

'Dangerzone Deflector' Can Save Lives in Bus vs. Pedestrian Accidents

By ERIC RAPP

(June 13, 2002) Every year, people across the country are injured – sometimes fatally – by falling under the rear wheels of transit buses.

The MTA is responding to this problem with a new device, the "Dangerzone Deflector," which can push a fallen pedestrian out from under the rear wheels of a moving bus.

All new buses being delivered to the MTA are equipped with the Dangerzone Deflector. The Board is scheduled to vote in June on retrofitting existing Metro Buses with the \$1,300 devices. They would be installed on the MTA's fleet over the next 12 to 15 months, starting with approximately 400 in the 2002 fiscal year.

The danger usually occurs as buses are making right-hand turns. A pedestrian who is not fully on the sidewalk or who falls into the street is at risk of being run over by the right rear wheel of the bus. Nationwide, 40-100 people are seriously injured every year in this way.

Out of harm's way

Called the "S-1 Gard" by the manufacturer, the Dangerzone Deflector is a sturdy, curved piece of plastic that is bolted to the underside of the bus just in front of the right rear wheel. The curved portion of the guard may be able to push a person out of harm's way.

Installation is easily accomplished, without welding, in about 30 minutes. Measuring approximately two feet wide by one foot high, the deflector has a quick-release mechanism that enables mechanics to easily remove them during bus maintenance.

Many transit agencies across the country and locally are installing the S-1 Gard on their buses. Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus has installed the deflectors on their fleet. Washington D.C.'s WMATA recently retrofitted 1,300 buses with the device. Other agencies from Chicago to Orange County are already using the deflector or are in the process of testing it on their buses.



Joe Quintero, Division 9 equipment maintenance supervisor, points out the Dangerzone Deflector that can push a fallen pedestrian out of harm's way. Below, stills from a Dangerzone Deflector video show the deflector pushing aside a fallen pedestrian.



When installed on all Metro Buses, the Dangerzone Deflector design will help minimize potential injuries in bus vs. pedestrian accidents, says Operations Deputy Executive Officer John Roberts.

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