

CEO REPORT

Joseph E. Drew
MTA Chief Executive Officer

April 1, 1996

I feel enormously fortunate to have been named your Chief Executive Officer at last Wednesday's Board meeting. The MTA is a great organization with many outstanding men and women and I'm honored that the Board has placed its trust in me to lead you.

Let me make this important point. As CEO, my job is to improve our working environment so that you can do your job better and smarter, more efficiently, more safely and with more attention to the needs of our customers. I'm going to work hard to make that happen.

I hope I will have your support as we move forward together. We have unique problems to solve as we work to improve the region's transit system. I'm depending on you to do your best at your job, to advise and counsel me, and to work with me in getting the job done right.

Grand Jury Stamp of Approval

The Los Angeles County Grand Jury has issued a report that indicates our rail construction quality assurance program is "on the right track." Jurors wrote that MTA procedures are competent, conservative and follow generally accepted quality guidelines. In fact, our Quality Program manual has been adopted by the Federal Transit Administration as an industry standard.

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The panel began looking into the MTA's quality assurance procedures after local media reported that subway tunnel walls beneath Vermont Avenue were thinner

than required. The Grand Jury said, however, that our quality assurance staff maintained oversight and ensured that all repairs and inspections were properly completed.

I want to congratulate Stan Phernambucq, construction executive officer, who has upgraded the concern for both quality assurance and construction safety, and the members of the team who have helped lead this positive out-

come: Garry Warren, Bill Moore and Charles Stark. The panel also was complimentary of our construction safety program, a tribute to the hard work of Dan Jackson, director of construction safety.

Our quality assurance and construction safety programs are constantly improving and the favorable Grand Jury report is solid confirmation of an outstanding achievement by the MTA Construction Division.

Moving Ahead on SDI

The Board settled the question of how to handle the State Disability Insurance (SDI) issue last Wednesday. On a motion by Director Alatorre, members voted unanimously to raise former LACTC employees' pay to offset their mandatory annual contribution to the SDI fund.

For 1996, the SDI tax is 0.8% of the first \$31,767 of an employee's salary, or \$254.14. The cost to the agency of this benefit will be about \$100,000.

The Board did not approve extending payment of sick leave balances to all non-represented employees. This policy, which gives employees 75% of sick leave balances at retirement and 100% upon the death of an active employee, is applicable only to former SCRTRD employees.

Lawsuit Filed to Stop Tunneling

Two organizations, Rescue Our Canyons and Friends of Runyon Canyon have filed suit in U.S. District Court seeking an injunction that would stop the Metro Red Line tunneling project that will connect Hollywood with the San Fernando Valley. The suit is based on environmental arguments.

I want you to know that the MTA has a valid environmental impact statement for the project that indicates little, if any, adverse effects on the mountains. The tunnels will be constructed between 200 and 970 feet below the surface.

The Board also has taken action to further minimize any possible impact. Builders, for example, will use less explosives than originally planned and will reduce by half the amount of water that must be pumped from the hills during construction. Outside experts tell us the project can be built safely without negative impact. I met recently with a homeowners group and assured them that we are sensitive to their concerns and will do everything possible to avoid inconveniencing them.

Greater LA Vendor Fair

Next Tuesday, April 9, the MTA will participate in the 4th annual Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Convention Center. The MTA has been

a major player in organizing and promoting the Vendor Fair, the largest public agency trade show in California. The purpose of the fair is to open the door for our diverse business community and help them qualify to do business with the MTA and other agencies.

Last year, almost 3,000 business operators attended the Vendor Fair and we hope to attract even more this year. The fair will offer 25 workshops and will feature more than 200 exhibits hosted by government agencies, including the MTA. Our exhibits will include the LA Rail Car and the Advanced Technology Transit Bus (ATTB).

If you're interested in volunteering for the Vendor Fair, please call Carey Peck at 922-1062.

Expanded Employee Orientation Program

Our Employee Development Section has begun an orientation program that will help new employees quickly become members of the MTA family. Under the leadership of George Nickle, the new program, called NEO Part II, will include a full day of orientation activities.

New employees now will spend a morning visiting various MTA facilities, such as the Regional Rebuild Center, an operating division or the Central Control Facility. Cathy Dickinson of the Marketing Department coordinates these tours with John Rivenes, Rick Hittinger and Everett Wooden of Operations. In the afternoon, the new employees will learn about the MTA's structure and our policies on such important topics as sexual harassment, alcohol and drug abuse, ethics and worker's compensation.

I applaud the revised orientation program because it will demonstrate in a dramatic way to new employees what the MTA is all about and the important work we do for the citizens of Los Angeles County. I encourage all new employees to attend NEO Part II and urge all supervisors to send newly hired staff to the orientation program within their first month on the job.

Me and My Shadow

It was good to see all the bright, young faces around the MTA during the "Me and My Shadow" career day last week. These high school students are enrolled in our Transportation Careers Academy Program (TCAP) and the Transportation Occupations Program (TOP). They were here to learn about careers in transportation from you, the industry professionals.

About 175 of the students will be back in July to participate in our High School Summer Internship program. During the eight-week program, they may be found working in each of our departments and also with some cooperating MTA consultants.

Thanks to Jean Tillman of the Career Development and Training Center for her efforts in organizing the program. And thanks to all of you for making the kids feel welcome. Some of them could well be the future of the MTA.

Brown-baggin' with Operations

I sat down to a brown-bag lunch last week with 20 or so employees from the Operations Division and had an opportunity to talk philosophy. In response to a question about my vision of the future, I said our Number One priority is delivering service to the people out there who need us. That's what all of our planning, all of our construction

activity is about: developing the region's mass transportation system.

My vision also extends to how we must work. We've got to work technically smart by developing new transit services and innovative equipment like the ATTB "stealth bus." We have to identify problems and solve them, especially when those problems involve our customers.

As many of you must realize by now, I'm a real believer in the need for strong leadership in an organization like the MTA. Most people are willing to be led, but don't necessarily want to be "managed." Projects are managed; people are led. Leadership implies a degree of risk-taking that management does not. And true leaders are flexible enough to realize that people should be able to make mistakes without undue consequences when they are involved in trying to solve difficult problems.

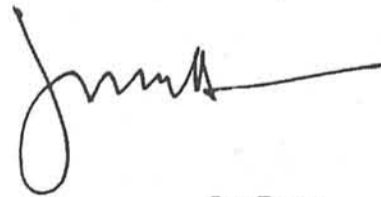
In the time I've been here, I've come to recognize the high caliber of the men and women who make the MTA the leading transit agency it has become. With continued good leadership, and with good teamwork, we can accomplish great things together.

Our Long-Distance Runners

At least 27 of our colleagues had the fortitude and stamina to compete in the recent LA Marathon as either runners or bikers. Let's all applaud our marathoners for representing the MTA so well. Deborah Harrell, Mary Morgan, Willie Atienza and Mel Rivera, Internal Audit. Keith Killough and Paul Burke, Countywide Planning. Everett Wilson, Bill Bassett and Andrew Lee, General Accounting. Tom Carmichael and Sarah Brown, Rail Operations. Larry Muzar, Loretta Ferem and Sara Moore, Transit Police. Miriam Simmons, Public Affairs; Bill Frazier, Employee Relations; Ron Stamm, Legal; Marion Ray, Quality Assurance; Jody Little-Williams, Executive Office; Phil Meyers, Facilities Engineering; Torri Hill-Williams, Marketing; Carmen Rivera, Materiel Management; Albert Allen, ITS; Linnea Berg, Mobility; Martha Fuentes, Mail Services; Angelica Nevez, Customer Information; and Juan Marques, Division 18.

A Word of Thanks

I want to take a moment to express my appreciation to Andrea Greene, who has edited the CEO Report since its inception. Editing the publication is now the responsibility of Internal Communications. Andrea worked closely with both Frank White and me in preparing this weekly newsletter. I think she's done a terrific job under sometimes difficult circumstances. Thanks, Andrea, for a job well done!



Joe Drew

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