



PHOTO BY LUIS INZUNZA

The Division 3 Metro Bus was heavily damaged, but maintenance officials believe it can be repaired. On Thursday morning, the bus was still designated as an LAPD crime scene and was off-limits to MTA personnel.

Operator Gutierrez in Fair Condition Following Hijacking; 3 Passengers Injured; Dead Woman Identified

(May 3, 2001) Emma Gutierrez, the Division 3 operator whose bus was hijacked in the Westlake District, Wednesday, was reported in fair condition, today, at County-USC Hospital.

Gutierrez, 48, suffered a cut on her nose and other facial cuts and bruises during the incident, but a hospital spokesperson said she had no broken bones as had been reported. A 15-year veteran, Gutierrez joined the MTA in December 1985.

When MTA and UTU officials visited Gutierrez in her hospital room, Wednesday night, she was sedated and in pain, and was being comforted by family members.

Among her visitors were John Roberts, deputy executive officer, Bus Operations, Division 3 Manager Dan Frawley and UTU official Rick Ortega. Pam Engelke, manager of Occupation Health and Safety, and Dr. Arthur Henry, the MTA grief counselor, also visited.

'Want to see her healed'

"We told her not to worry and that we want to see her healed," said Roberts. "All the pieces were in place and everyone did a super job in attempting to minimize the impact of this tragedy on the family of Operator Gutierrez."

The Los Angeles Coroner's Office has identified the woman killed in the incident as Guadalupe Arevalos, 34, of Norwalk. Of the five passengers aboard the bus, a 51-year-old woman and a 27-year-old mother and her 4-year-old child were transported to area hospitals.

Police said the hijacking occurred at 4:15 p.m. on Olympic Boulevard as the eastbound Line 28 bus arrived at Witmer Street. Police said Carlos Garcia, 33, had just been involved in a shooting and attempted to escape by boarding the bus.

Holding a gun to the operator's head, the gunman forced her to drive east at high speeds. At some point, Garcia pulled Gutierrez from the driver's seat and took the wheel, himself, police said. He continued to hold the operator at gunpoint.

The bus turned north on San Pedro Street and, at the 4th Street intersection, collided with a minivan. It then struck a UPS truck and crashed into a row of cars in a parking lot. In all, 13 vehicles were damaged.

Garcia jumped out of the stopped bus and tried to hijack a car on nearby Boyd Street, but he was caught by pursuing officers and arrested. The suspect was booked for murder, kidnapping, assault with a deadly weapon and other charges at the Jail Ward of County-USC Hospital.

[Back to MTA Report](#)