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## Board Approves UTU Contract with Wage, Benefits Increases

In other actions:

- [Extends anti-graffiti contract](#)
- [Approves Blue Line shop catwalk](#)

(Jan. 23, 2003) The three-year labor agreement with the United Transportation Union, approved Thursday by the MTA Board, includes increases in wages and benefits for the union's 4,400 bus and train operators.

The agreement, which took effect July 1, 2003 and will continue through June 30, 2006, gives UTU members a 2.5 percent pay hike on July 1, 2004 and another 2.5 percent pay increase on July 1, 2005. It includes no quarterly wage adjustments (QWA).

It increased the operator training rate for full-time, part-time and BDOF operators to \$10.

Among other provisions, the agreement includes increases in MTA monthly contributions to the UTU Health Plan for full-time operators of \$607 in the first year, \$698 in the second year and \$803 in the third year of the contract. For part-timers, the monthly contributions would amount to \$296 in the first year, \$329 in the second year and \$379 in the third year.

The agreement calls for the union's Health Plan governing board to have six UTU trustees and two MTA trustees.

MTA agreed to raise its group life insurance premium payment for full-time operators from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Under a new provision, MTA will pay the first \$50,000 of the operators' accidental death and dismemberment insurance premiums.

In other action, the Board:

**Approved Item 31**, awarding a one-year, \$497,600 contract extension to Graffiti Control Systems of North Hollywood for graffiti removal on the Metro system.

For more than five years, the company has been under contract to remove graffiti from Metro stations and rail facilities. The contract extension would increase the number of graffiti control technicians assigned to this task from seven to 10 and would assign one technician to the Metro Gold Line.

**Approved Item 33**, authorizing the construction of a steel catwalk to provide safer and easier access for maintenance employees working in the Heavy Repair Shop at Metro Blue Line Division 11.

The catwalk will be designed to be used as a working platform to handle the loading of air condition units, pantographs, roof cables and other heavy repairs to rail cars. Milco Constructors of Long Beach, who won the \$306,000 job, earlier installed a similar catwalk in the Metro Blue Line vehicle shop.

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