



MTA's Emergency Operations Center team prepares for the unexpected.

Democratic Convention's Impact Being Felt on Metro Rail System

(Aug. 14) The Metro Rail system was feeling the impact of the Democratic National Convention, Monday, as delegates and protesters, alike, boarded trains to downtown destinations. At mid-morning, the system was reported to be running smoothly and no on-board incidents had been reported.

The MTA and its security force, however, were prepared for a busy day. At least three protest marches - most beginning at Pershing Square and ending near the Staples Center - were planned. A concert by the antiestablishment band, "Rage Against the Machine," was scheduled Monday evening in the protest area near the convention site.

Morning rush period ridership appeared to be somewhat lighter than usual, even though there were standing loads on most Metro Red Line and Metro Blue Line trains, said Ralph de la Cruz, deputy executive officer, Rail Operations.

Ambassadors to help passengers

Thirty-two specially trained MTA ambassadors will be stationed at a number of Metro Rail stations this week to help passengers unfamiliar with the system. The ambassadors - uniformed bus operators assigned to the transitional duty program - will work at the Vermont, Universal City, Westlake, Pershing Square, Union Station, Pico, Grand and 7th and Metro stations.

Bus Operations, meanwhile, has scheduled four additional transit operations supervisors to its usual two-member team to monitor Metro Bus service in the Central Business District. The team also will assist with the detours in place around the Staples Center. At 11 a.m., the Bus Operations Center reported things were going smoothly.

"People have been very orderly," said Transit Operations Chief Tom Conner. "We think this is going to be a great week and people will get to try out our transit service going to and from the convention."

Two 'suspicious packages'

At its morning meeting, the MTA's Emergency Operations Center team noted several incidents that occurred on Sunday. Two "suspicious package" incidents were cleared by police.

In the most serious non-convention-related incident, Sunday, a passenger died from stab wounds following a robbery attempt on the Metro Green Line platform at the Rosa Parks/Imperial station. A male teenage suspect was shot and another fled. It was the first homicide in 10 years of Metro Rail operation.

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