

CEO REPORT

Joseph E. Drew
MTA Chief Executive Officer

January 6, 1997

With this CEO Report, I have another opportunity to thank those of you who have had so many kind words for me in recent weeks. It has been a great honor to lead you during the twelve months I've been your CEO. I'll continue to serve until the end of January.

I felt especially proud during the recent Holiday Magic dinner dance to have been a part of the MTA. It was a beautiful, warm occasion and the room was filled with employees, their spouses and guests. Everyone was in a party mood. We were able for a brief while to put aside our responsibilities and enjoy ourselves as a true family should.

On behalf of everyone at the party, I want to congratulate our employee activities manager, Diane Delaney-Talton, her staff and the dinner dance committee members for arranging a fantastic evening. The food was terrific, the music was great, the door prizes were fun and the decorations were beautiful!

A special thanks to committee members, Patricia Clark, Brian Soto, Kathi Harper, Marion Colston, Cathy Dickinson, Denise Mora, Yolanda Rosales, Aurora Lopez, Edith Goff-Youngblood, Dee Hawkins, Sharon Sterling, Rick Provencio, Adrian Rogers, Kati McCoy, Betty Mons, Kathy Lau and John Hardgrow. Thanks also to my musical partners Ed Scannell, Alan Nakagawa and Barry McBride. And to all the Macarena dancers! □

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Updating Important Matters

Those of you waiting for the implementation of PERS are aware by now that the effective date has been postponed to give PERS officials more time to review our proposal. Deputy CEO Linda Bohlinger and her team are working hard to make this happen as quickly as possible, but the shift into PERS could be delayed until July 1.

Current retirement plans will remain in force during the postponement period and there will be no adverse impact on retirement coverage or pay. This month, Linda will ask the Board to allow the MTA to pay the OASDI portion of employee Social Security tax

contributions of all non-represented employees and Teamsters members who were scheduled to be transferred to the Public Transportation Services Corporation on Jan. 1, 1997.

In December, the Board adopted a report by the auditing firm of Coopers & Lybrand on ways to improve MTA efficiency, productivity and response to customers. The wide-ranging report cited continuing merger issues, budget cuts, construction difficulties and the class action lawsuit as problems that have confronted the MTA.

The auditors approved of many of the MTA's efforts to strengthen leadership and clarify the purpose of the agency. And they complimented the quality of the staff. The Board now intends to adopt an action plan to implement the suggestions made by the auditors. □

Employees of the Month

Congratulations to November's MTA Employees of the Month. Once again, the review committee has selected an outstanding group of our co-workers.

Ellen Gelbard, Multi-Modal Planning. An RTP&D employee, Ellen's major contribution is her five years of work on the proposed Mid-Cities extension of the Metro Red Line. She has capably guided this project through changes in alignment. Her work demonstrates the highest level of motivation and professionalism.

Ruthe Holden, Management Audit Services. Nominated by the Executive Office, Ruthe is recognized for the quality of her work as demonstrated by the superior audit reports she prepares. She's an active problem solver and team player who brings enthusiasm and energy to all her work.

Vokleang Lim, Photocopy Machine Operator, Printing Services. Representing MTA Administration, Vokleang looks for ways to make good jobs even better by taking the initiative to correct problems before they arise. His top priority is customer service and he's absolutely passionate about making a service difference.

Carlos Monroy, Finance/OMB. Carlos has distinguished himself as a Finance employee with his work on purchase orders in the FIS system. He took the initiative to help employees in the various MTA cost centers review the progress of purchases. Carlos has a strong commitment to service.

Maureen Tamuri, Facilities Engineering. Nominated by Metro Construction, Maureen consistently achieves superior results in all her projects. She leads a team on the Metro Eastside Extension and is recognized by her team as a supportive, considerate and results-oriented leader. She works every day to accomplish the MTA's mission.

Rachel Velasquez, Customer Information Supervisor, Customer Relations. A Communications employee, Rachel's positive atti-

tude motivates everyone who works with her. A true professional, she's an outstanding employee who's committed to serving our customers.

Joe Williams, Mechanic, Division 6. Joe is recognized within Transit Operations as an excellent team leader who can serve as an example to all MTA employees. Over the years, he has worked as an operator, schedule checker and mechanic. He's committed to service and constantly works to upgrade his considerable skills. □

New Classification Information

Deputy CEO Linda Bohlinger conducted a series of informational sessions in December to explain the new job classification and compensation program for non-represented employees. The new system, which resulted from the Hay Study, was implemented January 1.

Many employees were critical of the old classification system because of its wide salary bands and lack of management participation in the previous compensation study. The Hay classification system created a fairer and more equitable structure that focuses on the value of the job to the MTA. The new classifications were evaluated by a peer group committee with members from all areas of the agency.

As a result of the reclassification of jobs, some employees have received new job titles that more accurately reflect their job descriptions. A few whose current salaries are below the minimum for their new salary range will receive pay raises to the minimum of their salary range. Employees whose salaries are above the maximum range may not receive raises until the ranges catch up with their current salary levels.

The Hay system pegs MTA jobs within the market at a higher than average salary level. This not only reflects the quality of the employees we currently have and will want to hire in the future, it also is in keeping with our agency's unique and important responsibility for transportation planning, construction and operations. □

New Service for Less

The MTA expanded its bus fleet in December, adding 53 buses on 34 lines and making schedule and route adjustments on a total of 93 lines. It was the largest single addition to our fleet since 1976, and it will be followed next June by a second installment of 51 buses.

At the same time, the price of monthly passes was reduced from \$49 to \$42. We also introduced an \$11 weekly pass and a special 75-cent fare that's in effect during off-peak hours — 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., Monday through Friday — on Lines 40 and 42. Both lines are heavily traveled by the transit-dependent.

On December 30, we inaugurated two Metro Bus limited-stop lines with 20 of the 53 new buses. Line 311-Limited now parallels Lines 111 and 112 on Florence Avenue in South Central LA. Line 394-Limited complements Line 94 on San Fernando Road between downtown and the Sylmar Metrolink station. The remaining 33 buses are augmenting bus lines throughout our service area.

This month, we expect to name more bus lines to the 75-cent off-peak fare program, with the reduction possibly taking effect in March. All these changes are included in the Bus Service Improvement Plan and are part of our implementation of the consent decree from the settlement of the fare lawsuit. □

CEO HotLine Activity

Many calls have come into the CEO HotLine from employees who have questions about PERS and the MTA Retirement Plan. Those questions are being handled directly by Benefits Administration, but one needs to be addressed here. It concerns a military buy-back provision.

In the November 18 CEO Report, you said there would be no military buy-back provision in the PERS plan offered to MTA employees. This would be a no-cost option for the MTA, so why can't it be included?

Since that CEO Report was published, PERS agreed to add a military buy-back provision to the plan, although the effective date of PERS has been postponed for the immediate future. When PERS is implemented, Armed Forces veterans may be eligible to purchase extra credit in PERS for time served in the military.

Check with Benefits Administration if you think you're eligible.

**Have an issue or concern?
Call the CEO HotLine at 922-6282.
Give your name and location if you
want a personal reply.**

There's a safety hazard for Metro Blue Line passengers disembarking at the Washington/Grand station. Stops and Zones painted a red line on

the sidewalk to warn people about on-coming traffic, but that's not enough to prevent injury. Can't something be done about this?

Thanks for caring about our passengers' safety. In addition to the red warning line, plans also are to extend the fence to the crosswalks, open the west end of the platform and add another signalized pedestrian crosswalk. We'll also construct a ramp, extend the platform, and make other safety improvements.

In September, 1995, there was a fatal accident in the Division 7 yard. Poor lighting may have been the cause. We were promised better lighting, but 14 months later no extra lights have been installed.

Progress has been made since your call. The installation of lighting in the yard is nearly complete. At this writing, thirty-three 400-watt fixtures have been replaced by thirty-six 1,000-watt fixtures. The improved lighting will ensure more uniform lighting in the yard. You'll be happy to know that Facilities Engineering has made improved lighting a high priority at all Transit Operations locations. □

Closing Thoughts

As I read the November Employees of the Month descriptions, I was struck by their commitment to customer service. We need to continually remind ourselves that quality service is the key to remaining competitive. The MTA may never equal our competitors' costs, but we certainly can provide equal or better service. Let's dedicate ourselves to that achievable goal. □

Joe Drew



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