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PHOTOS BY JOE JONES



This 40-foot, low-floor Orion is one of 84 new coaches being operated for the MTA by First Transit.



Coach USA operates 36 new buses on MTA contract lines, including this 20-foot Thomas coach.



This 40-foot Blue Bird bus is one of six operated by MV Transportation under MTA contract.

### **MTA Contract Bus Lines to Have All-New Fleet by July 1**

(June 27, 2001) By July 1, the MTA's three major bus line contractors – First Transit, Coach USA and MV Transportation – will be providing passenger service with an all-new fleet of coaches.

The three contractors will operate a total of 126 new buses on the 15 lines they contract from the MTA, according to Joe Jones, manager, Transportation Contract Services.

Josee Larochelle, manager, Operations Budget and Performance Analysis notes that the three companies had been running some coaches that were more than 18 years old.

The MTA, which has been upgrading the Metro Bus fleet, recently awarded contracts that required First Transit, Coach USA and MV Transportation to operate new buses on the 15 contract lines.

These buses are part of the MTA's accelerated bus procurement program instituted in 1998. Since that time, the average age of the Metro Bus fleet has dropped from nearly 15 years to 6.1 years of age.

### **Positive impact on performance**

Some of the new buses already are in revenue service and have had a positive impact on contractor performance. Customer complaints related to service adherence are down.

"The reduction in customer complaints can be directly attributed to the new and more reliable equipment," says Larochelle. "That has resulted in improvements in on-time pullouts and reductions in lost revenue service. In addition, the new equipment has contributed positively to improvements in contractor cleanliness ratings."

First Transit, which runs a total of 84 buses for the MTA, will have 67 new Orion 40-foot, low-floor coaches. The company also will operate 17 30-foot El Dorado coaches.

Coach USA will operate 36 new buses – 20 40-foot Thomas coaches, 11 30-foot El Dorados and five 25-foot El Dorados – to service MTA contract lines.

MV Transportation will operate six new 40-foot buses built by Blue Bird.

"We recognized that there was a need for new vehicles on the contractor lines," says Larochelle. "We had to make this improvement in order to offer higher quality, more reliable service to the public."

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