

MTA Seeking Most Durable, Comfortable Bus Operators' Seat

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 31, 2002) MTA is on a quest to find bus operator's seats that will be the most comfortable for the largest number of operators and will be the best fit for the various models of Metro Buses in the fleet.

Beginning Nov. 6, Transit Operations will launch a program to test four different models of driver's seats. All four models provide options that include lumbar support, a wider range of seat adjustments and track glide movement, as well as cushion and seat bottoms that can accommodate different body sizes and builds.

All models being tested have specially designed seat belts that provide enhanced operator safety against driving hazards.

The four seat models – built by Recareo, USSC and Bostrom – will be on display in the MTA Headquarters Plaza lobby through noon, Tuesday, Nov. 5.

"Selected operators at each division will have a chance to test each of the four seat models," says Pam Engelke of Corporate Safety, who serves on a five-member team evaluating the seats. Metro Operations Staff Director Cynthia Gibson and Division 15 Maintenance Manager John Roberts head the group.

Ergonomics evaluation

The project stems from an ergonomics evaluation of Workers' Compensation claims filed by operators who listed the operator's seat as a possible contributing cause. For the past three fiscal years, 10 to 15 percent of all claims filed listed seats as a contributing factor.

The seat-testing program will begin at South Bay Division 18 where nine male and female operators have been selected to drive the nine test buses for two to three weeks under various road conditions. Each selected operator will submit a daily survey on the bus and seat used that day.

After an evaluation period, the test buses will be moved, Dec. 15, to divisions 8 and 15 in the San Fernando Valley. They'll continue to



Operator Beatriz Ibarra of West Valley Division 8 tries out a USSC Model Q90 test seat. Four test seats will be on display in the Plaza lobby through noon, Tuesday, Nov. 5.



Like other seats in the test group, the USSC Model Q90 has adjustments for lumbar support and forward and back movement.

cycle through the service sectors until all divisions have had an opportunity to test them.

The evaluation team expects to report to operations management next spring on the results of the operators' test.

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