

MTA, Local Operators Establishing Bus Service 'Lifeline'

(Oct. 15, 2003) MTA is working with local transit agencies in Los Angeles and surrounding counties to expand a "lifeline" of services for passengers stranded by the transit strike, Deputy CEO John Catoe told a news conference today.

"Our staff is contacting every contract operator, every charter operator in Riverside, Ventura, Orange and Los Angeles counties asking if they have buses and drivers available for MTA use," Catoe said.

He noted that Teamsters picketers had halted service, today, on 12 of MTA's 22 contract lines. But, he said the contractor – First Transit – is bringing in management staff from elsewhere in the country to re-establish service as quickly as possible.

Catoe expects the network of service to increase daily as local transit agencies respond by adding more and more buses and additional routes to the network. One of the first going into effect will be service in the San Fernando Valley from Warner Center to the Gateway Center.

OCTA to provide service

Los Angeles County has agreed to provide service from East Los Angeles College to Gateway, where passengers can connect with other service.

"As the day progresses," Catoe said, "we will assign vehicles to various areas of the county. This will not replace MTA service, but it will provide a lifeline of service to some of our customers who have no other way to get across the county."

Bus service also will be offered between the Metro Green Line's Norwalk and Avalon stations.

In response to overcrowding, Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus is obtaining 60-foot articulated buses from a private company to beef up its service.

While noting that the lifeline service "will not meet even 25 percent" of patrons' needs, Catoe said, "It is a small lifeline, but to the individual who gets a trip and keeps their job or gets their kids to school or goes to the hospital, it's truly a lifeline."

[Back to MTA Report](#)



Deputy CEO John Catoe described MTA's "lifeline" of bus services at a Wednesday news conference.