

CEO Report

Linda Bohlinger, Chief Executive Officer
June 30, 1997

We've had good news from three fronts in the past few days. A congressional subcommittee has earmarked \$76 million for Metro Red Line construction. We've reached agreement with the City of Los Angeles that will bring us \$200 million. And the Board has approved a \$2.8 billion budget for FY 1997-98 which includes funds to buy 223 new buses.

Earlier, Federal Transit Administrator Gordon Linton announced that his agency supports the MTA's funding requests to Congress and will soon consider for approval our revised Rail Recovery Plan for completing the Metro Rail system. This means that the MTA is gaining back the respect and support of the FTA.

Regarding the City's contribution, I'm pleased to announce that, after extended negotiations, both the City Council and the MTA Board approved the City's \$200 million agreement. The Council had voted recently to withhold money owed the MTA for Segment 1 until a decision was made to accelerate the construction of a rail line across the San Fernando Valley. The new agreement includes a commitment for the construction of a cross-Valley line to begin as early as 2007 and support for the MTA's commitment to buy more buses.

Our Board, meanwhile, has taken a firm stand on completion of Segment 3 to North Hollywood by 2000, completion of

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the Eastside extension to First and Lorena by 2004, and completion of the Mid-City line by 2008. In September, we'll be in Sacramento seeking continued state funding for the Metro Blue Line to Pasadena. We're asking the state for a \$54 million loan from the highway account and another \$50 million from the 1998 State Transportation Improvement Program. By using the state money up front, and local funds later, we believe we can finish this important project by August, 2001 – three years earlier than expected in last January's Rail Recovery Plan and a slight delay from its original schedule.

Weird Rules

Remember the Top Ten Weird Rules (plus one)? A survey of employees, conducted by the CEO Advisory Group, identified some 83 inconsistent or unusual practices that annoy us or adversely affect our work. Now, I've asked the executive officers to prepare action plans by July 15 that will resolve or eliminate those practices.

Six of the 11 Weird Rules, concerning hiring, promotions and salaries, are Human Resources issues. Others involve commuting and telecommuting, payment of consultant invoices and Headquarters signage and pedestrian safety. Eliminating these bothersome practices is an employee supportive action that will improve the way we do business and help us accomplish the MTA's mission.

Employees of the Month

Congratulations to our Employees of the Month for May! This month we're honoring 10 employees, including a two-member team. The Employees of the Month for May are:

Alice Dickerson, Communications. Alice's responsibilities include tracking MTA Marketing projects, graphics and print coordination, and negotiating with vendors. She keeps over 600 projects a year on track, helping to meet crucial deadlines. Thanks to her efforts, the MTA's good works are seen by many Los Angeles residents.

Ernest Horstmanshoff, Transit Police. An administrative analyst, Ernie is responsible for personnel issues in the Transit Police Partnership Task Force. He worked tirelessly to advocate the best terms for non-contract civilian personnel and the MTA during merger negotiations with the LAPD and Sheriff's Department.

Robert Jackson and Richard Steinbeck, RTP&D. Robert (RTP&D) and Richard (Marketing) are being jointly honored for their Service Planning and Market Research Project. This customer survey provides data about transit patterns and needs in LA County. Their collaborative effort is a fine example of teamwork and motivation.

Laura Mohr, Construction. A member of the Metro Red Line Eastside Extension Team, Laura leads a successful design team. As president of the American Society of Civil Engineers' Younger Member Forum, she represents the drive and work excellence that is the goal of all MTA employees.

Linda Perryman, Executive Office. An Equal Opportunity Programs employee, Linda recently took the lead in identifying and researching glitches in the EO database. She also developed a reporting tool to provide easy-to-read information on case files. Her dedication and diplomacy make her an excellent source of guidance for co-workers.

Robert Ponce, Transit Operations. As a Rail Operations Controller, Robert is responsible for operating the interlockings and for ensuring that Metro Blue Line and Green Line trains are moving in a timely and efficient manner. His work ethic and attitude inspire all those around him to give their maximum effort.

Vazgen Vartanian, Administration. An ITS employee, Vaz recently helped ensure completion of benefits information, PERS enrollments and year-end payroll processing, which resulted in FICA refund checks for many MTA employees. A dedicated employee, he often works on his own time to complete high priority projects.

Jeff Vergel de Dios, Procurement. Jeff's expertise in computer programming enabled him to provide the Inventory Planning group with reports that enhance inventory forecasting capabilities. He also provides invaluable training to members of his department and sets the standard for integrity and leadership.

Hedi Woods, Finance. Hedi serves as a role model for her peers in Risk Management. Given responsibility for recovering damages to Metro Red Line transformers, she mounted an effort that took almost three years, involved more than ten departments and four outside vendors. As a result, the MTA will be reimbursed for over \$190,000.

Safety Matters Most

"Safety Matters Most" was the theme for June as we marked National Safety Month. The MTA's Office of Safety Compliance took the lead by issuing helpful information on first aid, workplace, community, home and driving safety. Safety-related calendars, signs, banners, lapel pins and stickers also were distributed to employees and construction workers on MTA projects.

The safety of our passengers, of course, has always been our number one priority. The safety of MTA employees also ranks at the top of our concerns. MTA Operations Safety guards the health and safety of employees and our 1.2 million daily riders. Construction Safety monitors safety at rail construction sites. Construction Systems Safety ensures that new rail lines are designed and built for safe operation.

Welcoming Our Sons

June 26 was Take Our Sons To Work Day. Some 600 boys, ages 9 to 15, participated at Headquarters and at the Operating Divisions. The event, which mirrored the successful Take Our Daughters To Work Day, gave the young men exposure to the working world and positive attention from adults.

The Take Our Sons To Work Day committee includes representatives from Human Resources, Public Affairs-Construction, Internal Communications, Marketing, Transit Operations and General Services. Organizational Development and Training coordinated the event.

More Kudos for MTA

Congratulations to Metro Rail Construction! The Metro Red Line Wilshire Extension has been awarded a 1997 Caltrans Excellence in Transportation award for Intermodal Transportation. Construction and their partners on the project, Engineering Management Consultants and Parsons Dillingham, will receive commemorative plaques to mark the honor.

The MTA has been named a "Family Friendly Employer" by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Child Care Advisory Board. The award recognized the MTA for providing the Child Care Center and other family-oriented services to employees. The MTA was one of eight organizations named from among 70 nominations.

Adding More Service

In line with our Consent Decree commitment to help the transit dependent get to school, work and other destinations, the MTA added 53 buses on a variety of routes in June. The MTA staff and the Bus Riders Union also concluded a series of public meetings to hear ideas about where new service is needed. The meetings were well-attended and provided further insights on how the MTA can improve service.

Congratulations to Transit Operations employees for achieving a 38 percent drop in traffic accidents over the past 10 years. Metro Buses now travel about 34,000 miles (1.4 times around the world) between accidents. As a result, our bus system is one of the safest in the world.

Spreading our Message

I'm pleased to announce that a new MTA Speakers Bureau will be in operation by August 1. More than 100 employees, representing a cross-section of the agency, are being given formal training for this important community outreach effort. Public Relations Director Marc Littman and Judy Schwartze, Director of Program Management, Multi-modal Planning, are coordinating the Speakers Bureau.

The purpose of the Speakers Bureau is to promote positive public awareness of the MTA. It will be part of a broad program that also will include tours of MTA facilities and construction sites, public forums and other events. We'll seek opportunities to make presentations to organizations we haven't reached before.

The Speakers Bureau has assembled key messages speakers can weave into their presentations. These include our mission statement and guiding principles. Speakers also can show a "Meet the MTA" video, and will have brochures, fact sheets and a new annual report as additional information for their audiences. They'll be regularly updated on breaking news at the MTA.

Of course, MTA executives, public affairs representatives and area team members have always been active in speaking to community groups. We should welcome the Speakers Bureau, however, as a revitalized effort to get our messages out to our stakeholders.



Linda Bohlinger

Have an issue or concern?
Call the CEO HotLine at 922-6282.
Give your name and location if you
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Editor:	Bill Heard
Designer:	Terry McMahon
Executive Officer, Communications:	Rae James
Director, Public Relations:	Marc Littman
Asst. Director, Internal Communications:	Phyllis Tucker
Manager, Printing Services:	Al Moore



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