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PHOTO BY BETH KRANDA



Division 1 Line Captains are, from left, Roberto Sarabia, Raul Gomez, Henry Madrid and Sammy Morales.

Division 1 Commissions Line Captains to Monitor Metro Bus Lines

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Sept. 16, 2004) Central City Division 1 has revamped old ideas to create Line Captains, an initiative intended to target and resolve issues on Metro Bus lines.

The Line Captains will serve as an intermediary between operators and the management team, encouraging open dialogue and effective resolutions to reduce accidents and improve the lines' performance.

Line Captains are experienced bus operators with distinguished records who have volunteered or been recommended by a superior. They must have no avoidable accidents or customer complaints and no more than one instance of sick calls or missouts during the year.

Transportation Manager Sonja Owens and assistant managers, Beth Kranda and Thom Mattocks, have recognized 24 Line Captains and may be considering adding more.

'Respected by their peers'

"We look at their record and we also look at them as individuals who are respected by their peers and carry themselves well and we place them over that line," Owens says.

Employee participation and consistent feedback is the one thing that's been missing, says Kranda. But the division has developed a way to encourage participation.

"We started off with people who were already motivated, giving them an opportunity to voice their concerns who feel that in the past they haven't been listened to," says Mattocks. "Here's an opportunity to change that."

New employees have been identified as presenting high risks of

accidents and the division has also targeted lines for improvement.

Present their concerns

Line Captains are able to present such concerns as road hazards, scheduling issues or questions of professionalism to managers in a monthly meeting, giving management a different perspective when making operational decisions.

"We've been thinking about this for months," Owens says. "It's an old program revisited."

Since their first meeting, Aug. 18, the Line Captains have taken the initiative to create surveys and generate feedback for the management team, Kranda says.

"The team concept is prevalent here," Owens says. "We are their leaders but we want them to feel that we're a part of their team. They can make a difference with us."

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