

Snoble Asks Special Master for Consent Decree 'Remedy'

(Nov. 1, 2002) In federal court testimony, Tuesday, CEO Roger Snoble asked Special Master Donald Bliss to "remedy the load factor component" of the Consent Decree – a bone of contention that has plagued the six-year-old agreement.



CEO Roger Snoble
to Special Master:
"Give us a
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The CEO asked the Special Master to provide guidance to MTA and the Bus Riders Union on how to interpret the decree's load factor requirements.

Bliss visited Los Angeles for several days this week to get a first-hand look at how the six-year-old Consent Decree is being implemented. He also heard formal testimony from both parties on passenger load factors aboard Metro Buses.

In his testimony, Snoble noted that the MTA-BRU Joint Working Group established by the Consent Decree "cannot agree on the methodology for identifying and remedying the load factor standard."

He asked the special master to adopt MTA's load factor methodology or "give us one that clearly guides both parties in how to determine overcrowded trips and what to do about it."

'Standard transit practice'

Snoble said there are a number of ways to eliminate overcrowding, but that MTA needs flexibility beyond adding another bus to its fleet. The process suggested by MTA resembles "standard transit practice" and will "reduce the disagreement between us," he said.

The CEO said the agency has made "tremendous efforts" to develop transit service that "not only meets the spirit of the Consent Decree, but actually exceeds it."

"We are taking steps to reduce overcrowding by buying bigger buses, doing a better job of scheduling and managing service on the street and by going to higher-capacity rail lines and BRT services on a few heavy corridors," Snoble said.

MTA will spend more than \$1.2 billion – 47 percent of its budget – on bus service this year, Snoble said, and expects to spend more than \$1 billion on compliance before the Consent Decree expires in 2006.

The CEO took issue with the BRU's contention that "only white suburbanites ride the rail service...." An MTA survey in 2001 showed that buses and trains had similar percentages of minority riders.

"Anyone with the gift of sight can clearly see," he said, "that (the minority patrons) riding our trains are (in nearly) the same proportions as those riding the buses."

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