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MTA Board Approves Purchase of 70 More High-capacity Buses

By RICK JAGER

(Jan. 23, 2003) Taking advantage of an option to purchase more high-capacity buses, the MTA Board today approved the acquisition of 70 additional 45-foot "Compo-Bus" coaches.

Powered by compressed natural gas, the low-floor "Compo-Bus" will be five feet longer than current MTA coaches and will seat 46 passengers, 16 percent more seats than the traditional 40-foot buses now in operation.

The approval of the option to buy an additional 70 buses will bring the total number of "Compo-Bus" coaches in the MTA fleet to 100. The Board last year approved the first order of 30, which are expected to begin arriving this summer.

Each bus is priced at \$373,156 and employs some of the technology developed by MTA in its Advanced Technology Transit Bus program, including a shell constructed of lighter composite materials. Hence the name "Compo-Bus."

The composite material used primarily is fiberglass with a balsa core construction method similar to that found in the marine industry.

The "Compo-Bus" will be lighter than a conventional 45-foot steel-framed bus, resulting in better fuel economy and reduced brake wear. Other benefits of using composite material include simplicity of repair and absolute resistance to corrosion.

North American Bus Industries (NABI) of Anniston, Ala., will manufacture the "Compo-Bus." The total contract price for the additional 70 buses, plus spare parts and diagnostic equipment, is \$28,679,137.

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