

First of 500 New Buses Roll onto MTA Property

(Feb. 16) Eight coaches of a huge new bus order rolled onto MTA property this week – the first of about 500 the agency will receive in calendar 2001.

The eight low-floor, CNG coaches were built by New Flyer, which is under contract to provide a total of 223 buses this year. Within the next 30 days, the company expects to ramp-up production to 10 to 15 coaches per week.

Meanwhile, North American Bus Industries is nearing completion on the first coaches in a 215-bus order. The first buses are expected to arrive at the MTA in early March. By early April, NABI should be delivering buses at a rate of 10 to 15 per week.

NABI also is under contract to build an additional 370 buses for delivery beginning this fall. By year's end, the agency will have received a total of approximately 500 new buses from the two companies. The remainder of the NABI order is expected in 2002.

'Significant impact on our fleet'

"The new buses have had a significant impact on our fleet and on the quality of our service," says John Drayton, manager, Vehicle Acquisition.

One sidelight of the influx of new buses is its impact on the Arthur Winston Division. Like most other divisions, it has operated buses made by several manufacturers. But, sometime later this year, 100 percent of the division's buses will be New Flyers.

"Our goal in Fleet Management is to have no more than two – and preferably only one – type of bus operating out of each division," says Drayton.

Of the 222 buses assigned to the Arthur Winston Division, 172 currently are New Flyers. Drayton expects to allot up to 50 more New Flyers to the division this year as replacements for its older buses.

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