumer Price Index (CPI-Los Angeles)	3.5%	1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	-49.8%

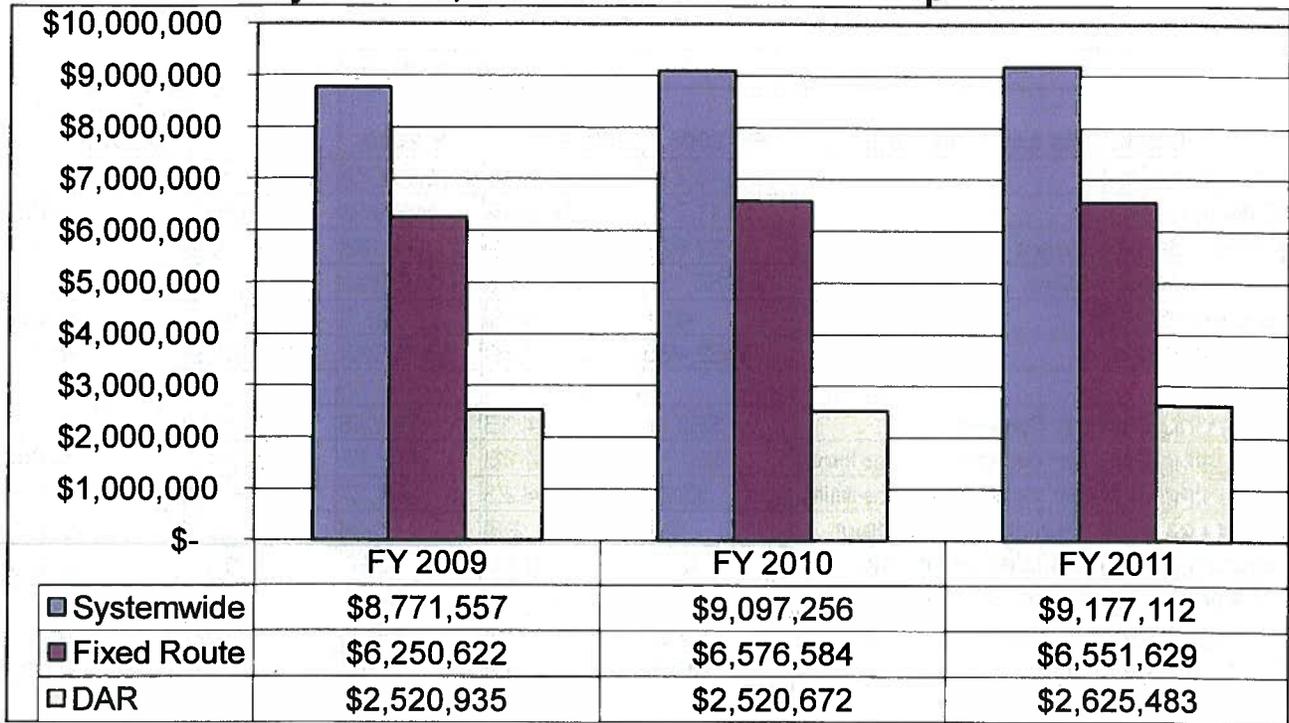
Source: NTD and State Controller Reports

**Table IV-3  
TDA Performance Indicators  
Demand Response**

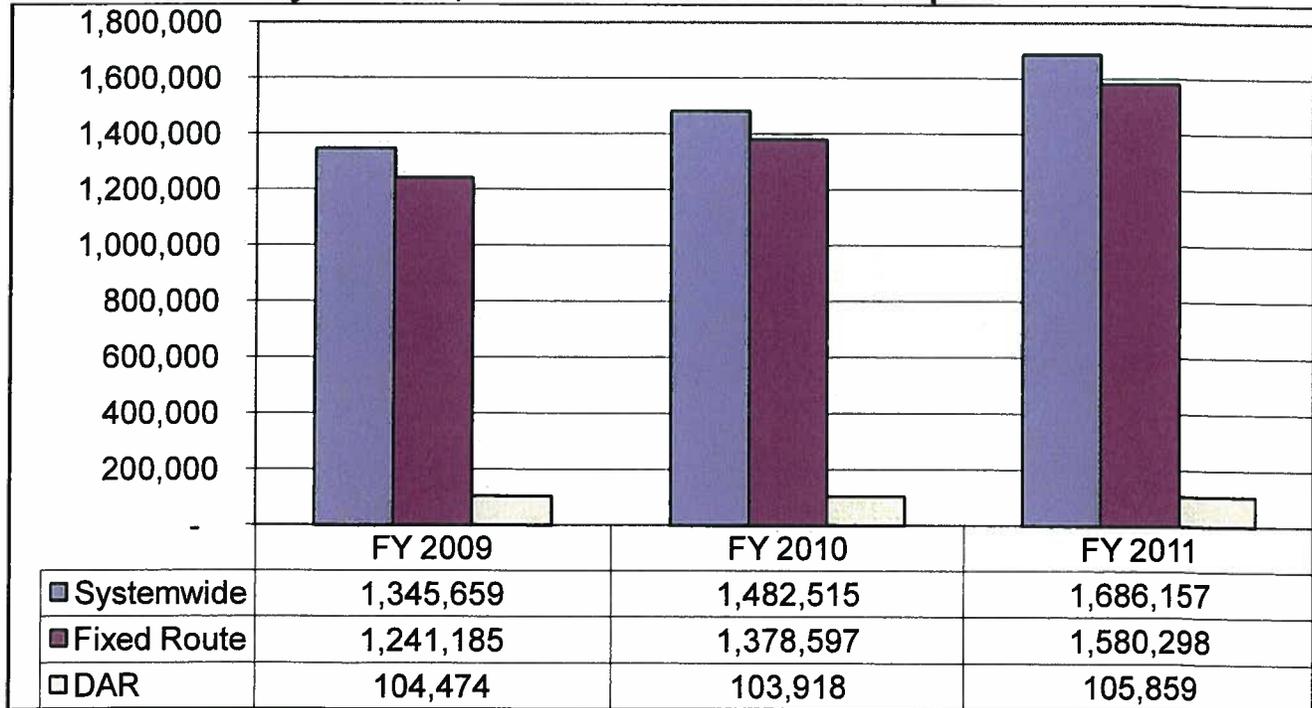
Performance Data and Indicators	Audit Period				% Change FY 2008-2011
	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Operating Cost	\$2,543,213	\$2,520,935	\$2,520,672	\$2,625,483	3.2%
Total Passengers	111,717	104,474	103,918	105,859	-5.2%
Vehicle Service Hours	37,881	37,219	37,138	37,956	0.2%
Vehicle Service Miles	657,137	595,472	590,392	603,147	-8.2%
Employee FTE's	40.1	45.9	53.7	54.7	36.3%
Passenger Fares	\$362,485	\$343,859	\$341,013	\$344,259	-5.0%
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$22.76	\$24.13	\$24.26	\$24.80	8.9%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour	\$67.14	\$67.73	\$67.87	\$69.17	3.0%
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Mile	\$3.87	\$4.23	\$4.27	\$4.35	12.5%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	-5.4%
Passengers per Vehicle Service Mile	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.18	3.2%
Vehicle Service Hours per Employee	944.7	810.9	691.6	694.4	-26.5%
Average Fare per Passenger	\$3.24	\$3.29	\$3.28	\$3.25	0.2%
Fare Recovery Ratio	14.3%	13.6%	13.5%	13.1%	-8.0%
Consumer Price Index (CPI-Los Angeles)	3.5%	1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	-49.8%

Source: NTD and State Controller Reports

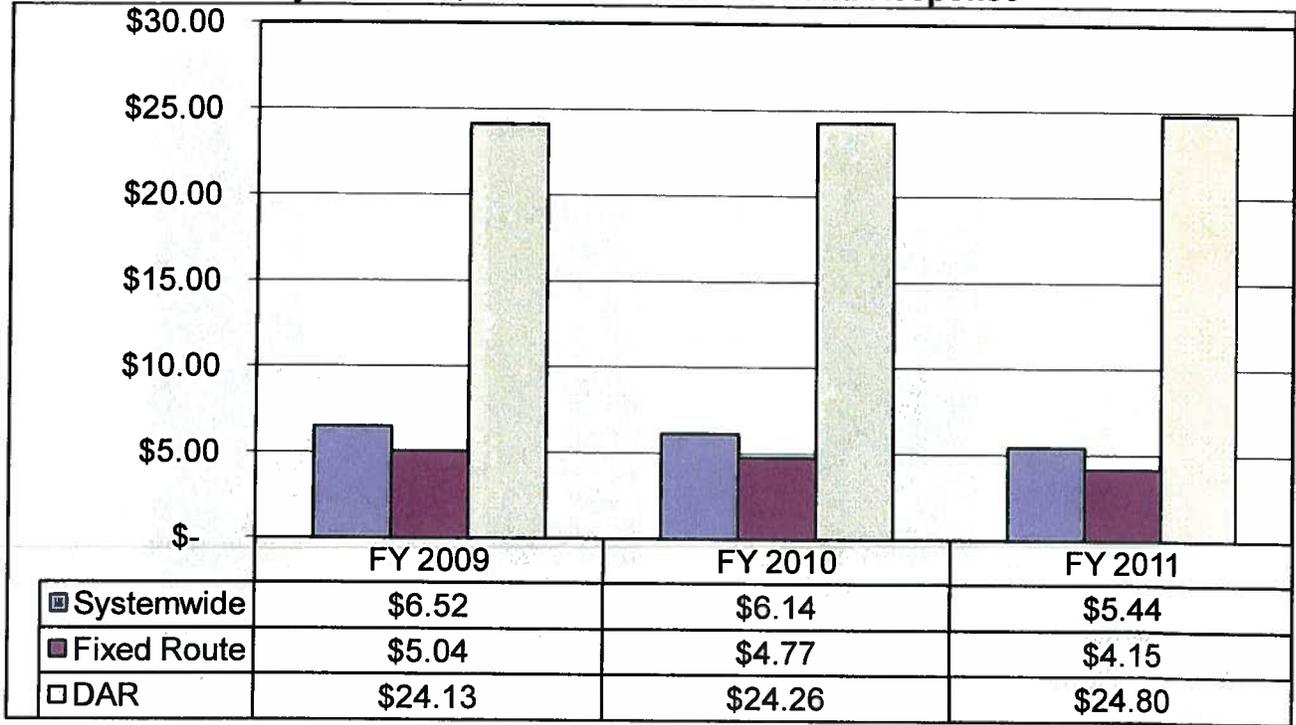
**Graph IV-1  
Operating Costs  
Systemwide, Fixed Route and Demand Response**



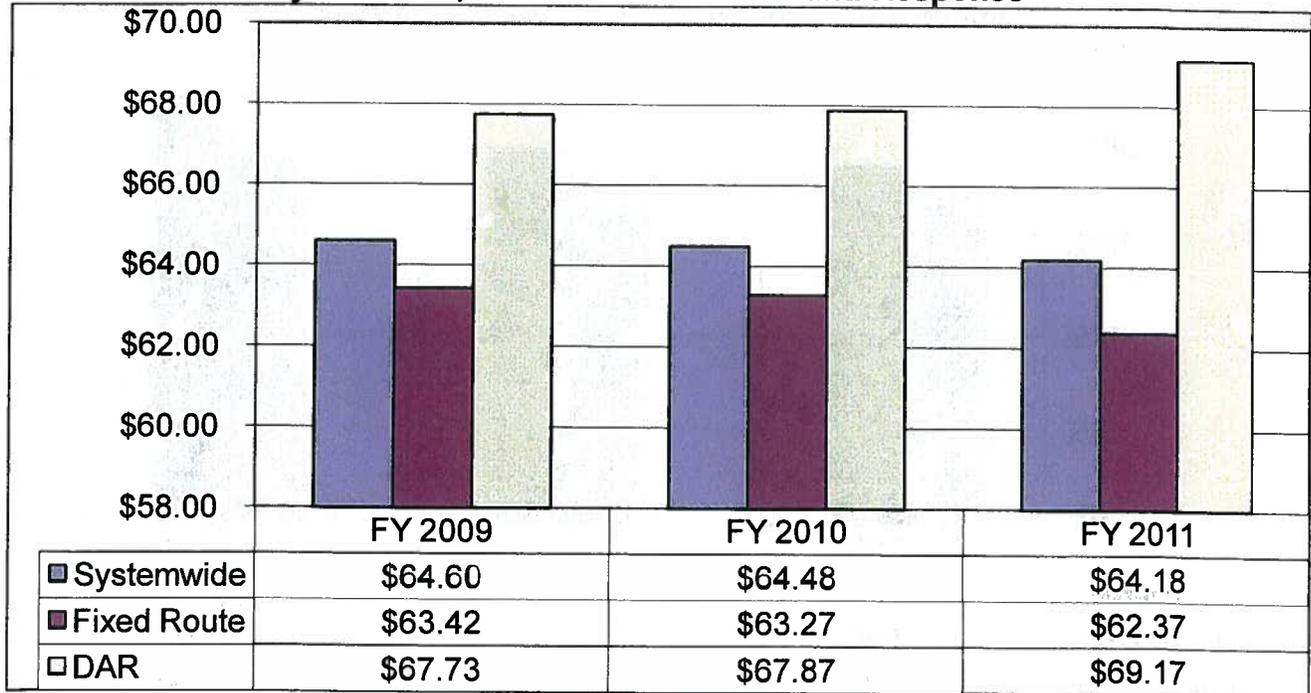
**Graph IV-2  
Ridership  
Systemwide, Fixed Route and Demand Response**



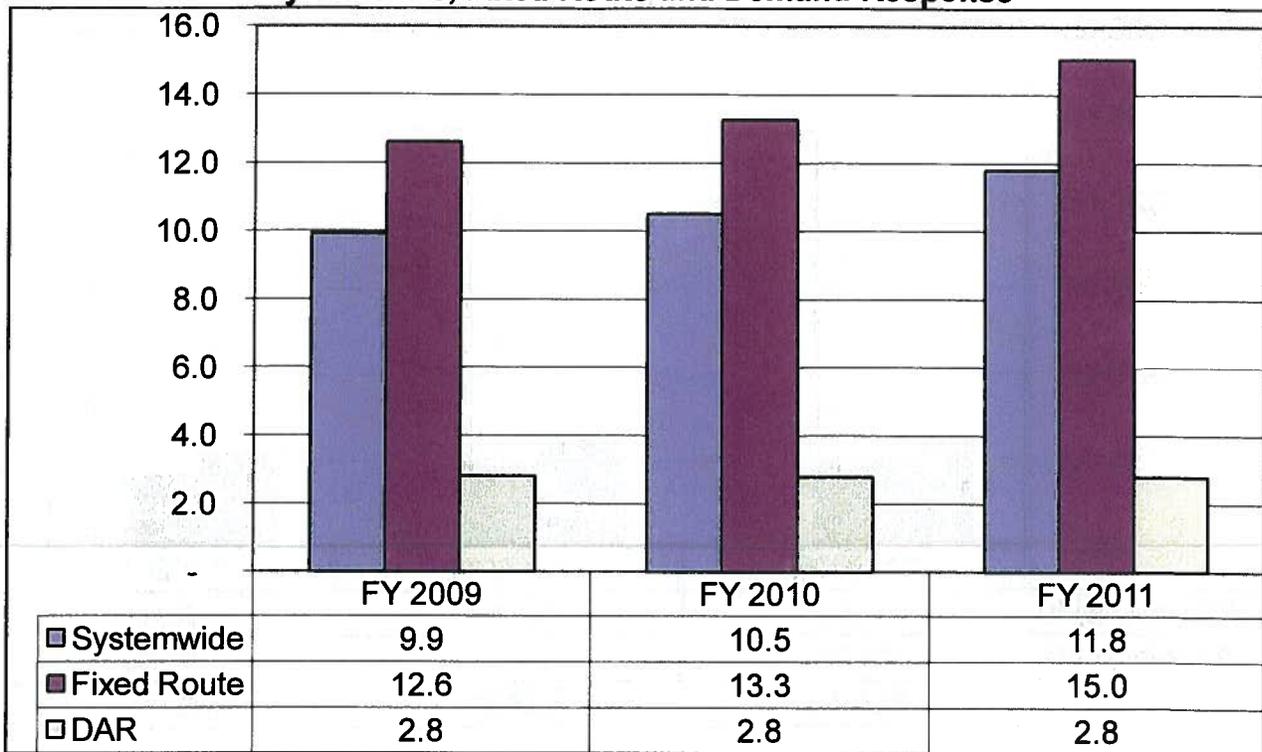
**Graph IV-3  
Operating Cost per Passenger  
Systemwide, Fixed Route and Demand Response**



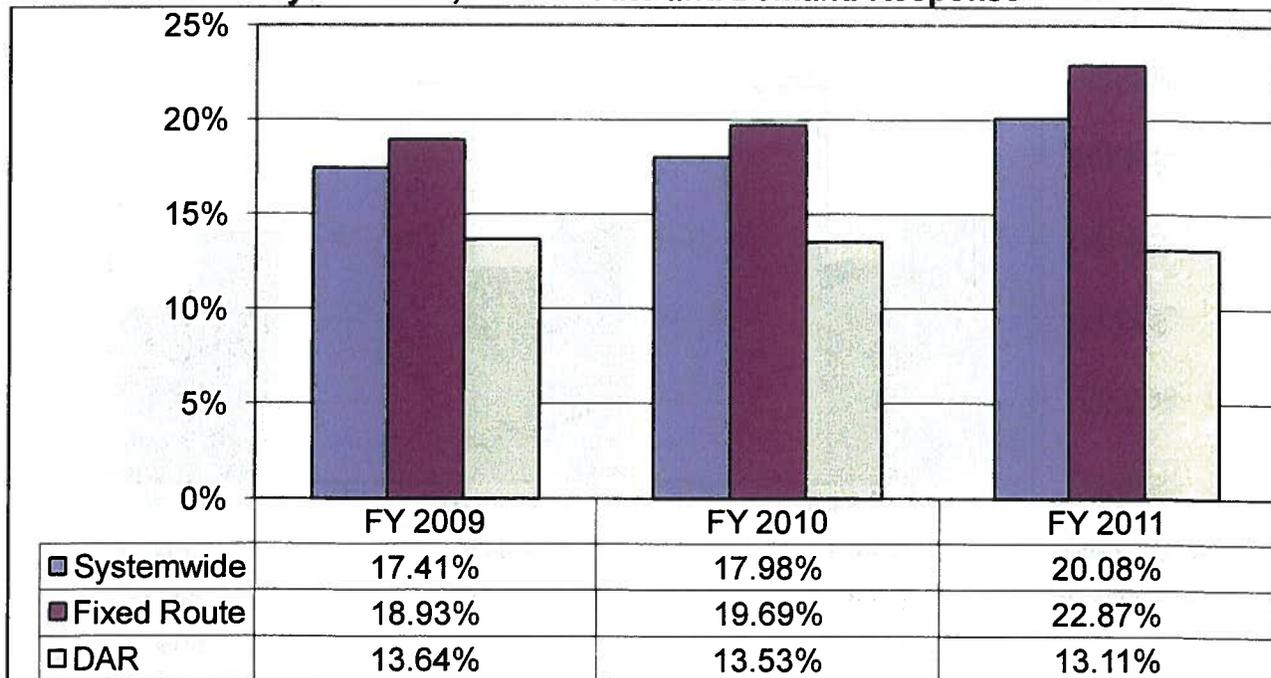
**Graph IV-4  
Operating Cost per Vehicle Service Hour  
Systemwide, Fixed Route and Demand Response**



**Graph IV-5  
Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour  
Systemwide, Fixed Route and Demand Response**



**Graph IV-6  
Fare Recovery Ratio  
Systemwide, Fixed Route and Demand Response**



## Findings from Verification of TDA Performance Indicators

1. Operating costs systemwide increased by 14.4 percent over the past three years. Fixed route operating costs increased by 19.5 percent and demand response costs increased by 3.2 percent. Most of the cost increase was observed in FY 2009 when fixed route frequencies were increased to provide more service. Systemwide costs grew more slowly after that.
2. Ridership increased by 50.1 percent systemwide, with 56.2 percent ridership growth on the fixed route side but a 5.2 percent decline on the demand response side. VVTA reduced headways on key fixed routes, increasing system ridership while drawing passengers away from the demand-responsive service, a planned service strategy to improve productivity.
3. The provision of vehicle service miles increased by 13.1 percent systemwide during the audit period. Vehicle service miles increased 22.7 percent on the fixed route service and fell 8.2 percent on the demand response service during the audit period.
4. The provision of vehicle service hours increased by 17.3 percent systemwide, jumping in FY2009 and growing more slowly after that. Vehicle service hours increased 24.8 percent on the fixed route service due to the decreased headways, and remained stable for demand response during the audit period.
5. Operating cost per passenger decreased by 23.8 percent systemwide. For fixed route service, cost per passenger decreased by 23.5 percent. For demand response service, cost per passenger increased by 8.9 percent. Fixed-route ridership rose steeply during the period but operating costs had a much smaller increase, leading to a drop in the operating cost per passenger.
6. Operating cost per vehicle service hour decreased by 2.4 percent systemwide, with a 4.2 percent decrease for fixed route but a 3.0 percent increase for demand response. Operating cost per vehicle service mile increased by 1.1 percent systemwide, with a 2.6 percent decrease for fixed route and a 12.5 percent increase for demand response. The slight increase in costs during the audit period for demand response, combined with a decrease in service miles, leads to a higher cost per mile.
7. Passengers per vehicle service hour increased by 28.1 percent systemwide, while passengers per vehicle service mile increased by 32.7 percent systemwide. For fixed route service, passengers per hour increased by 25.2 percent and passengers per mile increased by 27.3 percent. For demand response service, passengers per hour decreased by 5.4 percent and passengers per mile increased by 3.2 percent.
8. Estimated vehicle service hours per full time equivalent employee, which measures labor productivity, decreased by 23.9 percent over the past three years. The trend is the product of employee FTEs increasing at a faster pace than the growth in revenue hours. The operations contractor is addressing the challenge of a 30 percent turnover rate during initial training of new drivers as well as driver absenteeism.

9. The fare recovery ratio for fixed route service increased from 17.9 percent in FY 2008 to 22.9 percent in FY 2011. The fare recovery ratio for demand response service decreased from 14.3 percent in FY 2008 to 13.1 percent in FY 2011. Both modes met their respective farebox recovery requirements set by SANBAG.

## Section V

### Review of Operator Functions

This section provides an in-depth review of various functions within VVTA. The review highlights accomplishments, issues and/or challenges that were determined during the audit period. The following functions were reviewed at the Authority:

- Operations
- Maintenance
- Planning
- Marketing
- General Administration and Management

---

Within some departments are sub-functions that require review as well, such as Grants Administration that fall under General Administration.

Several changes and notable events have occurred at VVTA over the past three years, with several occurring slightly after the audit period. They include the following:

- VVTA brought administrative staff in-house as employees of the JPA in October 2010. As recommended by the previous performance audit, a Finance Officer position was included to improve the handling of financial and treasury related responsibilities. The staff now reports directly to the Board in a change that was cost-neutral or provided some savings. Bringing staff in-house was especially important because it allowed better management of the construction of the new operations facility.
- Several recommendations of the 2007 Comprehensive Operations Analysis were implemented during the audit period. These include routes that have been restructured to make them more efficient and effective. Key routes increased service in FY2008-09 to provide 30 minute headways which resulted in significantly increased ridership on these routes. New routes were established in West Victorville such as Route 54 and on Main Street while VVTA implemented same day service for ADA trips on a space available basis.
- A new COA was underway after the audit period, starting February 2012. This COA effort also includes an updated Short Range Transit Plan, with the current year's budget serving as an interim SRTP. The consultants conducting the COA drew from technology components such as Automated Passenger Counts (APCs) and enabling more data to be collected and analyzed. Most of the report was expected to be completed by the end of the 2013 fiscal year. A separate study commissioned by SANBAG as an "add on" to the COA

contract with the consultant is evaluating the potential consolidation of VVTA, City of Barstow transit service, and City of Needles transit service.

- The population of the service area continued to grow but more slowly than in the past. However, with improved transit service, ridership continued to grow. The rate of growth has been at a steadier pace without a spike in response to higher gas prices. This is positive because most of the ridership growth is attributed more to improved transit services rather than simple reaction to economic factors.
- VVTA applied for and received grants to support a Mobility Manager who works on a variety of projects including vanpools. Additionally, the Mobility Manager developed the FTA-required plan at the end of 2012 on how the agency intends to spend its Federal 5316 (JARC) and 5317 (New Freedoms) funds. VVTA had not spent these funds while awaiting approval for a mobility manager position and plan.
- VVTA initiated a CMAQ-funded project (with funding for 3 years) in January 2011, the BV Link. The BV Link is a relatively new fixed route lifeline service that initially served between Barstow and Victor Valley operating 3 days per week, and serving medical facilities and shopping opportunities. Service to Fort Irwin began in May 2012. The service meets the first and last trips on local City routes plus the first and last trips on local County routes. Ridership has been growing slowly. An extension to the San Bernardino Valley (San Bernardino and Fontana) began in October 2012 to serve the Metrolink Stations and medical centers.
- Due to Barstow Area Transit ending its shuttle service to Fort Irwin in May 2012, VVTA developed the NTC Commuter service with only six weeks to prepare. This service provides weekday service between Victorville, Barstow and Fort Irwin. The NTC Commuter bus becomes BV Link on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The service was budgeted relatively quickly with the goal of having it be self sufficient through fare revenue collection. Military personnel receive a subsidy to use the service while military contractors also ride the services. A six-month demonstration began in May 2012 and was approved as a formal part of VVTA's suite of services in November 2012.
- Significant capital purchases during the audit period included:
  - ✓ Global Positioning Systems for improved dispatching plus real time bus location via the web.
  - ✓ Automatic Passenger Counters
  - ✓ On board video surveillance
  - ✓ New Administration and Operations Facility – VVTA staff and the contractors moved in during the period of November 2011 through April 2012. The facility offers: improved maintenance capabilities; on-site fueling at the service island while vehicles are being cleaned; reduced energy consumption and emissions; and overhead photovoltaic cells that generate energy while providing shade and reduced emissions cooling cost for buses.

- VVTA became a Greyhound bus service ticket distributor as a result of feedback from the annual transit unmet needs hearings. This service fulfills service gaps created with the cancellation of the Victor Valley commuter service in June 2005. In working with SANBAG, VVTA offers a 50 percent subsidy on Greyhound tickets.

## **Operations**

All VVTA operational and maintenance services continue to be contracted with a private vendor. Historically, VVTA operations were consolidated under the transit contractor Veolia in January 2005 when the cities of Victorville and Adelanto ceased their own bus operations that were being operated through MOU's with VVTA. The latest contract with Veolia that drew five bidders became effective September 2011. It is a seven-year contract with three, one-year options. VVTA can cancel with or without cause with a 90 day-notice. The scope of work for the current contract was based on the functioning of the new operations and maintenance facility. Because of delays in completing the new facility, the last contract was extended on a month-to-month basis for 18 months.

The establishment of a new facility had been in progress for several years. VVTA moved into the new facility beginning in November 2011, with all services moved by April 2012. The facility has the capacity to accommodate up to 100 buses, more than sufficient for the current and near-term fleet. It is a green energy efficient building with photovoltaic shade structures that produce enough electricity for the facility as well as provide vehicle parking shade. Providing shade for vehicles reduces time needed to cool down vehicles thus reducing fuel consumption and emissions. A CNG fueling station is located on site, which went into operation before operations relocated.

The new facility has improved morale for both the transportation and maintenance staff. There is ample space for maintenance functions which have led to enhanced maintenance practices.

### **Contract Personnel**

Veolia currently employs 124 drivers. All employees are full time union members, with no part time operations staff. The contract allows for part-timers, but Veolia prefers to use full-time employees as jobs with benefits attract better employees and aids employee performance and retention.

Absenteeism is an on-going concern but has been less since the move into the new facility. All employees have better facilities, including a quiet room to rest and additional restrooms. The DRIVE Committee, made up of employees, suggests incentives to reduce absenteeism. Recently, all drivers showing up on time are given Bingo pieces for prizes including a day off and gift items. The contractor also makes contributions to a fund for good attendance, accident free driving, etc. that has resulted in purchases such as video game consoles for the break room. There are also penalties for unscheduled absences.

There are enough drivers to handle the existing VVTA schedule. The contractor recruits through the internet, their own web site, job search web sites, the EDD and the local press. The turnover

rate among new potential drivers is about 30 percent during their initial training. However, drivers who stay for at least the first six months generally remain on staff. Retention of drivers is influenced by competing job opportunities nearby.

There is a 90-day probation period for drivers. New drivers are evaluated every 30 days by a trainer. After the probationary period, drivers are evaluated every six months by a trainer riding along with them. There are seven road supervisors who can conduct the evaluations including a training manager, training instructor, and five behind-the-wheel trainers (drivers who train part time).

All new drivers receive training whether or not they already hold a commercial driver's license. Training consists of 40 hours of classroom, 40 hours behind the wheel and 40 hours in revenue service with a trainer. Retraining is triggered through events such as performance evaluations, or problems reported to management by spotters. Retraining is tailored to the issue found. All driver grievances have been resolved in-house with none having gone to arbitration since 2007.

Newer buses have seven cameras installed for safety and monitoring. Management uses random video monitoring to check on drivers, including pre-trip inspections. About 95 percent of the training is for fixed-route drivers. The most popular work assignments for the more senior drivers who require less retraining are on the ADA service.

According to TransTrack, service miles between accidents fluctuated during the audit period, ending at a rate of about 1 accident per 140,000 miles, well above industry standard of 1 accident per 100,000 miles. Claims from accidents are the responsibility of Veolia, and VVTA is indemnified from such actions. In addition, VVTA is a member entity of the Public Entity Risk Management Authority (PERMA), which provides additional liability insurance for public agencies.

### Direct Access Policies

Direct Access services are available to Direct Access certified riders per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Direct Access travels beyond the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile radius around a bus route with zonal fares that are charged based on the distance away from the bus route. Zone 1 comprises up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile band on either side of the fixed routes. Zone 2 is the band from  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles to 1.5 mile, and Zone 3 is beyond 1.5 miles. A trip between zones is charged the higher rate. In contrast, deviation routes are comprised of general riding public commingled with ADA certified riders within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of the deviated route.

ADA Ride, a third-party contractor, handles registration and eligibility. The application is Internet based, although they can also be completed over the phone or by mail. Support in filling out the application is available for those who need additional assistance.

Reservations may be made from 1 day to 14 days in advance. Reservations can be made daily from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Sunday. Reservation requests may be made by voice mail outside those times. The reservationist may negotiate the pick-up time within an hour, with a policy of no trip denials. When feasible, riders can be transferred between vehicles for efficiency.

Trapeze software optimizes trip assignments to vehicles every night. On-time pick-up is between 10 minutes before and 30 minutes after the scheduled appointment time. On-time performance is running about 95 percent. As a matter of policy, VVTA does not comingle regular trips with subscriptions which are set up as a separate route. The subscription customer base is more comfortable with traveling the same route each time.

Based on Trapeze data, the rate of no-shows has been flat but lower than in previous years. This trend in lower no-shows can help improve the efficiency of service.

Operations Performance

The standard for on-time performance is 95 percent. Standards for on-time are between 0 and 5 minutes late for arrival at a bus stop for fixed route and no more than 10 minutes before or 30 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time for demand response. VVTA started reporting on-time performance in its monthly report to the Board of Directors in 2006. Veolia provides both fixed-route and ADA paratransit on-time performance rates along with tabular data. The implementation of Trapeze and TransTrack software has helped improved data collection in this respect.

Transportation Supervisors are required to note 25 time checks per day but are not told where or when to conduct them. Because the checks are not statistically random, they may not be as accurate a depiction of the performance of the system as might be desired. However, this does not mean the checks are not useful. VVTA administration staff conducts regular yet random spot checks, which show lower levels of performance. Trapeze software calculates on-time performance for ADA service.

The AVL system is operable but is still in its testing phase. VVTA will soon be able to stop the manual checks and use the AVL data for on-time performance. VVTA policy calls for buses to meet at transfer points for the last two trips per day to ensure no one is stranded. Sometimes this means that a bus must slow down or wait. The AVL system needs to be adjusted to accommodate this behavior and not count trips as late in this situation.

Table V-1 and Table V-2 show vehicle operations performance measures for VVTA fixed route and demand response service, as provided in TransTrack and NTD reports.

**Table V-1  
Vehicle Operations Performance Measures – Fixed Route**

	FY2008	Audit Review Period			% Change FY08-11
		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Veh Operations Cost	\$3,829,592	\$4,299,290	\$4,380,542	\$4,372,321	14.2%
Vehicle Service Hours	84,182	98,564	103,939	105,041	24.8%
Vehicle Service Miles	1,458,200	1,667,559	1,760,771	1,788,906	22.7%
Total Vehicle Hours	87,681	103,902	109,442	110,858	26.4%
Total Vehicle Miles	1,537,730	1,820,161	1,927,453	1,968,137	28.0%
Passenger Trips	1,011,566	1,241,185	1,378,597	1,580,298	56.2%
Passenger Miles	5,923,576	7,269,155	8,078,482	9,438,100	59.3%

	FY2008	Audit Review Period			% Change FY08-11
		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Veh Ops Cost/VSH	\$45.49	\$43.62	\$42.15	\$41.62	-8.5%
Veh Ops Cost/VSM	\$2.63	\$2.58	\$2.49	\$2.44	-6.9%
Veh Ops Cost/Pas	\$3.79	\$3.46	\$3.18	\$2.77	-26.9%
Veh Ops Cost/Pas Mile	\$0.65	\$0.59	\$0.54	\$0.46	-28.3%
Average Speed	17.3	16.9	16.9	17.0	-1.7%
VSH/Total Hours	96%	95%	95%	95%	-1.3%
VSM/Total Miles	95%	92%	91%	91%	-4.1%
Pas Miles/Passenger	5.9	5.9	5.9	6.0	2.0%
% change in CPI-U		1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	

Source: NTD Reports

**Table V-2  
Vehicle Operations Performance Measures – Demand Response**

	FY2008	Audit Review Period			% Change FY08-11
		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Veh Operations Cost	\$1,808,481	\$1,776,366	\$1,742,737	\$1,813,428	0.3%
Vehicle Service Hours	37,881	37,219	37,138	37,956	0.2%
Vehicle Service Miles	657,137	595,472	590,392	603,147	-8.2%
Total Vehicle Hours	43,018	45,248	44,344	46,637	8.4%
Total Vehicle Miles	765,707	747,626	731,906	759,446	-0.8%
Passenger Trips	111,717	104,474	103,918	105,859	-5.2%
Passenger Miles	1,384,324	1,295,291	1,288,583	1,253,324	-9.5%
Veh Ops Cost/VSH	\$47.74	\$47.73	\$46.93	\$47.78	0.1%
Veh Ops Cost/VSM	\$2.75	\$2.98	\$2.95	\$3.01	9.2%
Veh Ops Cost/Pas	\$16.19	\$17.00	\$16.77	\$17.13	5.8%
Veh Ops Cost/Pas Mile	\$1.31	\$1.37	\$1.35	\$1.45	10.8%
Average Speed	17.3	16.0	15.9	15.9	-8.4%
VSH/Total Hours	88%	82%	84%	81%	-7.6%
VSM/Total Miles	86%	80%	81%	79%	-7.5%
Pas Miles/Passenger	12.4	12.4	12.4	11.8	-4.5%
% change in CPI-U		1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	

Source: NTD Reports

Vehicle operations costs increased by 14.2 percent for fixed route service and 0.3 percent for demand response service as reported by VVTA in the National Transit Database. For fixed-route service, vehicle service hours increased 24.8 percent and service miles increased 22.7 percent. The operations cost per vehicle service mile and hour both decreased, as did vehicle operations costs per passenger and passenger mile. Contract provisions during the audit period had both a fixed and a variable cost component. When hours increased, only the variable cost component rose which contributed to a decreasing trend in cost per hour (and mile).

For demand response service, the vehicle service hours increased by 8.4 percent, while miles declined 8.2 percent. This led to a higher growth rate in cost per mile compared to the cost per

hour. Decreasing average vehicle speeds during the audit period was one factor in the decline in miles.

Customer Complaints

VVTA collects and tracks customer complaints and comments. Customer complaints provide a simple measure of customer satisfaction and operational effectiveness. Complaints are generally made through the phone to the VVTA administrative offices. They are also collected from VVTA's website and from Board meetings and other public hearings. Complaints are handled by the contractor and reviewed by VVTA management. All complaints are logged into TransTrack with the customer receiving communication and acknowledgement by VVTA. The contractor and VVTA collectively decide whether the complaints are chargeable.

One measure of customer satisfaction is the number of complaints per 100,000 passengers. Table V-3 shows this indicator for the fixed route, paratransit, and systemwide. The total number of complaints also includes those that were not attributable to a particular mode. The data show that the trend of complaints has decreased for both fixed route and demand response services during the audit period. Complaints per 100,000 riders decreased from 33 in FY 2009 to 22 in FY 2011.

Complaints about the fixed-route service decreased more than on the demand-response service, likely as a result of increased service and improved headways. However, complaints during this audit period are quite a bit higher than reported in the prior audit report. Staff believes that the overall increase in service and ridership made on-time performance more challenging and likely has led to an increase in complaints.

**Table V-3  
Complaints per 100,000 Passengers**

	Complaints	Passengers	Complaints/ 100,000 Passengers	% Change
<b>Fixed Route</b>				
FY09	350	1,241,185	28	
FY10	309	1,378,597	22	-20.5%
FY11	293	1,580,298	19	-17.3%
<b>Demand Response</b>				
FY09	65	104,474	62	
FY10	43	103,918	41	-33.5%
FY11	49	105,859	46	11.9%
<b>Total</b>				
FY09	448	1,345,659	33	
FY10	367	1,482,515	25	-25.6%
FY11	371	1,686,157	22	-11.1%

Source: TransTrack

## **Maintenance**

Based on the FY 2010-11 fleet inventory, there are currently 76 revenue vehicles of various sizes, including spare vehicles. Bus purchases have included El Dorado Aero Elites and North American Bus Industries (NABI) buses. The VVTA fleet is moving to an all CNG fleet as buses are replaced.

VVTA uses a maintenance program from Ron Turley & Associates (RTA) which is being customized for the VVTA fleet. A continuing challenge is to customize the maintenance program to fit exactly the processes employed by the maintenance department. There is ample room in the new facility, so maintenance is more efficient compared to the prior location.

The new contract with VVTA requires mechanics to be ASE certified and enables the mechanics to earn a \$1,600 bonus for meeting the certification. Mechanics use an automated system for their maintenance work processes. They clock in and out with each vehicle and input all services performed and parts used. Daily mileage is recorded into the system which then flags buses that are due for a preventative maintenance inspection (PMI). PMIs are done at intervals of 3,000, 6,000 and 25,000 with a window of plus/minus 500 miles. Any body work on the vehicles is outsourced.

VVTA uses another subcontractor, Silver State Transportation, to manage the janitorial services for the new facility including the service island. Silver State's services include fueling and washing the vehicles, and maintaining the large farebox vault that is located on the service island. The fareboxes are deposited into the vault upon fueling.

Parts are stored in a locked room where access is through the use of special cards. There are three cycle counts in addition to the physical inventory that is done once a year. Veolia wants to keep no more than a 90 day supply of parts on hand. The maintenance computer system helps them know what and when to order, depending on how long it takes to get each part. Staff can ask the system for an order list. Current inventory is valued at about \$186,000. Veolia wants to reduce that to a goal of \$150,000. There is a computer in the parts room and kiosks in the maintenance area so mechanics can scan the parts being used for maintenance into the system.

According to reported NTD data, the vehicle spare ratio for fixed route service was 30 percent and 21 percent for demand response in FY 2011. The fixed-route spare ratio jumped considerably in FY 2011 with the acquisition of additional vehicles in preparation for the start of a new service. Earlier years showed ratios between 22 and 24 percent. The spare ratio for demand response declined from 24 to 21 percent during the audit period. VVTA plans to reduce the spare ratios in the motor bus fleet to approximately 25 percent. This is slightly higher than FTA guidelines of 20 percent due to the relatively small size of the fleet as well as the diverse makeup of the fleet. This will be done through selling off some of the older units and starting a contingency fleet.

Maintenance costs declined steeply in FY 2009 and then climbed slowly the ensuing years. Overall, costs rose only 1.3 percent for fixed route but fell 6.2 percent on demand response. Maintenance cost per vehicle service hour and mile decreased during the audit period, although

most of the performance improvement occurred between FY 2008 and FY 2009. Both modes experienced improved performance measures with fixed route having greater improvement.

Table V-4 and Table V-5 show maintenance performance measures for VVTA fixed route and demand response service, as provided in NTD reports.

**Table V-4  
Maintenance Performance Measures – Fixed Route**

	FY2008	Audit Review Period			% Change
		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY08-11
Maintenance Cost	\$770,975	\$737,559	\$793,375	\$780,916	1.3%
Total Vehicle Hours	87,681	103,902	109,442	110,858	26.4%
Total Vehicle Miles	1,537,730	1,820,161	1,927,453	1,968,137	28.0%
Active Vehicles	27	34	35	40	48.1%
Peak Vehicles	21	26	27	28	33.3%
Maint Cost/VSH	\$8.79	\$7.10	\$7.25	\$7.04	-19.9%
Maint Cost/VSM	\$0.50	\$0.41	\$0.41	\$0.40	-20.9%
Maint Cost/Active Veh	\$28,554.63	\$21,692.91	\$22,667.86	\$19,522.90	-31.6%
Veh Hrs per Active Veh	3,247	3,056	3,127	2,771	-14.7%
Veh Mi per Active Veh	56,953	53,534	55,070	49,203	-13.6%
Spare Ratio	22.2	23.5	22.9	30.0	35.0%
% change in CPI-U		1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	

Source: NTD Reports

**Table V-5  
Maintenance Performance Measures – Demand Response**

	FY2008	Audit Review Period			% Change
		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY08-11
Maintenance Cost	\$268,729	\$233,137	\$237,331	\$251,967	-6.2%
Total Vehicle Hours	43,018	45,248	44,344	46,637	8.4%
Total Vehicle Miles	765,707	747,626	731,906	759,446	-0.8%
Active Vehicles	33	32	32	33	0.0%
Peak Vehicles	25	25	26	26	4.0%
Maint Cost/VSH	\$6.25	\$5.15	\$5.35	\$5.40	-13.5%
Maint Cost/VSM	\$0.35	\$0.31	\$0.32	\$0.33	-5.5%
Maint Cost/Active Veh	\$8,143.30	\$7,285.53	\$7,416.59	\$7,635.36	-6.2%
Veh Hrs per Active Veh	1,304	1,414	1,386	1,413	8.4%
Veh Mi per Active Veh	23,203	23,363	22,872	23,014	-0.8%
Spare Ratio	24.2	21.9	18.8	21.2	-12.5%
% change in CPI-U		1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	

Source: NTD Reports

## Planning

To address city planning needs and population trends that may require transportation services as well as viewing the upcoming Board agenda and discussing transit plans, the general manager works with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members from member jurisdictions on a monthly basis. This monthly meeting is an integral part of the planning environment, and lends to a collaborative partnership between VVTA and local stakeholders.

An Operations and Growth Analysis (also known as a Comprehensive Operations Analysis or COA) was completed during the prior audit period, and another began in 2012, shortly after the current audit period. These studies include an analysis of existing service demand and an assessment of service utilization leading to recommendations for potential modifications or restructuring. The studies also include development of a five year recommended action plan.

VVTA has implemented approximately 80 percent of the recommendations from the 2007 COA. VVTA planned to raise fares but shelved the fare increase in light of the economic recessions. One major change was to move to 30-minute headways on key routes. Another change of policy resulted in VVTA no longer operating over unmaintained roads.

COAs are usually undertaken every five years, while short range transit plans are usually compiled every other year. The latest COA commenced in February 2012 which includes producing an SRTP. This COA will use data from the APCs, allowing a better understanding of how passengers utilize the VVTA network.

With regard to bus shelters, VVTA plans for and provides the shelters. In turn, the local member cities install and maintain them. The COA will make performance based recommendations for the placement of amenities at bus stops.

VVTA uses the COA to forecast future service needs and help identify funding to meet those needs. Also, the member jurisdictions notify VVTA of planned developments that might affect the need for transit service. VVTA management monitors current service through regular reviews of TransTrack data and other reports, watching for overcrowding and other indicators of the need for service changes.

Public hearings are held as part of the COA process and before adopting an SRTP, fare increase or change in route service levels of over 25 percent. Annual Unmet Needs Hearings in the Fall (September) is used to receive input from the public on any transit issues and help identify potential service needs. The selling of Greyhound tickets was a result of a formal transit Unmet Needs finding many years ago. Other sources for input include outreach through local social service agencies, SANBAG's PASTACC, complaints from riders and comments from TAC members. To assure reaching a good cross section of riders the COA consultant conducts a series of "drop by" outreach meetings at key VVTA transfer points.

## **Marketing**

VVTA does little in-house marketing because there is no dedicated marketing staff. Ridership growth is typically generated by improved and more frequent service, such as the 30-minute headway, or changes in demographics and the economy. As there are very few choice riders in the service area, growth targets for new riders are not specific but result from the improved services made available by VVTA.

The website ([www.vvta.org](http://www.vvta.org)) is the primary means of marketing transit services. Rider alerts and route changes are continuously updated. Alerts are also posted on buses. Bus schedules are distributed regularly. For fixed-route, bus locations are available on-line in real time on the VVTA web site. The site also contains standard essential information such as schedules, routes, fares, bid opportunities, board meeting minutes, contact information, and news about the system. Given that students and young people comprise a significant portion of ridership, it is recommended that VVTA evaluate its ability to be engaged in social media as another means of reaching out to its market using digital content and building on the website.

---

## **General Administration and Management**

During the audit period VVTA brought the management staff in-house, a change that was either cost-neutral or achieved small cost savings. This gives the Board better control over the staffing of the agency and allowed VVTA to conduct some tasks that had been the responsibility of member cities previously.

All VVTA non-administrative services are contracted. The latest contract with Veolia was effective September 2011. It is a seven-year contract with three, one-year options. VVTA can cancel with or without cause with a 90 day-notice. There were five bidders during the last round of proposals to operate the service. The scope of work for the current contract was based on the new facility. The cost of major components are on a shared risk basis between VVTA and Veolia which reduced the bid cost. Fuel cost is also passed through to VVTA. Because of delays in completing the new facility the previous contract was extended on a month-to-month basis for 18 months.

The contract is closely monitored by VVTA management. The contractor operates out of the administration building, giving management easy access to all contractor's operations and personnel. In addition there are regular meeting between administration and the contractor to discuss various issues impacting both parties. Reports are provided by the contractor and reviewed by VVTA management with appropriate data entered in TransTrack. VVTA staff use TransTrack data and reports plus personal observations to monitor and assess the contractor's progress.

By design there are no liquidated damages in the contract. VVTA management indicated it is more productive to work with the contractor on addressing and resolving issues rather than imposing financial penalties. In addition, management did not want to include incentives which are generally paired with liquidated damages. However, there are established service standards to

gauge contractor performance for preventive maintenance, productivity, driver training, safety and other operational aspects.

Table V-6 and Table V-7 show administration performance measures for VVTA fixed route and demand response service, as provided in NTD reports.

**Table V-6  
Administration Performance Measures – Fixed Route**

	FY2008	Audit Review Period			% Change FY08-11
		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Admin Cost	\$880,558	\$1,047,590	\$1,225,283	\$1,206,968	37.1%
Vehicle Service Hours	84,182	98,564	103,939	105,041	24.8%
Vehicle Service Miles	1,458,200	1,667,559	1,760,771	1,788,906	22.7%
Passenger Trips	1,011,566	1,241,185	1,378,597	1,580,298	56.2%
Passenger Miles	5,923,576	7,269,155	8,078,482	9,438,100	59.3%
Admin Cost/VSH	\$10.46	\$10.63	\$11.79	\$11.49	9.8%
Admin Cost/VSM	\$0.60	\$0.63	\$0.70	\$0.67	11.7%
Admin Cost/Pas	\$0.87	\$0.84	\$0.89	\$0.76	-12.3%
Admin Cost/Pas Mile	\$0.15	\$0.14	\$0.15	\$0.13	-14.0%
% change in CPI-U		1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	

Source: NTD Reports

**Table V-7  
Administration Performance Measures – Demand Response**

	FY2008	Audit Review Period			% Change FY08-11
		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Admin Cost	\$466,003	\$474,621	\$503,131	\$504,103	8.2%
Vehicle Service Hours	37,881	37,219	37,138	37,956	0.2%
Vehicle Service Miles	657,137	595,472	590,392	603,147	-8.2%
Passenger Trips	111,717	104,474	103,918	105,859	-5.2%
Passenger Miles	1,384,324	1,295,291	1,288,583	1,253,324	-9.5%
Admin Cost/VSH	\$12.30	\$12.75	\$13.55	\$13.28	8.0%
Admin Cost/VSM	\$0.71	\$0.80	\$0.85	\$0.84	17.9%
Admin Cost/Pas	\$4.17	\$4.54	\$4.84	\$4.76	14.2%
Admin Cost/Pas Mile	\$0.34	\$0.37	\$0.39	\$0.40	19.5%
% change in CPI-U		1.1%	0.5%	1.8%	

Source: NTD Reports

Administration performance measures, as measured in cost per quantity of service provided (vehicle service hours or miles) or service consumed (passenger trips or passenger miles),

improved during the audit period even though administrative costs increased 37 percent for fixed route and 8 percent for demand response. Performance indicators for administration are very sensitive to the cost allocation formulas used. Differences between modes are likely due more to allocation methods developed by VVTA than to actual costs incurred.

The contractor provides VVTA with monthly reports on performance. The data is then reviewed by VVTA management and included in the Board Agenda Reports. For example, trends in ridership and fare revenues are provided, as well as route by route and paratransit performance data.

### Grants Management

Grants, from application through award and reporting, are handled by the Deputy Director. VVTA has been slow to use its New Freedoms and JARC funding to hire a Mobility Manager. This position will be responsible for developing and submitting a required plan to FTA outlining how VVTA will spend these grant monies.

VVTA had initially contracted a Grants Administrator. However, due to the remote location of this administrator, VVTA continued to experience control issues and the contract was subsequently terminated. In view of these concerns, VVTA has taken several aggressive steps to ensure correction of this weakness in internal controls compliance. VVTA has filled the recommended Finance/Accounting position with a dedicated, qualified, and knowledgeable individual and has procured new software to manage the finance and accounting functions needed to record, monitor and support the grant administration function. Additionally, VVTA has brought the grants administration function in house and is in the process of developing written internal control policies and procedures to support this revised structure. As a result, no grant deadlines have been missed.

## Section VI

### Findings

The following summarizes the major findings obtained from this Triennial Audit covering fiscal years 2009 through 2011. A set of recommendations is then provided.

1. VVTA has complied with most TDA requirements. Submittal of reports to the State Controller's Office, including the annual fiscal and compliance audits and the State Controller annual transit operator reports, were not on time. Responsibility for submittal of these financial documents lies with the SANBAG auditor, which operates independently of VVTA.
2. VVTA received "satisfactory" ratings during each of the CHP terminal inspections at the maintenance facilities during the audit period. Annual inspections occurred during the first calendar quarter of each audit year.
3. The fare recovery ratio for fixed route service increased from 17.9 percent in FY 2008 to 22.9 percent in FY2011. The fare recovery ratio for demand response service decreased from 14.3 percent in FY 2008 to 13.1 percent in FY 2011. VVTA has complied with the minimum TDA farebox recovery ratios established by SANBAG.
4. All four of the prior four audit recommendations were implemented.
5. Operating costs systemwide increased by 14.4 percent over the past three years. Fixed route operating costs increased by 19.5 percent and demand response costs increased by 3.2 percent. Most of the cost increase was observed in FY 2009 when headways were reduced to 30 minutes on the most productive routes. Costs grew slowly or decreased in the succeeding years.
6. Ridership increased by 50.1 percent systemwide, with 56.2 percent ridership growth on the fixed route side and a 5.3 percent decline on the demand response side. Slight increases in ADA trips on demand response were offset by declines in subscription trips. VVTA reduced headways on key fixed routes which resulted in increased system ridership while drawing some passengers away from deviated services and demand-responsive service onto the bus. This reduction in demand response ridership with a correlated increase in bus passengers improves overall performance and cost efficiency.
7. The provision of vehicle service miles increased by 13.1 percent systemwide during the audit period. Vehicle service miles increased 22.7 percent on the fixed route service and fell 8.2 percent on the demand response service during the audit period.
8. The provision of vehicle service hours increased by 17.3 percent systemwide, jumping in FY 2009 and growing more slowly after that. Vehicle service hours increased 24.9 percent

on the fixed route service and 0.5 percent on the demand response service during the audit period.

9. Operating cost per passenger decreased by 23.8 percent systemwide. For fixed route service, cost per passenger decreased by 23.5 percent. For demand response service, cost per passenger increased by 9.0 percent.
10. Operating cost per vehicle service hour decreased by 2.5 percent systemwide, with a 4.3 percent decrease for fixed route but a 2.7 percent increase for demand response. Operating cost per vehicle service mile increased by 1.1 percent systemwide, with a 2.6 percent decrease for fixed route but a 12.5 percent increase for demand response.
11. Passengers per vehicle service hour increased by 27.9 percent systemwide, while passengers per vehicle service mile increased by 32.7 percent systemwide. For fixed route service, passengers per hour increased by 25.1 percent and passengers per mile increased by 27.3 percent. For demand response service, passengers per hour decreased by 5.8 percent and passengers per mile increased by 3.1 percent.
12. Estimated vehicle service hours per employee Full Time Equivalent, which measures labor productivity, decreased by 23.8 percent over the past three years. The operations contractor responded to a 70 percent driver turnover rate by hiring more employees/drivers in order to get ahead of the termination/resignations curve throughout the years.

## Recommendations

1. Develop and Retain a Facility Maintenance Plan.  
(High Priority)

VVTA recently moved into a new facilities building with more space and modern features. However, with noted construction issues identified by VVTA staff in some areas of the facility, a plan to maintain the facility should be retained and VVTA management staff given responsibility to implement the plan in efforts to control cost and maintain facility functionality.

2. Submit Separate Annual State Controller's Reports for Fixed Route and Direct Access.  
(High Priority)

VVTA has been submitting a combined report to the State for both fixed route and paratransit. As Direct Access is a paratransit service exclusive for ADA passengers, State Controller Report instructions require the filing of separate reports between the two modes, one for general public service and another for exclusive service. The Controller's instructions state "...a separate report must be filed for each type of service provided: General Public Use Service or Specialized Service exclusive for elderly and/or handicapped..." These two reports should be submitted within the timelines prescribed by the instructions.

3. Increase VVTA Administrative Staff.  
(High Priority)

VVTA has traditionally had a very small administrative management staff. To help ensure all administrative tasks and functions of a growing transit agency are covered and backed up, consideration should be given to increase the level of administrative management staff. Possible areas that could benefit from additional staff support include planning, government relations, grants and asset management, and accounting. Also, given that VVTA has a large student ridership, consideration should also be made to expand media relations to include digital content such as social media. An internship type position could be an appropriate measure for this need.

Additional expansion of staff should be made in the context of the recent Consolidation Study and its findings.

4. Plan for fare adjustment or increase as conditions warrant.  
(Medium Priority)

The Operations and Growth Analysis completed in 2007 recommended a fare increase. VVTA held the required hearings to increase the fares but decided not to implement the fare increase in light of the economic recession. VVTA should continue its evaluation and planning for fare adjustments in light of improving economic and operational conditions.

5. Provide Systemwide Map.  
(Medium Priority)

VVTA should develop a systemwide map depicting the fixed routes and paratransit service coverage areas. A systemwide map would provide improved customer service through visualization of route connections within VVTA and other transit systems. A digital system map should be first developed for the VVTA web site to coincide with the individual route maps. The digital version enables a low cost alternative and instant reach to passengers with digital access. Printing and distribution of a printed map may not be as cost effective, but should be considered for use based on the effectiveness and distribution of existing printed individual maps.