

MTA Inaugurates Three-Car Train Service on Metro Blue Line

Board Chairman John Fasana was joined at a news conference by county supervisors Yvonne Brathwaite Burke and Don Knabe, and CEO Roger Snoble. The group rode one of the first of the three-car trains.

The MTA will phase in more three-car train trips as it takes delivery of new light-rail vehicles. The third car will allow the MTA to carry up to 145 more seated and standing passengers. That should help ease crowding on a rail line that carried a record 69,400 average weekday boarding passengers last August. Just one decade after it debuted in 1990, the Metro Blue Line had reached capacity.

The MTA spent approximately \$11 million during the past 16 months to extend the platforms at 19 stations along the 22-mile route to accommodate three-car trains.

The Metro Green Line also is being upgraded. The MTA has started phasing in two-car trains on that line to replace one-car trains.

A transit lifeline

"The Metro Blue Line is a transit lifeline that gives tens of thousands of riders – largely minorities and low-income people – access to jobs, schools, medical care, shopping, recreation and other opportunities," said Fasana.

He noted that the Metro Blue Line is part of the expanding Metro Rail system that serves many parts of Los Angeles County with fast, inexpensive and safe transportation.

"This upgrade will allow us to keep pace with demand today and grow with the future," Fasana said.

Supervisor Burke, the immediate past Board chair, introduced the motion calling for expanding Metro Blue Line platforms in 1999, and was in the forefront of the Board's search for funding.



MTA CEO Roger Snoble, center, joins MTA Board members and county supervisors Don Knabe and Yvonne Brathwaite Burke to lead media tour on one of the first three-car trains. PHOTO: LUIS INZUNZA

Below, A train exiting the newly reconstructed 7th and Metro tail track approaches railings installed as safety barriers where the platform was reconfigured to accommodate the trains. PHOTO: BILL HEARD



"We worked a long time to get this," said Burke. "The Metro Blue Line carries more passengers than any other light-rail line in the nation except Boston, so this is very important to help eliminate crowding."

Snoble noted that buses remain the backbone of public transportation in Los Angeles County. While Metro Rail is being upgraded, he said the Metro Bus system also is being overhauled with a new fleet of buses and expanded service, including new Metro Rapid buses.

Covering the media event were KCBS-TV, KNBC-TV, KABC-TV, KCAL-TV, Channel 22 and 26, KMEX-TV, ECO Television, KNX, KFWB, KFI, KCSN, KLON, La Opinion, Bus World and Metro Networks Radio.

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