



# NEWS

August 4, 1998

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## **MTA TO RECEIVE \$4.3 MILLION IN CLEAN AIR FUNDING**

The MTA will receive a total of \$4.3 million for clean air programs involving its purchase and operation of compressed natural gas (CNG) buses.

The Mobile Source Emission Reduction Review Committee (MSRC) – a regional clean air funding group – provided the grant in response to the MTA's purchase of 223 compressed natural gas (CNG) buses. The \$83.6 million order was approved by the MTA Board last September.

The \$3.675 million in MSRC funding will offset about half the \$35,000 difference between the cost of a CNG bus and a diesel bus. The MTA will begin receiving the funding on a schedule matching the delivery of the new buses, set to begin in February, 1999. The buses, to be built by New Flyer of America, will cost \$319,789 each.

"The MRSC has recognized the MTA's continuing commitment to clean air technologies," said Bea LaPisto-Kirtley, mayor pro tem of the City of Bradbury and the MTA's representative on the MRSC. "This is an historic award that will improve air quality for the citizens of Los Angeles County."

The MTA grant resulted from months of work by the agency's staff and elected officials. It is the second largest grant ever made by the MSRC, second only to a \$4 million grant to the MTA for CNG buses in 1995.

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“The MSRC has provided welcome financial assistance to the MTA, which – with almost 500 CNG buses on the road – operates North America’s largest clean air fleet,” said CEO Julian Burke. “These funds will help implement the MTA Board’s policy of purchasing clean fuel and clean air buses.”

Currently, the MTA is receiving 15 to 20 new Neoplan CNG buses each month on a total order of 250. The agency recently exercised an option to purchase an additional 50 Neoplan buses for delivery this year.

In September, the MTA expects to award a contract for the purchase of 215 low-floor CNG buses – all together, a total of 738 buses to be added to the fleet over the next several years.

“There are more and more opportunities for clean fuel grants at the state and regional levels,” said Deputy CEO Sharon Landers. “We’ll continue to be aggressive in seeking opportunities like this for the MTA.”

The MSRC is an eight-member committee consisting of Southern California county transportation commissions, regional agencies and local jurisdictions. The MSRC funds clean air projects from part of a \$4 fee paid through annual vehicle registrations.

In addition to the MSRC grant, the MTA also recently received \$625,000 as payment for clean air credits generated by the agency’s fleet of CNG buses. The agency also will receive \$200,000 worth of in-kind technical support for the CNG fleet. Clean air credits are created when transit operators use buses whose emissions are substantially cleaner than required by state law.

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