

# CEO REPORT

A weekly report  
from the office  
of the CEO

May 16, 1994



I want MTA's bus and rail service to be the best in the country. To achieve that goal, I have established an Operations Task Force which will develop and recommend cost-effective alternatives for increasing productivity, reducing operating costs, and changing the structure of the MTA Operations Unit.

**W**e need to take a fresh look at the unit, from top to bottom, and in doing so, make improvements that save money and improve service.

I chair the task force and Art Leahy, executive officer, operations, serves as vice-chair. The task force steering committee includes Kim Kimball, deputy chief executive officer; Alan Pegg, acting chief administrative officer; Jay Ehrgott, special assistant to CEO; and representatives of the management consulting firm of Deloitte & Touche. But it will be the agency, and not the consultants, who design the changes.

The first meeting of the task force was last Wednesday. Our mission is to implement structural changes that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the MTA's Operations Unit. We hope to begin making the changes later this year. Stay tuned.

#### **Status of Health and Welfare Benefits Package**

The Executive Management Committee last week recommended to the Board the adoption of the health and welfare benefits package, which includes medical, dental, vision, managed mental health care, voluntary life, basic life, special risk, and long-term disability insurance for the 17-month period August 1, 1994 through Dec. 31, 1995. The approval is subject only to the resolution of a protest filed by one of the bidders.

Approval by the full Board of the benefits package will result in a cost savings of \$700,000 for the first year. The

savings were achieved as a result of a well-structured negotiation process conducted by in-house staff and assisted by MTA's benefit consultant, A. Foster Higgins. The level of benefits are approximately equivalent to those provided by the predecessor agencies. Some of the proposed modifications include:

- Increasing the lifetime maximum medical coverage from \$1 to \$5 million;
- Providing domestic partner coverage for medical, dental and vision;
- Providing the ability to waive medical coverage separately from dental and vision coverage; and
- Providing an optional 90-day elimination period for all three Long-Term Disability coverage levels.

There will be further details on the above and about specific carriers in an upcoming BIT newsletter.

#### **Social Security Update**

Still to be resolved is the question of Social Security participation. We understand that a verbal opinion from the Internal Revenue Service is expected this month. As soon as we know, we'll pass it along.

#### **National WTS Conference in Los Angeles**

Seven MTA employees — Ed McSpedon, executive officer, RCC; Sharon Papa, Transit Police chief; Jim de la Loza, central area team director; Pat McLaughlin, deputy executive officer, planning and programming; Jessica Cusick, public art director; and Irving Taylor, land use

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project policy project manager— will be featured speakers at the Women in Transportation Seminar's 1994 national conference in Los Angeles this week.

Held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel downtown on May 18-20, the WTS conference will focus on new directions and innovations in the transportation field. More than 2,600 women and men nationwide from every transportation mode in the public and private sectors belong to the organization.

This year's conference coordinator is MTA's Robert Cashin. Renee Berlin is the co-coordinator.

#### Transit Police Win Grant

MTA's Transit Police Department has obtained a \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to hire 12 more police officers. The grant will assist the Transit Police in deploying a new transit community-based policing unit in South Central Los Angeles. Sen. Diane Feinstein and Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke were instrumental in securing the funds.

#### Seven Divisions Win Safety Awards

Several of our operating divisions recently captured top awards at the National Safety Council Awards Dinner held April 25 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. In the category of fleet safety, Divisions 8 and 16 took third place honors; Division 15 scored second, and Division 12 clinched first place.

Also, Div. 15 placed third in the business and industry safety contest. Div. 18 and the Regional Rebuild Center (formerly called the Central Maintenance Facility) won first place honors for the low number of occupational injuries among employees in those facilities.

Barbara Anderson, director of risk management, was my representative at the ceremony.

#### Telecommuting Program

Our Telecommuting Program continues to move forward with training for managers and supervisor scheduled this week. I encourage managers to attend the telemanager training, if not to enter the telecommuting program right now, then to receive the latest information about how telecommuting is making a difference in many companies and government agencies locally.

Telemanager training dates and times are:

- 425 Bldg. Tue., 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Boardroom, 2nd floor
- 818 Bldg. Wed., 3 p.m., 10th Floor Los Angeles Room

If your supervisor completes telemanager training and agrees that you are a good candidate for the telecommuting program, both of you must fill out an application and return it to Jay Fuhrman, 425 Building, Human Resources - 2nd Floor, no later than May 23.

#### National Employee Health and Fitness Day

The MTA is again a player in this Wednesday's 5th Annual National Employee Health and Fitness Day. If you wish to participate in a 30-minute walk downtown to celebrate the occasion, contact Luanna Urie, 2-7164, or Mary Conforti, 2-7169, in Human Resources.

For employees at the 425 Building, the walk starts at 4th and Spring; if you are in 818, your stroll begins at Wilshire and Flower. The MTA, as it does each year, will distribute water for walkers at 4th and Spring. The MTA is among more than a dozen organizations participating in the festivities. There also is an annual mini-health fair near the corner of 4th and Hope, sponsored by the Ketchum Downtown YMCA. Come join the fun!

#### Outstanding Employees Selected by Association

Finally, five MTA employees were named Outstanding Transit employees in the May issue of Transit California published by the California Transit Association. They included 88-year-old Division 5 Service Attendant Arthur Winston, who was honored in the category of long-standing dedication. "His dedication and remarkable longevity are an inspiration to all transit employees," the magazine wrote. Winston recently celebrated his 60th year in the industry.

Others honored included Linda Bohlinger, deputy executive officer, capital planning, who worked closely and tirelessly with local, state and federal governments in the aftermath of the Jan. 17 earthquake to obtain financial assistance for the provision of emergency transportation to the Los Angeles area; Michael Gonzalez, assistant to the CEO, who showed outstanding leadership in working with an independent panel of tunnel safety experts during an exhaustive review of the integrity of the Red Line subway tunnel construction and a review of construction oversight; Sharon Papa, chief of Transit Police, who oversees 250-plus officers which provides bus and rail security; and Charles Stark, vice president and project manager for Segment 3 of the Red Line. "Stark," wrote the magazine, "displayed outstanding leadership in preparing for and executing the groundbreaking for the North Hollywood extension of Segment 3."

I'm very proud of these individuals!

- Franklin White

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*I welcome your comments and questions in response to CEO Report, which is designed to provide employees with direct communication with my office. Please contact either of my Special Assistants, Michael Gonzalez at 244-7476, or Phyllis Tucker at 244-6191. Also, employees can fax comments to 244-6014.*

#### A publication of the MTA CEO's Office

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