

## MTA Led Federal Program to Ease Small Business Certification in California

(Nov. 13, 2001) Under a new federal program, small firms that are certified to do business with the MTA will automatically be certified to do business with 137 agencies throughout California.

Federal regulations recently directed states to create "one-stop" certification programs to give DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprises) firms a shortcut through a maze of forms.

Unified Certification Program (UCP) procedures effective Jan. 1, 2002, will eliminate the requirement for small businesses to register and seek approvals from federally funded agencies in California.

"The UCP will eliminate the need for DBE firms to obtain certification from multiple agencies within the state," says Linda Wright, the MTA's director of Small Business Diversity and Labor Compliance. California is the first state approved to implement the UCP program.

As a member of the UCP executive committee, Wright chaired the external affairs committee and led significant MTA efforts in submitting the state program to the U.S. Department of Transportation for approval. More than 129 state agencies, recipients of federal funds, participated in creating the program.

Joe Hernandez, the MTA's manager of Small Business Diversity, will oversee certification activities of the Los Angeles Area Cluster. The group includes the MTA, the City of Los Angeles, Orange County Transportation Authority and John Wayne Airport.



More than 225 firms attended a public meeting held in the MTA boardroom Oct. 26 to provide a comprehensive overview of the new statewide Unified Certification Program (UCP) for small businesses. Algerine McCray, Deputy Director of Civil Rights with the California Department of Transportation, was the meeting facilitator. From left, Allen McCarty, CalTrans; Helmut Peindl, City of Los Angeles; Linda Wright, MTA; Algerine McCray, CalTrans; Mal Evans, Triaxel Management; Tina Giles-Potter, Orange Country Transportation Authority (OCTA). Below, UCP Facilitator Algerine McGray with MTA Executive Officer, Procurement, Lonnie Mitchell.



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