



THE OTHER DNC DREAM TEAM-- From left, Division 10 Operator Hugh Cooper, Division 15 Operator Ada Hernandez, Bus Operations Control TOS Fausto Brito, Division 8 Operator Fidel Mendoza and Division 10 Operator Gail Walker are among MTA transportation personnel assigned to operate 100 Metro buses allocated to DNC delegate transportation. See more photos below.
PHOTOS BY JODY FEERST-LITVAK

Bus Transportation for Convention Delegates is Trouble-Free

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 16) The only problem thus far experienced by Metro Bus operators assigned to drive Democratic National Convention buses is not having enough Metro pins to trade with delegates. That's according to Dave Castillo, a transit operations supervisor who's assigned to coordinate delegate transportation.

"The operators say the delegates are really treating them well," said Castillo. "Many operators are coming back from their runs wearing the pins they've traded with the delegates."

In the midst of the convention's third day in Los Angeles, the 250 buses assigned to transport delegates - including 100 Metro Buses - have experienced no problems on the road, even during the many demonstrations taking place near the convention site.

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Maintenance team praised

That performance can be attributed in large part to the work of the MTA's maintenance team – a team that drew high praise from the Secret Service agent in charge of "sweeping" the buses for security. Team members include John Mirabal, Kevin Cameron, Kirk Lobban, Lech Gazinski, Mike Bujosa, Sean Dunning, Tommie Davis, George Karbowski, Emmitt McGee, Carlos Curiel, Jr., and Manny Zaragosa.

The buses are allocated to three convention routes - red, yellow and green. A deputy sheriff is assigned to each one as it leaves the yard.

Operators driving convention transportation routes start arriving at the temporary bus yard, located near the Sports Arena, about 10 a.m. Buses are dispatched by 1 p.m. and remain in operation until about 11 p.m. Working with Castillo in the transportation center are TOS Dan Dryden and Russ Wilson, an MTA retiree and transportation consultant.

Meanwhile, just a short distance away, several MTA employees are assigned to the LADOT convention transportation command post.

Bus Operations Control Center Supervisor Tom Jasmin, Rail Senior TOS Henry Castaneda, Asst. Vehicle Operations Manager George Trudeau and TOS Lois Nesby monitor the LADOT traffic control system in order to coordinate the MTA's regular bus and rail services. In the event of a street blockage, the crew can quickly order a detour.

"Working the convention has been a good experience for our operators," said Castillo. "And I think the MTA will come out shining."

'DREAM TEAM' PHOTO GALLERY

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MTA Government Affairs staffs transit information booth: from left, Wilbur Babb, Claudette Moody, Jody Feerst-Litvak, and Michael Turner.



From left, Division 5 operators Gregory Smith, China Greenlee, and Melvin Derden; Division 7 operators Marceia Allen and Leonard Santos; Division 18 Operator Harvey Townes, and Division 9 Operator Mark Allman.



Long Beach Transit Operator William Black, joins with Division 9 Operator Ernest Scott, Division 18 Operator Lujen Bausley, and Division 9 operators Jerry Boykin and Calvin Lawton.



Standing, from left, Division 3 Operator Garo Shamirian, Division 9 operators Nellie Gomez and Luis Rodriguez, Division 3 Operator Gail Alcantar, Division 10 operators Tommy Armstrong and Phillip Cegielski; foreground, Division 3 operators Arturo Ramos and Guillermo Maynetto.



Division 3 Operator Margaret Tucker is ready for her close-up.



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