

## **Metro Clean 'Volunteers' Scrub Thousands of Buses, Bus Stops in Community Service Program**

By LUIS GARCIA  
(Jan. 24) You may have seen groups of individuals wearing orange safety vests while cleaning buses at MTA layover zones or sweeping the area around bus zones along various routes. And you may have asked yourself: do they work for the MTA?



**Metro Clean Laborer B, Brian Howard, supervising a community service crew at a local layover zone**

Well, yes and no. Yes, because they are supervised by MTA personnel; no, because they are doing the work on a "volunteer" basis in a program called Metro Clean.

### **Swept, polished, scrubbed**

During the first six months of FY 2000, some 3,600 of these community service workers participated in the Metro Clean program. They swept, polished and scrubbed graffiti off 14,296 buses and cleaned 19,631 bus stops and zones. They pressure-washed 392 bus stops, zones and terminals and pulled weeds and picked up trash on 14.2 million square feet of rail rights-of-way or other MTA property.

Formerly known as MARS (Mediation And Restitution Services), Metro Clean continues to stay true to its original purpose of providing alternative sentencing in the form of community service for adult and juvenile offenders. Community service centers and municipal courts around the county provide the MTA with the "voluntary" labor.

"The public's perception of the MTA is based not only on our equipment and service, but also on the appearance of our 18,071 bus stops," says Peter Serdienis, facilities maintenance manager. "By keeping these stops clean and litter-free, we help improve the quality of life for the surrounding community and our patrons."

### **Assists the courts**

Serdienis says the Metro Clean program assists the courts and prison system by providing a way for convicted offenders to avoid jail by performing community service. "These individuals pay off their debt to society by removing graffiti from MTA buses, cleaning our stops, inactive rail rights-of-way and the neighborhoods we serve."

In recent months, Metro Clean has expanded its activities to include community cleanup events. Metro Clean has participated in dozens of

community cleanup events throughout the county. Volunteers took part in the East Los Angeles Cleanup Day, Jan. 22, and are scheduled to participate in the Cypress Park Community Cleanup Day, Jan. 29.

Metro Clean's effectiveness is due, in large part, to an MTA team that includes eight maintenance employees who supervise the community service workers on a daily basis, and four equipment service supervisors whose focus is to address public inquiries, provide support for community events, increase program referrals, and survey locations that may need cleaning throughout the MTA's service area.

The Metro Clean program operates from 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., seven days a week. So, next time you see one of the Metro Clean crews at a layover zone or parked adjacent to a bus zone, remember: providing our patrons a clean bus and bus stop is an MTA priority!

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