

Metro Blue Line carries record number of boarding passengers during May

By RICK JAGER

The downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach Metro Blue Line -- part of the Metro Rail system -- set a record by carrying more than 70,000 boarding passengers on an average weekday in May 2002.

The light rail line carried 70,020 average weekday riders, up from May 2001 when 63,925 boarding passengers rode on an average weekday and breaking the previous record of 69,400 weekday riders set in August 2001. The Metro Blue Line began service in July 1990.

"The popularity of the Metro Blue Line and the growth in ridership over the years is solid proof of how successful Metro Rail has been in meeting the transportation needs of the community," said MTA CEO Roger Snoble. "The extension of the Metro Blue Line platforms to accommodate the addition of three car trains on the system has helped increase capacity on the line."

MTA spent approximately \$11 million last year extending the platforms at 19 Metro Blue Line stations to accommodate 3-car trains along the 22-mile route that serves Watts, Compton, Willowbrook as well as Long Beach, Los Angeles and other communities. Last November, MTA began operating 3-car trains on the Metro Blue Line.

The Metro Red Line subway system recorded a slight increase in May by carrying 135,460 boarding passengers on an average weekday, up from May 2001 when 134,675 rode. However, subway ridership has more than doubled since May 2000 when 65,150 boarding passengers rode on an average weekday.

The Metro Green Line was slightly down with 27,348 boarding passengers compared to May 2001 when 30,350 average weekday boarding passengers rode.

MTA's Metro Bus system and contracted bus services remained constant last month carrying 1,189,175 boarding passengers on an average weekday compared to 1,196,113 during May 2001.

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