

Special Master Issues New Order for More Buses, More Service

(Jan. 13, 2004) The special master overseeing implementation of the federal Consent Decree has issued a new order requiring MTA to buy more buses and provide more service hours.

The order would require MTA to purchase and to place into service the equivalent of 145 new 40-seat buses no later than December 2005. The agency also was ordered to provide at least 370,185 additional annual in-service hours to meet Consent Decree obligations.

MTA staff members told local reporters the Special Master's 88-page ruling was complicated and would take time to analyze before discussing it with the MTA Board later this month.

Officials said MTA has made great strides in improving Metro Bus service by placing 437 more peak-hour buses on the road, today, than in October 1996 when the Consent Decree was signed. Much of the fleet has been replaced, new high-capacity buses will soon start arriving and new Metro Rapid service has been implemented.

To date, MTA has spent about \$716 million to comply with the Consent Decree – nearly half its annual budget is earmarked for bus operations and capital.

The Special Master's order for the equivalent of 145 buses and 370,185 service hours would cost almost \$40 million to implement in 2004 and \$40 million annually to operate the service.

Staff members noted that MTA is in a difficult financial situation due to proposed state budget cuts, uncertain federal funding and now the Special Master's order for more bus expenditures.

[Back to MTA Report](#)