

REPORT OFFICE

A weekly report
from the office
of the CEO

October 30, 1995



A lot of you are talking about the proposed changes to our retirement program. It's important to understand that these changes — having the option to keep your current retirement plan or joining PERS — create a unique win-win situation for employees and the agency.

Many details about the program remain to be resolved and we ask your patience as we work with the IRS, Social Security, and PERS to iron out these issues. We are not expecting IRS or PERS approval until December. In the meantime, we are committed to ongoing communication about the proposed program and will soon issue a timetable of key dates. Here are some target dates:

Nov. 15	Board approval of the program
Nov. 30	Union approval of free choice concept
Dec. 8	IRS approval
Dec. 13	Board approval of PERS contract
Dec. 29	PERS approval of MTA contract

We are committed to close communication as we continue to resolve issues. The latest information will be included in the weekly edition of the *CEO Report*.

If the plan is approved by the Board, the unions and the governing agencies, those employees who elect to remain in the RTD plan or to join PERS will be offered a Social Security Replacement Plan (SSRP) which guarantees benefits equivalent to Social Security. When we reach resolution with the IRS, those employees who have paid into Social Security will receive a partial refund of the amount since April 1, 1993. In addition, the SSRP will cost less than what employees — and the MTA — currently contribute to Social Security, so the good news is employees can expect to receive greater take home pay.

An Eighth Place Finish!

My congratulations to Division 12's Mark Holland, who did an exceptional job of representing us at the International Bus Rodeo in San Antonio on Oct. 10. Mark finished in 8th place out of a field of 72 operators competing in the 40-foot bus category.

Folks who have been around a while tell me this is the best finish they can recall in quite some time. More than half of those competing were rodeo veterans. A driver from Seattle placed first. Mark was a newcomer to the tourney. I'm impressed!

Communications Plan

I'm very pleased with a communications plan prepared by staff

and approved by the Board that will establish a process for honest, open communication with the MTA's various audiences — riders, employees, legislators, taxpayers and business owners and residents impacted by construction programs.

So many times we're accused of not being succinct in our message and for not promoting as best we can the services we offer. This plan is concise — we've identified five goals and have developed bilingual messages for each one that will be shared with the taxpayers repeatedly in the coming fiscal year. This approach will not lead to an overnight change in public perceptions of the agency, but it will, over time, provide a more solid foundation by which these publics may judge us.

Here are the goals:

- Increase ridership on MTA buses and trains.
- Build the relationship between MTA employees and the transit riders we serve. Improve agency teamwork, improve productivity and morale and build a higher level of pride throughout the work force.
- Develop and sustain among local, state and national legislators and regulatory officials a high level of confidence in the MTA's ability to build and operate a complex and efficiently-run transportation system. It is imperative for these leaders to be kept abreast of MTA activities.
- Communicate to the taxpaying public that the MTA spends substantial sums — \$1 billion or more annually — for programs that benefit county residents who are commuters or who use other forms of transportation, but are not current patrons of the MTA's bus or rail transit systems.
- Demonstrate the benefits that Metro Rail construction projects, plans and mitigation programs will bring to local communities in the form of improved transportation services, new business opportunities and an improved quality of life. Improve MTA mitigation programs to ensure their sensitivity to local conditions, residents and businesses.

Every week, I'll take one goal and detail the various messages we'll emphasize to our audiences. With regard to Goal #1 — Ridership — our message is the following:

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Service Reliability

The MTA provides daily service in a 1,400-square mile area. Your MTA neighborhood bus or train is the most reliable, and least expensive, form of transportation available. MTA buses and trains have an enviable on-time record, and travel about 275,000 miles a day — roughly the equivalent of traveling around the world 11 times.

MTA bus drivers have an average of 11 years of experience; train operators have an average of 19 years of experience. Their intimate knowledge of the city and the transit system makes them better able to serve our passengers.

Security and Safety

Serious crime is virtually non-existent on MTA buses and trains. MTA monitors and communicates with every bus and train that is in service with two-way radio systems located at the MTA Dispatch Center.

MTA has its own dedicated police force whose sole job it is to prevent transit related crime, including a special unit set up to deter graffiti crimes.

There is a systemwide video surveillance system in place on all MTA rail lines. This system is monitored round the clock at MTA's Central Control Facility.

Clean Bus Campaign

MTA has a program that fights graffiti and vandalism. No bus or train is to be put into service with exterior graffiti on it. This program has removed virtually all exterior graffiti in the last two years. The MTA is now turning its attention to removing interior vandalism, such as ripped seats and scratched windows.

MTA has a bilingual anti-graffiti education program aimed directly at the neighborhoods the bus serves, starting with kindergarteners and continuing on through high school.

MTA's Transit Police has a GHOST unit dedicated to solving graffiti crimes. The system has been used by LAPD and other police departments wanting to keep track of taggers.

Convenience

There is an MTA-funded bus or train within a half mile of wherever you work or live in Los Angeles County. Many of these bus lines connect with Metrolink stations and MTA's three rail lines, while serving virtually every major thoroughfare and tourist venue in the county.

MTA works with and helps support 13 municipal bus companies in Los Angeles County to ensure that services complement each other without duplication.

All MTA buses — 100 percent of the fleet — are accessible to physically disabled riders.

Affordability

MTA buses and trains are the best transportation bargain in Los Angeles County. Riders can save even more money by using tokens or monthly passes.

Using public transportation can result in substantial personal savings of up to 75 percent in auto insurance, gasoline use, wear-and-tear and maintenance.

I've reviewed these at length so each of you will know the story we need to tell and be a part of the telling each in your own way.

The most important thing we each can do, however, is to ensure that each rider is provided courteous, reliable and clean service.

The best way to communicate with our riders is to do that each and every day.

Chairman's Term Extended

The MTA Board of Directors voted last week to (1) extend the Board chairman's terms from one to two years, (2) limit the ability of a Board member's alternate to participate in regular Board meetings if the principal is present or to be appointed to any standing Board committee in his/her own name and (3) to require that no principal Board member may appoint more than one alternate. The third rule was referred to committee for establishment of an effective date.

Paper Published by Bud Moore

My congratulations to Bud Moore, operations superintendent for rail technical support, whose paper on rail transit power supply and electrification systems, will be published by the internationally recognized American Railway Engineering Association. He has written an entire chapter for the upcoming revised AREA manual which culminates three years of work. As a result of his work, the MTA is essentially defining key guidelines and standards that will guide the design, construction, operations and maintenance of rail transit in the U.S.

Richard Hunt Named Deputy CAO

Richard Hunt has been named acting deputy executive officer in operations-administration. Richard, who replaces Jerry Givens, had previously been assistant director of facilities maintenance, coordinating the activities of telecommunications, electrical and electronic revenue equipment buildings and grounds and maintenance of way in support of the Red and Blue lines.

Finally, I was pleased to see that some of you participated in the day of dialogue about race relations in Los Angeles. Those in attendance said it was a day to talk about moving forward. They represent the majority of MTA employees who strive for outstanding teamwork every day on the job.

—Franklin White

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 my Special Assistant, Phyllis Tucker, at 244-6191. Also, employees can fax comments to 244-6014.

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Editor:	Andrea Greene
Art Director:	Anne Roubideaux
Designer:	Terry McMahon
Deputy Dir., Media Relations:	Jim Smart
Special Assistant to CEO:	Phyllis Tucker
Manager, Printing Services:	Al Moore