

MTA REVIEW

OCTOBER 1996

MTA GETS \$70 MILLION FROM HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

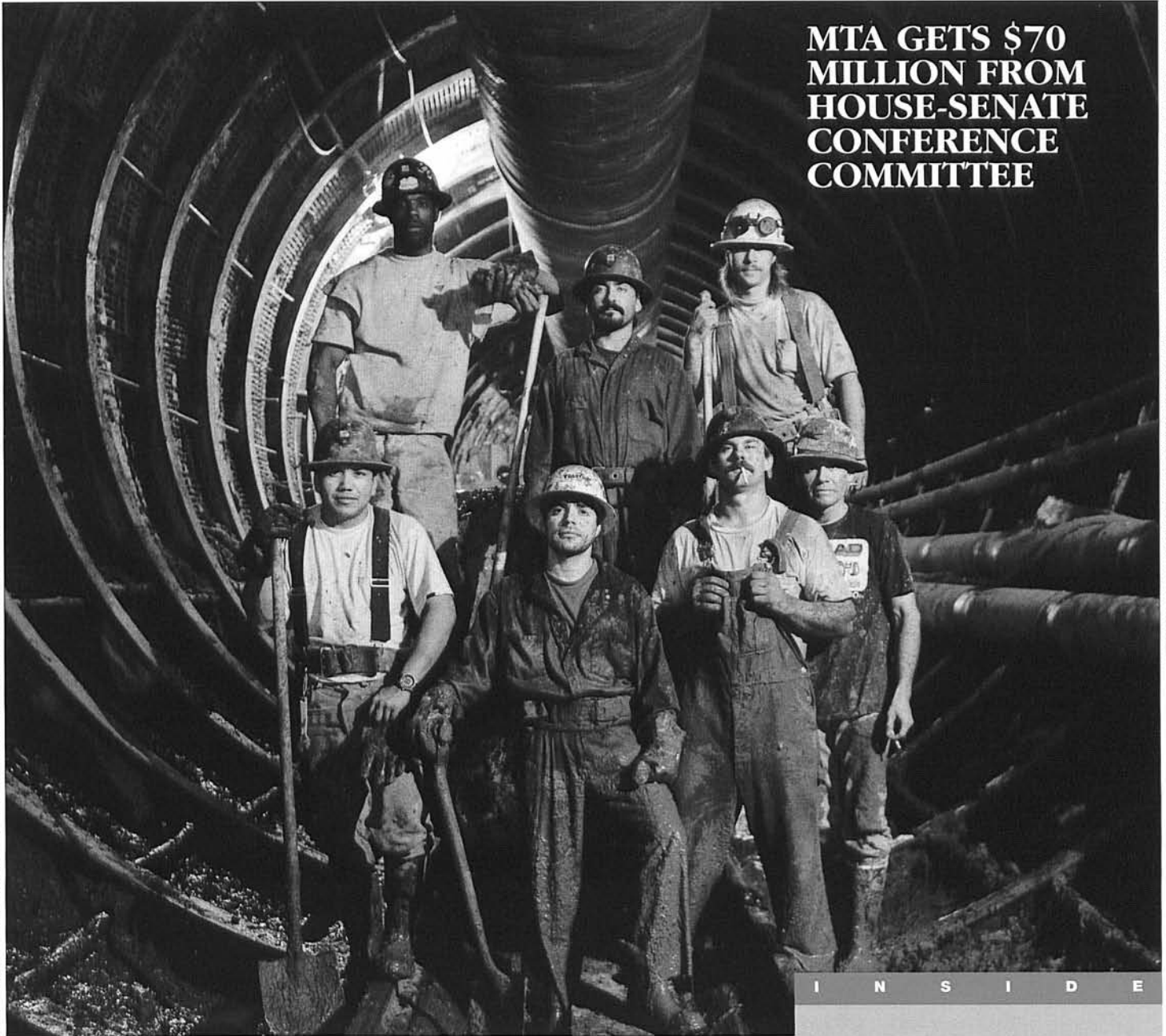


PHOTO BY KEN KARAGOZIAN

Workers take a break in the Metro Red Line tunnel across from Universal Studios. Officials are concerned that shrinking federal dollars may negatively impact the schedule of rail construction.

Overcoming a Senate recommendation of \$55 million, the MTA was successful in achieving a federal grant of \$70 million for its Metro Red Line projects Segment 3, as well as additional funds for other transportation programs.

While recognizing the shrinking universe of funds, combined with increased competition for those funds, officials were concerned that if the trend continues, this may negatively impact the schedule of rail construction.

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Fare Lawsuit Settlement

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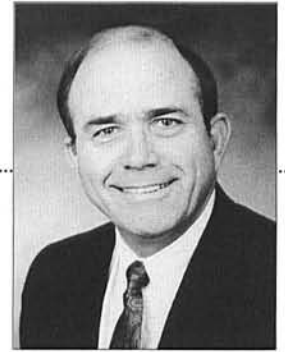
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Joseph E. Drew
Chief Executive Officer

METRO VIEW



By Joseph E. Drew
MTA Chief Executive Officer

With the ultimate goal of improving services for our customers, we're embarking on a comprehensive top-to-bottom review of the MTA to assess what we're doing right, what needs improvement and where we might be able to save or reassign resources.

The review or study will include input from employees, management, board members and outside stakeholders, including riders. The Board of Directors and I are working together with a consulting team to ensure that the findings are accurate and recommendations are realistic. We have asked Coopers & Lybrand, a national consulting firm, to facilitate this process. They will receive guidance from a joint Board and Management Steering Committee. Their study will include individual and group interviews, focus groups, an employee survey and a review of past studies on the MTA. The Coopers & Lybrand team has a practical, results-oriented approach to improving organizations and processes and has extensive experience in working with public transportation agencies.

Some might ask "Why another study?" Please be assured that this is not just another study. We will start by reviewing past studies of the MTA, assess what has been done to respond to recommendations and then identify open issues and gaps. This effort is different because it is a comprehensive look at the agency at a single point in time. It will help direct us for the future as we evolve into a new MTA that honors the past and looks to the future.

It's no secret that we are a large and complex organization that has gone through many changes since the 1993 merger of the Southern California Rapid Transit District and the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission. Even though parts of the MTA have been closely studied, there has not been an overall look at the entire organization since the merger. These top-to-bottom studies in other agencies have eliminated inefficiencies, saved millions of dollars and improved customer service - and this is precisely what we intend to accomplish at the MTA. While these studies are routinely used in private companies, it's rare for public agencies to examine themselves in this way.

This study will be conducted in three parts. The first part involves taking a fresh look at our organization and its issues through interviews with board members, management staff and people who deal with MTA from outside the agency. A survey will be done of a representative sample of all MTA employees: office workers, operators and mechanics and focus groups of these employees will be conducted to make sure the information is complete. The consultants will also examine processes identified through these interviews and ways to make them more accountable, efficient and understandable to both internal and external customers. Comparisons with other agencies and companies, a process known as benchmarking, will also be done. The final product will be a series of implementable recommendations and improvements. Some may be items we can accomplish in a short period of time and others may take longer.

This is a critical study because we're taking a fresh, unbiased look at the MTA to see how we can do better with an emphasis on actions and results. The study will provide a road map to help the MTA become more efficient, more productive, and most importantly, more customer-focused. When the study is completed by the end of the year, we'll be reporting back to you on the results and our plan of action.



The Board Report

NEW SERVICE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Authorized staff to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with APT Senior Ride, Inc. for the operation of the Crenshaw Flexible Destination Shuttle. Called the Crenshaw Connection, this new concept in transit service provides the best features of a regular fixed-route bus line with the added bonus of flexible "off-route" service, allowing passengers greater convenience with less transferring. The Connection takes passengers to the front door of any destination within the service area, even private residences. The Crenshaw Connection, which begins service on October 28, serves the Crenshaw District, Leimert Park and eastern portions of the Baldwin Hills area.

This service is a demonstration project funded through previous Board actions with regard to the Inner-City Needs Assessment Study implementation. Initially the MTA and the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) studied the area bounded by the Glen Anderson (I-105), Harbor (I-110), San Diego (I-405) and Santa Monica (I-10) freeways to identify unmet transit needs as well as address service quality and accessibility issues.

The board later authorized staff to use up to \$2.5 million dollars to implement new demonstration projects to address the recommendations of the study, one of which is represented by the Crenshaw Connection. The concept was identified as a way to offer inner-city residents more convenient access to local destinations and easier access to the regional transportation system. The shuttle, which offers pick-up and drop-off service anywhere within a three-square-mile area, received widespread community support when it was introduced at community meetings and public forums.

The new service operates every 30 minutes, Monday through Friday between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. The fare is 25¢ cash; Metro monthly passes and transfers are also accepted. There is no defined route for this service, only checkpoints that the service passes. Riders may flag down the shuttle to board the Connection at any safe location between the checkpoints and ask the operator to leave the vehicle at any location within the Connection's service area.

BOARD APPROVES CONTINUANCE OF TRAINING PROGRAM

Approved the negotiation of and execution of a one-year Memorandum of Agreement with two one-year options with Management Education Associates and UCLA for the continuance of the Transportation Leadership and Management Program (TLAMP). The program was jointly developed by the MTA and UCLA to provide comprehensive management and leadership training for MTA staff. Sponsored and endorsed by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), TLAMP stresses ways for achieving customer satisfaction, community problem-solving and strengthening of internal controls.

MTA
BOARD
ACTIVITIES
FOR
SEPTEMBER
1996



The MTA launched an all-out effort to assist passengers during the changes to Metro Bus service on Wilshire Boulevard. The change was designed to reduce congestion, make the bus system more efficient, and take advantage of the faster travel times available on the Metro Red Line. MTA staff were at the Wilshire/Vermont and Wilshire/Western Red Line stations and aboard Wilshire buses for two weeks to hand out brochures explaining the service modifications and to answer patron questions.

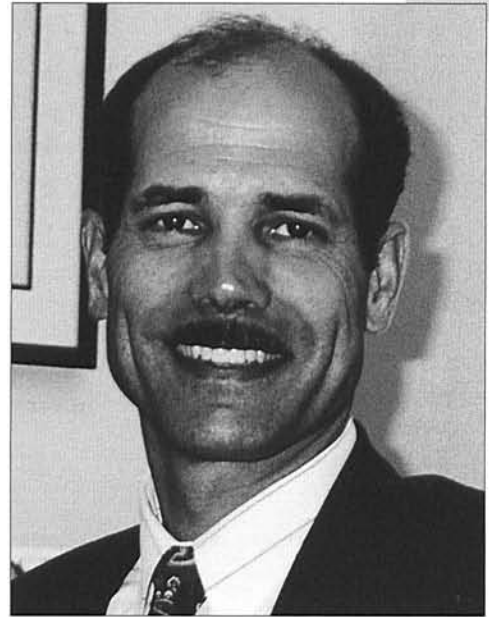
New Staff Appointments

Terry Matsumoto



Terry Matsumoto has been appointed to the position of Executive Officer, Finance effective October 14, 1996. He was previously Executive Officer, Administration. He brings over 25 years of professional and managerial experience in both the private and public sector to this position. Matsumoto was formerly Director of Strategic Funding Analysis for the MTA's Regional Transportation Planning and Development division and was formerly the Controller of the MTA. Prior to joining the MTA, Matsumoto was with the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles as a key member of the management team. His previous experience includes managing financial functions for Republic Geothermal, Inc., divisional finance and administration for Tetra Tech, Inc. in Arlington, Virginia, and auditing with Coopers & Lybrand.

Michal R. Robinson



Michal Robinson has been appointed to replace Terry Matsumoto as Executive Officer, Administration, effective October 14, 1996. Robinson was formerly the District Engineer and Commander of the Los Angeles District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He has 25 years of leadership experience of increasing responsibility in engineering, resource management, legislative liaison, real estate management, community planning, personnel administration, finance and executive level management.

He is also a Registered Professional Civil Engineer. His education includes a B.S. in engineering from California State Polytechnic University, a Master's from Stanford and post graduate work at the Army Command and General Staff College and the Army War College.

RECAP OF 1995-1996 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 1995-96 Legislative Session officially ended on August 31, 1996. The first half of this session, the 1995 calendar year, was a difficult one for the MTA due to concerns about the agency's management and because of construction difficulties with Metro Rail tunneling. In light of that fact, staff and MTA contract lobbyists spent the 1996 half of the session rebuilding relationships with legislators by clearly delineating the MTA message and creating a

greater understanding of the agency's programs and services. This rebuilding effort was enhanced by the more activist roles of the chairman and MTA executive officers which included trips to Sacramento and direct phone contact with Senators and Assembly Members.

Legislatively the MTA was instrumental in several industry-wide efforts. MTA staff provided consultation, technical expertise and direct lobbying assistance for a wide variety of legislation. AB 772 (Aguiar) benefited from MTA involvement. This bill places a cap on Caltrans' administrative costs for the Section 16 (b) program which

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Ellen Levine



Ellen Levine was named the agency's Executive Officer for Transit Operations effective October 7, 1996. She becomes the first female to lead the agency's Operations Unit.

Levine, who was previously Western Regional Operations Manager, will oversee all bus and rail services and maintenance, as well as Operations Planning for the Authority's bus and rail fleet. As the Western Region Manager, Levine led nearly 1,200 employees, who operated 420 buses which serve over 300,000 passengers per day. Her scope of responsibility now expands to 6,000 employees, 2,000 buses and 251,400 miles of bus routes, 100 rail cars and 48 miles of track and almost 1.2 million passengers per day.

Levine was born in New York City and raised and educated on the East Coast. She was 17-years of experience in public transit, including budget development and management, research design and evaluation and labor relations.

Prior to entering the transportation field, she worked in public health, and she holds a Master's degree in that field with a specialty in mental health.

MTA GETS \$70 MILLION

continued from page 1

Under the full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA), the federal government has pledged to provide \$1.4 billion for Metro Red Line extensions to North Hollywood, the mid-city area, and East Los Angeles and to provide the funds by 2002. With funds recently released by the Federal Transit Administration, the MTA has received \$440.7 million of the promised total.

The Committee also has approved funds for bus capital and operating expenses, approximately \$13 million for the continued development of the Advanced Technology Transit Bus, and \$1.5 million for the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative.

Joseph E. Drew, MTA CEO, said "We are in the process of updating our 20-year plan and the Congressional action underscores the fact that Los Angeles cannot expect to maintain its rail construction program schedule with the funding we have received in recent years. We must have assurances from Congress that it will honor its commitments. We must and we will face these fiscal realities."

In FY 1995, the appropriation for the Red Line was \$165 million, while \$85 million was granted in FY 1996.

The conference committee directed that the federal Department of Transportation Inspector General conduct quarterly reviews to ensure that the City of Los Angeles does not divert Los Angeles International Airport funds to the City's General Fund. If, as a result of such a review, it was found that funding was diverted by the city, the FTA would be required to withhold funds from the Metro Rail construction project.

"We are assessing the impact of this language added to the appropriations process," Drew said. "We will work with the leadership of Los Angeles to make sure we are in compliance with the Congressional mandate, but more importantly that we will continue to deliver to the taxpayers of Los Angeles County a quality product and a world-class transportation system."

Management Organization

6

Los Angeles

County

Metropolitan

Transportation

Authority

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922-

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922-7273

Daniel Jackson
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William Moore
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922-7385

Michael Gonzalez
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922-7426

Joel Sandberg
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Engineering
922-7223

David Sievers
Dep. Exec. Officer
GL & PL & Veh. Acq.
922-7225

Steve Polechronis
Dep. Exec. Officer
RL Seg. 2 & Mid City
922-1472

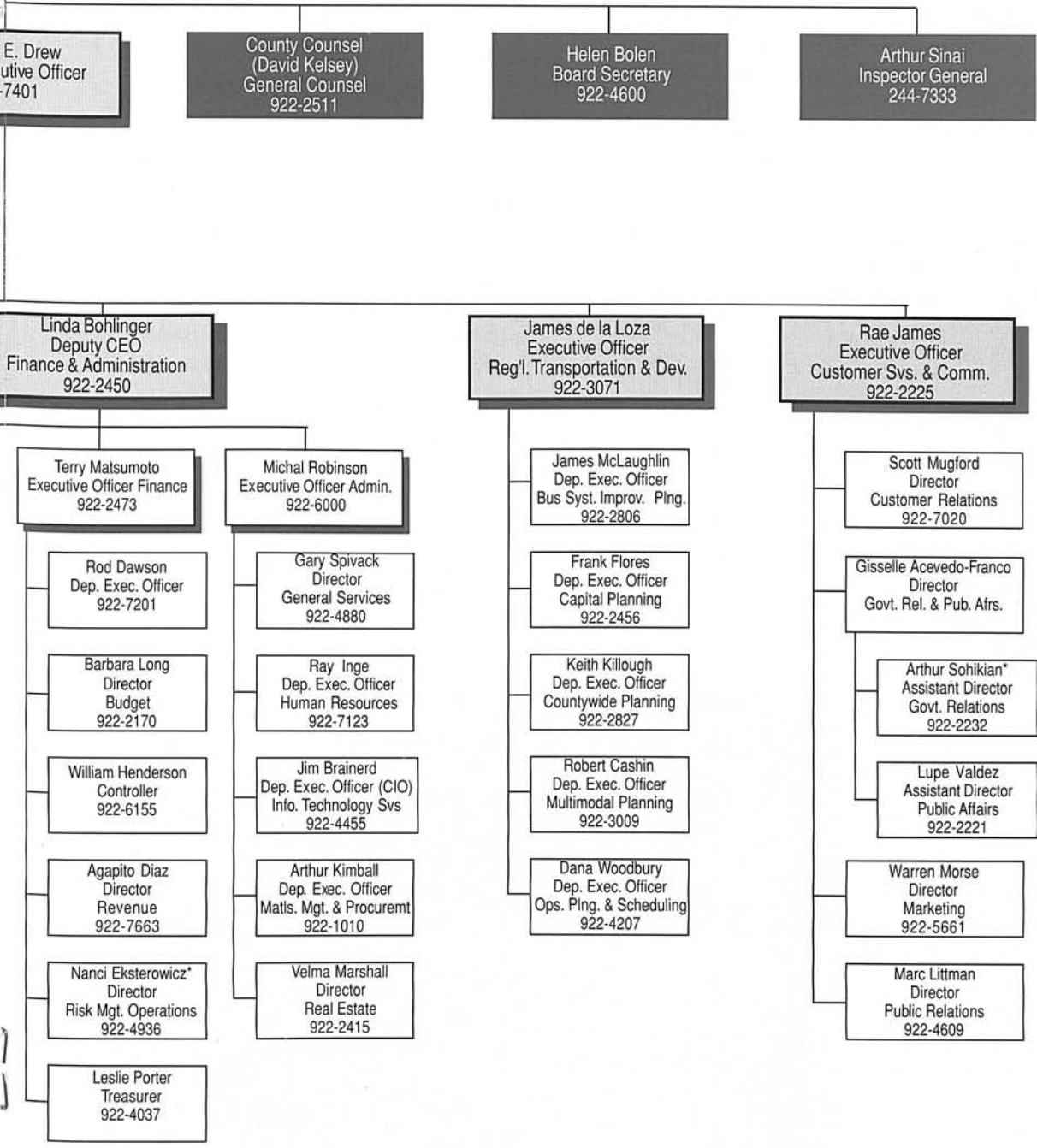
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RL Seg. 3-N. Hwd.
922-7220

Chart

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MTA DIRECTORS



*Interim or Acting

As
of
October 7,
1996

**Our
Goal
is
Better,
Safer,
Faster
Service
for
Our
Customers**

BUS SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The MTA is moving forward with an important element of its Bus System Improvement Plan to provide overcrowding relief for the transit-dependent. The Board recently approved a plan that allocates additional service through three categories. Two of the categories will be demonstration programs to test innovative ways to relieve overcrowding. The third category uses a conventional method. The plan requires 51 buses.

The Bus System Improvement Plan outlines over 30 projects or programs designed to improve bus service in Los Angeles County. The Board had previously appropriated \$10.4 million in Proposition C Discretionary Funds for Fiscal Year 1996/1997 for an annual countywide program to improve service on overcrowded lines. The MTA will receive an allocation of over \$7.8 million.

The current implementation involves new limited service on Lines 311 on Florence Ave. and 394 on San Fernando Rd. to relieve overcrowding. Instituting more limited service, which typically only stops at cross streets with transit service or major attractors, is anticipated to be particularly effective because it reduces travel time at the same time that seating capacity is increased. The MTA has had excellent customer response to new limited services in the Crenshaw Blvd. and Manchester/Firestone corridors.

A second element of the plan involves adding local service on Lines 30-31 (West Pico Blvd. and East 1st St.) and Line 204 (Vermont Ave.) to demonstrate the effect of extra capacity on attracting more riders and improving service quality. Compared to the typical 1.45 load factor (allowing 19 standees), the proposed 1.1 load factor will decrease the average standing load to fewer than five. There should be fewer pass-ups and customers riding these lines should find seats more quickly once aboard. Staff will

monitor the results and make refinements and adjustments to maximize the benefits to riders.

The final element of this three-part plan involves conventional overcrowding relief offering more local service to bring load factors down to a level commensurate with existing Board policy. This traditional way to relieve overcrowding (adding local service to adjust boarding levels to current standards) will also improve service quality. Staff will assess passenger impacts in all three categories. Program modifications will be considered annually as part of the budget process based on data collected by the MTA.

The agency is also making available \$250,000 this fiscal year to cities throughout Los Angeles County so that they can install bus shelters. This fast-track project will provide for improvements beginning this spring that may include anything from better lighting and additional benches to the installation of telephones and enhanced maintenance.

"By focusing on service quality improvements we are reinforcing our goal of providing better, safer and faster service for our customers, and we believe we are well on our way to achieving this goal," said Jim McLaughlin of Bus System Improvement Planning.



The MTA implements a plan to relieve overcrowding on buses.

MTA AND CLASS ACTION PLAINTIFFS REACH TENTATIVE AGREEMENT, SETTLING LAWSUIT

The MTA Board of Directors approved a tentative settlement with the class action plaintiffs, represented by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., that will result in additional bus service and continuation of the sale of the monthly pass, as well as a commitment by the authority to devote additional resources for security on the bus system.

"We are pleased that we have reached this agreement because it expands upon our already approved bus service improvement plan," said Joseph E. Drew, MTA CEO.

"The proposed settlement is a victory for the bus riders of Los Angeles who will enjoy lower fares, more buses, and safer rides," according to Constance L. Rice, Western Regional Counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.

The agreement calls for the MTA to field additional bus service to reduce the number of people who stand on a bus. Currently, on a regular sized 42-seat bus, as many as 18 people stand. Under the agreement, by the year 2002, the standee ratio would be cut in half. The agreement also calls for:

- 51 added buses to be put into service by the end of December 1996.
- 51 more buses to be put into service by June 1997.
- During the next two years, the MTA also will add 50 buses to improve access by transit-dependent riders to travel to destinations such as medical facilities, job sites and vocational schools.
- Restructuring of police services to provide equitable security on both buses and trains.
- Continuation of the sale of the monthly bus pass and a rollback in price of the pass from \$49 to \$42 for three years, or until a "needs" based pass is established. The MTA also will sell a semi-monthly pass at \$21 and a weekly pass priced at \$11.

- Off-peak discount fares also will be established on selected bus lines used predominately by the transit-dependent; the fare for this off-peak service will be 75 cents, 35 cents for seniors.
- A two-year commitment by the MTA to maintain the current cash fare of \$1.35 and the token at 90 cents. Transfers will remain 25 cents.

Funding to pay for the service improvements will be identified as the MTA updates its Long Range Plan early next year.

The agreement, which resolves a lawsuit filed two years ago in federal court, was jointly negotiated by mediator Donald T. Bliss and by attorneys representing the MTA and the plaintiffs which include the Labor/Community Strategy Center, the Bus Riders Union, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Greater Los Angeles, and the Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates. Lawyers for the defense include David Kelsey, Assistant County Counsel and Ken Klein. Lawyers for the plaintiffs include NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., the ACLU Foundation of Southern California, Paul Hoffman, Gary Bostwick, and K. S. Park. The Environmental Defense Fund has also provided counsel to the attorneys for the plaintiffs.

The proposed settlement has been submitted to federal court for review in late October.

Agreement

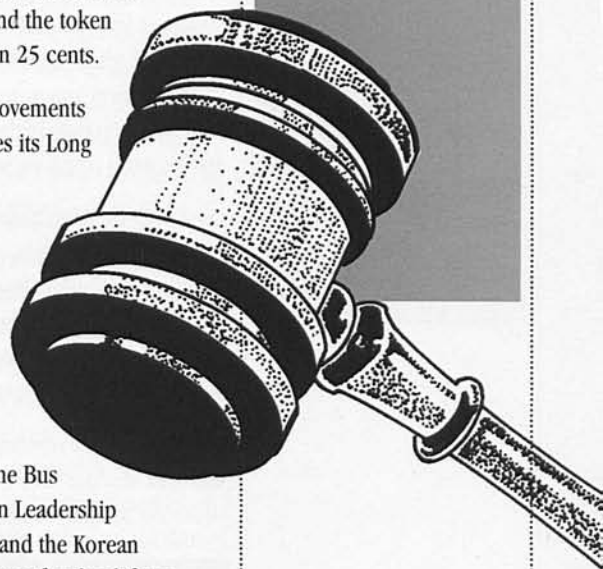
Expands

Bus

Service

Improvement

Plan



Veteran

Bus

Operator

Pancho

Gonzalez

Takes

First

Place

Honors

COMPETITION ABOUNDS AT BUS ROADEO

by Bill Heard

Poncho Gonzalez walks with a slight limp due to hip displacement at birth, but the 21-year veteran bus operator eased ahead of a competitive field of 30 of the MTA's best operators to win the 1996 Bus Roadeo.

The annual driving and maintenance competition was at the Santa Anita Racetrack and drew hundreds of family members and spectators to a parking lot where orange cones and white plastic barrels defined a course for the operators to negotiate in their 40-foot coaches. The 11 maneuvers included turns, backing, precision approaches and accurate stops, all within a seven-minute time limit.

Gonzalez, 48, first competed in the Bus Roadeo in 1979 and has driven in 10 events, always placing among the finalists. They key to winning, he says, is to be calm. "There's a moment of truth, and if you lose your edge of mind for even a fraction of a second, you can lose the competition," he said. Gonzalez works out of MTA's Division 9.

Runner-up in the driving event for the second year in a row was Sam Morales who finished only six points behind Gonzalez. Arnold Herrera came in a very close third.



Bus operator Poncho Gonzalez took first place honors at the 1996 Bus Roadeo. Joseph E. Drew, MTA CEO, congratulates him on his achievement.

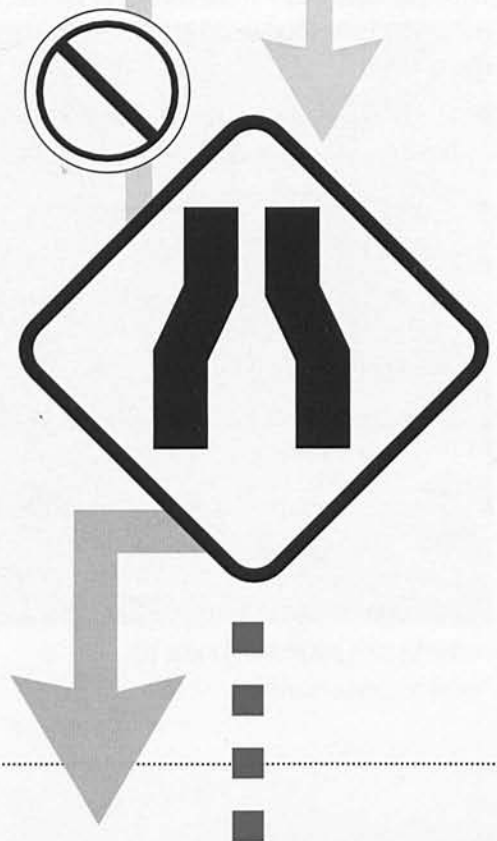
Gonzalez represented the MTA at the International Bus Roadeo in October in Anaheim. The event was held in conjunction with the American Public Transit Association's (APTA) annual conference.

In the Maintenance Team competition, the team of Doug Creveling, Fred Hines and Alan Wong finished 90 points ahead of their nearest challengers to win the brass trophy. The team works at MTA's Division 10.

Behind the scenes, mechanics dressed in white overalls labored to start a diesel engine, troubleshoot an air brake system and diagnose problems in a bus power train, all within 25 minutes. The event ended with a driving test.

The team represented the MTA at APTA's international finals September 13-15 in Tacoma, Washington.

Joseph E. Drew, MTA CEO, on hand at the Roadeo to present awards to the winners and runners-up, stated "The event demonstrates every year just how capable our operators and mechanics are."



CNG Buses Back on the Street

Most of the MTA's fleet of CNG buses were back on the road and operating safely by the middle of September.

Following the rupture of a carbon fiber tank during refueling in August, the agency ordered the buses off the streets and conducted tank-by-tank inspections of the entire 120-bus fleet. New safety procedures intended to prevent another such incident also were put in place.

No one was injured when the tank exploded, but the floor of the bus was damaged and windows were shattered.

"We are confident, as are the experts who are advising us, that the buses we are putting into service are safe, although the exact cause of the tank rupture has yet to be determined," Drew told the press in mid-September.

EDO has reported no similar incident among any of its 6,000 tanks in operation nationwide. The company has made carbon fiber tanks since 1993 and the tanks have been in use in the aerospace industry for about 20 years.

Each of the 12 tanks aboard every CNG bus in the MTA's

fleet has been inspected with an ultraviolet light to detect possible cracks. MTA inspectors rejected any CNG tank with a crack more than 1/10,000th of an inch wide.

Inspectors also tested all gas lines, valves and relief devices on the buses. The new safety procedures include installation of metal shields beneath each CNG bus to protect the fuel tanks from road debris. The shields will be inspected every night prior to fueling for signs of major impact. At the 6,000-mile inspection, the shields will be removed and the tanks given a more thorough inspection.

MTA officials also are reviewing the CNG fueling procedures and expect to revise them, perhaps reducing fueling pressures from 3,600 psi to 2,400 psi.

Neoplan has delivered about 200 CNG buses to the MTA this year on a total order of 294. The agency will receive another 250 CNG buses from Neoplan in FY 97-98. All buses still at the factory, and those to be delivered next year, will be inspected before they leave the plant.

Meanwhile, EDO has been directed to provide additional protection for the carbon fiber tanks during manufacturing and delivery. An MTA representative recently visited EDO to review manufacturing, quality control and shipping procedures.



Division 8 mechanic Alex Rocio inspects the protective shields on the underside of a CNG bus.

Following the incident, Joseph E. Drew, MTA CEO convened a panel of experts, including representatives of Cyltek, the testing company; the bus manufacturer, Neoplan; and the tank manufacturer, EDO of Calgary, Canada, to study the accident and recommend safety procedures.

In mid-September, the MTA hosted a conference for all transit properties that use CNG buses. During the day-long conference, MTA consultants shared their opinions on the cause of the tank rupture and the progress of the investigation, and transit operations described actions taken to mitigate impacts on bus service.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

continued from page 4

unincorporated county roads. AB 3020 was signed by the governor on September 30.

None of the measures regarding changes in MTA Board composition were passed by the legislature.

MTA staff and lobbyists were key to the defeat of several bills. Working with fellow members of the California Transit Association, AB 2084 (Richter), a bill which would have allowed for the transfer of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds for non-transportation purposes, was withdrawn by the author. AB 2640 (Pringle), which would have repealed the sales tax on gasoline excise tax with no replacement of these funds to cover the loss of transit operating dollars, failed passage in the Senate Committee on Revenue and Taxation. MTA representatives worked in opposition to AB 2640. Additionally, SB 1868 (Hayden), a bill which would have placed prohibitions on the use of market-based transportation control measures in Los Angeles County, incorrectly singling out the MTA as the lead agency on this issue, was held in the Assembly Transportation Committee, and therefore "dead" for this session.

Staff is currently working on the MTA's 1997 legislative program and arranging meetings with legislative candidates in uncontested and open districts to provide information on the MTA and its many programs and services. Other informational and advocacy efforts will continue throughout the coming months in anticipation of the reconvening of the Legislature in January, 1997.

funds transportation services for persons with disabilities and the elderly. AB 772 was signed into law by the Governor on September 20.

It was because of MTA staff efforts that AB 2419 (Bowler), a bill allowing urbanized counties to withdraw from congestion management efforts, was amended to make the measure acceptable and practical for all transportation interests around the state. MTA legislative and technical staff work removed nearly all opposition to AB 2419, which was signed into law by the Governor on July 25.

AB 2660 (Aguiar) had the strong support of the MTA and the bill was signed by the governor. AB 2660 authorizes a blanket public/private partnership program to allow state and local governmental agencies to enter into agreements and leasing arrangements with private entities for the design, construction or reconstruction of infrastructure projects. It has been a long-standing policy of the MTA and its predecessor agency, the LACTC, to support "turnkey" opportunities in the transportation industry.

The MTA was also able to secure a provision in AB 3020 (Bowler), the omnibus transportation legislation, which allows Los Angeles County to place call boxes on



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