

After a Week's Hard Work by MTA Crews, Metro Blue Line Repairs Near Completion

(Dec. 3) Metro Blue Line repair crews have been hard at work every night this week repairing damage to rail bed, tracks and overhead power systems caused by the tragic accident, Nov. 27, that killed a taxi driver and five passengers in Compton. They expect to complete the work Sunday night.

"This was the most extensive damage we've suffered in any incident since we started rail," said Ralph de la Cruz, deputy executive officer, Rail Operations. "The repair and restoration work was an incredible professional effort. It was awesome to watch."

Railroad Ties Replaced

During the week, maintenance of way crews have replaced some 56 concrete railroad ties. On Monday, a new foundation was poured for a power pole downed during the accident. A new pole was erected Wednesday night; catenary power wires were strung on Thursday. The wires will be re-tensioned and tested this weekend.

Sunday night, crews will bring in a rail-mounted tamper machine to align the tracks and compact the ballast rocks supporting them.

"We set up a plan at the beginning of the week and we're right on target," said Phil Meyers, director, Facilities Engineering. "We've had to make these repairs and still keep service operating. That's the trick."

Staff responded in force

"Our staff immediately responded to the accident in force," Tom Conner, Transit Operations executive officer, told the Board, Thursday. Noting that both tracks were in operation for the Monday rush hour following the Saturday night accident, he said, "The staff has done a good job in repairing the track and keeping the operation going."

Conner expressed appreciation to the Compton Police Department for maintaining traffic control and providing security for crews working at the accident site. He also noted the special effort crews made to work quietly in consideration of neighbors.

Meyers commended crew members involved in restoring the accident site and "support people who contribute to the overall effort, but may never actually be at the site."

Crew members listed were: Jeff Root, Johnnie Padilla, James Carlton, Charlie Briggs, Doug Jaeger, Art Hernandez, Rick Warren, Manuel Lopez, Ezequiel Cobain, A. Lee Wilson, Tanzeem Rizvi, Tobe Cowden, Rick Monzek, Art Ekbohm, Art Siemens, Ray Torres, Frank Hernandez, Hassan Alkachouri, Steve Norton, Dan Besabella and Gilbert Cabral.

See previous story [Metro Rail Crews' All-Out Effort Restores Metro Blue Line Service for Monday Rush](#)

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