



CEO Roger Snoble signs a five-year contract with DuPont Safety Resources to officially start the MTA's new employee safety campaign. From left, seated, are Joe Megginson, DuPont safety project manager; Jim Forsman, DuPont Safety Resources president; Snoble; and John Catoe, Deputy CEO. From left, standing, are Carmen Bianco, DuPont business development manager; Richard Brumbaugh, MTA chief financial officer; Deborah Spottsville, MTA contract administrator; Allan Lipsky, Deputy CEO; Gary Spivack, MTA safety project manager; and Paul Lennon, managing director, MTA System Safety and Security. PHOTO: BILL HEARD

MTA Introducing Multi-Year, Top-to-Bottom Safety Campaign

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 9, 2001) The MTA this month is launching a comprehensive, multi-year safety campaign that will touch every facet of the agency – operations, construction, planning and administration.

The campaign will personally affect every employee from the freshest face to the most seasoned veteran, and from top executives and middle managers to admin employees, bus and rail operators, mechanics and service attendants.

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"In order to provide the best service to our patrons, we must first ensure that we remain healthy and safe," CEO Roger Snoble wrote in a memo announcing the safety initiative.

Asking a personal commitment from each employee, Snoble said, "We all have responsibility for ensuring a safe working environment for one another."

The goals of the safety program are to:

- Develop an injury-free working environment,
- Improve on-the-job safety of employees,
- Reduce work-related injuries by half,
- Dramatically cut lost-time accidents,
- Reduce escalating workers compensation costs, and
- Trigger an enduring "Safety First" culture within the MTA.

- Top management commitment

Major elements of the safety program are top management commitment, a Strategic Safety Plan with action plans for each level of the MTA, and a Safety Steering Team whose management and union leader members will meet quarterly. The program also includes continual safety management training for all front-line managers and supervisors.

The effort will be modeled on a New York City Transit campaign that not only reversed the growth of injuries among the agency's 48,000 employees, but also lowered lost-time injuries by 50 percent in the first five years.

Currently, the MTA receives eight to 10 injury claims per day – about 3,000 or so each year from its 8,900 employees. Although the MTA's traffic accident rate is lower than that of NYC Transit, it records 20 lost-time injuries per 100 employees agency-wide. That's compared with NYC Transit's rate of only four lost-time injuries per 100 employees.

In FY 2000, the MTA lost about 96,000 days of work due to lost-time injuries. In FY 2001, the figure rose to 108,000 days – equivalent to the loss of 415 full-time employees. Nearly \$8 of the MTA's hourly service costs are tied up in injury claims.

This fiscal year, the MTA expects to spend \$59 million on workers compensation claims, in contrast to the \$40 million NYC Transit, with more than five times as many employees, will spend.

Five-year contract

To assist the MTA with its campaign, the Board in September approved a five-year contract with DuPont Safety Resources Business, a division of E.I. duPont de Nemours of Delaware, a company with probably the best safety record in the United States. NYC Transit, the Norfolk Southern Railroad and many other companies have adopted the DuPont safety program.

In launching its safety program, the MTA sets a first-year goal of reducing new work-related injuries by 10 percent, reducing lost workdays by 10 percent and bus and rail accidents by 5 percent.

DuPont's contract with the MTA sets five-year goals of reducing lost-time injury days by at least 50 percent, cutting work-related injuries by 50 percent and reducing the bus and rail accident rate by 50 percent.

"DuPont's safety management team has to train our managers and employees that safety is good for them," says Chief Financial Officer Richard Brumbaugh, who took the lead in bringing a safety management group and the MTA together. "We started from the principle that no one wants to get injured at work. They want to go home to their families and enjoy being with them. With this kind of safety program, we can do it!"

The MTA's agreement with DuPont is an incentive fee arrangement based on the company's ability to help lower lost time from injuries and bus accidents.

"That's a great incentive," says Brumbaugh. "DuPont has a lot at stake. If they aren't successful, they don't get paid."

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