



From left: CEO Roger Snoble, Operator Garry Brown, Deputy CEO John Catoe, Metro Bus Operator Don Smith, Board Chairman Hal Bernson and General Manager Tracy Daly.

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Division 10 Operators' Freeway Actions Protected Fallen Motorcyclist

By BILL HEARD

(July 25, 2002) "When I looked up from changing lanes, I saw this motorcycle tumbling right in front of me." That was Metro Bus Operator Don Smith's first glimpse of an accident that could have cost a young man his life early the morning of June 28.

Smith, driving a Line 3 bus and Operator Garry Brown, right behind him in a Line 2 bus, immediately braked to a halt to block two lanes of the westbound I-10 Freeway and protect the fallen rider. Both men are assigned to Gateway Division 10.

"When we saw him tumbling, we reacted by shutting the buses down in those two lanes," recalls Smith. "If we hadn't been there, he would have been a statistic."

As cars continued to speed around the accident scene, Smith and Brown jumped out of their buses and rushed to help the stunned biker.

Eased his breathing

The young man staggered to the freeway shoulder, where the operators made him lie down. "He couldn't talk," says Brown, so the operators opened the visor of his helmet, loosened his clothing to ease his breathing and comforted him.

Smith also had called the Bus Operations Control Center to report the accident and request assistance. A motorist, who had stopped to help, phoned the police.

Minutes later, an ambulance arrived to transport the injured man and within a half hour after the accident, Smith and Brown were able to continue to the start of their morning runs.

On Thursday, the MTA Board commended Smith and Brown for their actions in assisting the injured man – actions that almost certainly prevented an even worse accident and probably saved a life.

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