



NEWS

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Transit lifeline for more than 60,000 people

MTA STARTS 3-CAR TRAIN SERVICE ON BUSY METRO BLUE LINE

Riders on the popular Metro Blue Line that connects downtown Los Angeles and Long Beach joined MTA officials today in heralding the start of 3-car train service.

MTA Board Chairman John Fasana was joined by Los Angeles County Supervisors and MTA Board members Yvonne Brathwaite Burke and Don Knabe and new MTA CEO Roger Snoble in riding one of the first trains to have three cars instead of two. MTA will be phasing in more 3-car train trips as it takes delivery of new light rail vehicles.

The third car will allow MTA to carry up to 145 more seated and standing passengers. That should help ease crowding on the light rail line that carried a record 69,400 average weekday boarding passengers last August. Just one decade after it debuted in 1990, the Metro Blue Line had reached capacity.

MTA spent approximately \$11 million during the past 16 months to extend the platforms at 19 stations to accommodate 3-car trains along the 22-mile route which serves Watts, Compton, Willowbrook as well as Long Beach, Los Angeles and other communities.

The Metro Green Line light rail line, which connects with the Metro Blue Line in Willowbrook, also is being upgraded. MTA has started phasing in 2-car trains on that line instead of running one-car trains.

“The Metro Blue Line is a transit lifeline that gives tens of thousands of riders, largely minorities and low-income people, access to jobs, schools, medical care, shopping, recreation and other opportunities,” said MTA Chairman Fasana.

Fasana noted that the Metro Blue Line is part of the expanding Metro Rail system that serves many parts of Los Angeles County with fast, inexpensive and safe transportation.

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Metro Blue Line

“This upgrade will allow us to keep pace with demand today and grow with the future,” Fasana said.

LA County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, the immediate past MTA Board Chair, introduced the motion calling for expanding Metro Blue Line platforms in 1999, and was in the forefront of the MTA Board’s search for funding.

“We worked a long time to get this,” said Supervisor Burke. “The Metro Blue Line carries more passengers than any other light-rail line in the nation except Boston, so this is very important to help eliminate crowding.”

MTA CEO Snoble noted that buses remain the backbone of public transportation in Los Angeles County. While Metro Rail is being upgraded, he said the Metro Bus system also is being overhauled with a new fleet of buses and expanded service including new Metro Rapid buses that speed travel time by making fewer stops and extending green traffic lights with special transponders.

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