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Doncosta Seawell leads an ensemble of the Metro Choir, accompanied by Robert Vasquez on the guitar, in a rousing tribute to Independence Day. From left, Carmelita Romero, Jeanne Kinsel, Cynthia Chin-Pak, Patricia Clark, Leticia Lawenko, Norma Elston-Adams and Avis Brame.



PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

Stars and Stripes for Metro

By PERRY WILLIAMS

(July 1, 2005) -Metro Choir voices filled the lobby of Gateway during a presentation of patriotic songs in celebration of the Fourth of July holiday.

Dressed in patriotic attire and holding flags, the ensemble of choir members offered five selections during a 15-minute program: "Battle Hymn of the Republic," "America, the Beautiful," "The Star-Spangled Banner," and "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." The last song, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," was sung acapella.



Robert Vasquez accompanies Metro Choir performances.

The ensemble was directed by Doncosta Seawell, senior contract administrator, and accompanied by Robert Vasquez, senior contract administrator, on the guitar.

People passing through the building showed support and appreciation by singing along, or applauding to make their presence known.

"We enjoy singing wherever we are," said choir member Leticia Lawenko. "The choir sees it as an honor and pleasure whenever we're invited to sing."


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Metro Offering Shuttles for Hollywood Bowl Performances

By DAVE SOTERO

(July 1, 2005) This summer Metro is again offering non-stop service for the Hollywood Bowl performance season, through Sept. 18.

Metro Bus Line 163 Special offers service from the Metro Red Line Hollywood/Vine station on the southwest corner of Hollywood Boulevard and Argyle Avenue.

Shuttle buses run about every 20 minutes, starting three hours before scheduled performances. The last pre-show bus leaves the Hollywood/Vine station 30 minutes before showtime.

Return trips to Hollywood/Vine start 20 minutes after the show and continue until approximately 11:30 p.m. Metro Red Line trains are scheduled to depart every 20 minutes at night.

The last westbound train from Hollywood/Vine departs at 12:36 a.m., while the last eastbound train departs at 1:04 a.m.


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Service Sector Governance Councils Set July Meetings

By RICK JAGER

(July 1, 2005) Service sector governance councils will hold their regular monthly public meetings in July to discuss various transportation issues.

Governance council meeting times and locations for the month of July are:

- San Fernando Valley Service Sector, Wednesday, July 6, 6:30 p.m., Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys.
- Westside/Central Service Sector, Thursday, July 7, 3 p.m., La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.
- South Bay Service Sector, Friday, July 8, 9:30 a.m., Carson Community Center, 801 E. Carson, Carson.
- San Gabriel Valley Service Sector, Tuesday, July 12, 5 p.m., San Gabriel Valley Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte.
- Gateway Service Sector, Thursday, July 14, 2 p.m., The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey.

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Board Chairman Frank Roberts joins Palmdale Mayor Jim Ledford, city council members and other government officials to celebrate the grand opening of the Palmdale Transportation Center during a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Photo: Juan Ocampo



Palmdale Transportation Center Opens; 54th Metrolink Station

BY DAVE SOTERO

(July 1, 2005) Officials gathered in Palmdale Transportation Center, June 24, for the grand opening of the Palmdale Transportation Center, a state-of-the-art transportation hub for Antelope Valley commuters.

The new facility, which includes 500 free parking spaces, eight bus bays and bicycle lockers, is the 54th station in the 500-mile Metrolink System. It is now the principal transportation hub for North County commuters needing quick, reliable transportation between the Antelope Valley and the greater L.A. Basin.

The station provides connections between Antelope Valley Transit Authority local and commuter bus service, Metrolink, Santa Clarita Transit, Greyhound, Amtrak Throughway bus service and the Sierra Bike Trail.

The station's Clock Tower Plaza comes complete with an indoor passenger waiting area that includes concessions, public telephones, seating, restrooms and security service. Metrolink passengers can use the partially enclosed outdoor waiting accommodations on the rail platform.

Metro provided \$5.64 million of the \$14.85 million dollar project costs through its Call for Projects. The agency also administered the project's federal funds on behalf of the city of Palmdale.

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The *D's Delivery* construction crew, from left, are Metro's David Sutton and his sons, Harrison, 6, and David Jr., 17, along with B.J. Presley and his dad, William.



Metro Cardboard Boxes Float to Victory in High School Regatta

By ARLENE LIM

(July 5, 2005) Forty hours of labor and many large cardboard boxes later, the good ship *D's Delivery* cruised into first place at the 13th annual Brethren Christian Senior High School Corrugated Flotilla.

At the competition, held June 17 at Mothers' Beach in Long Beach, *D's Delivery* took top honors among the six boats competing, finishing 10 seconds ahead of the pack.

As part of a physics final, students at Brethren Christian in Huntington Beach were required to build a boat entirely out of cardboard to race a distance of 100 yards.

David Sutton Jr., 17, son of Employer Programs Manager David Sutton, and his friend, B.J. Presley – with the help of their parents – built *D's Delivery* with empty cardboard boxes, some of which came from Metro.



Built as a high school science project, *D's Delivery* was constructed of cardboard boxes, duct tape, carpet tubes and mailing tubes, and finished with blue masonry paint for watertight integrity. Paddles are poles, cardboard and duct tape. The Domino's Pizza boxes symbolize the construction crew's "fuel supply."

A science project

Sutton Sr. found two TV monitor boxes in Bus Operations Control and asked the director, Tom Jasmin, if he could take the boxes for a science project his son was working on.

Jasmin waited to see if the contractor would come back for the boxes and, when he didn't, gave them to Sutton to use for the boat.

"We used those boxes to wrap the entire boat in," explained Sutton. "Then, we painted the boat with masonry paint to make it waterproof."

"Cardboard doesn't come in convenient shapes," said Sutton, "so, it was quite an effort."

In honor of the many boxes of Domino's Pizza eaten throughout the building process and of the boat's captain, Brethren Christian teacher Tom D'Stefano – Mr. D – the boat was christened *D's Delivery*.

After the race, *D's Delivery* was delivered to Sutton's backyard, where his youngest son, Harrison, 6, spends hours playing pirate and having other "seaborne" adventures with his buddies.



Brethren Christian teacher Tom D'Stefano – Mr. D – paddles like crazy to bring *D's Delivery* take first place at the 13th annual Brethren Christian Senior High School Corrugated Flotilla.



A Corrugated Flotilla race official awards the winner's trophy to, from left, B.J. Presley, David Sutton, Jr., and their teacher, Tom D'Stefano.

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Metro Orange Line

COUNTDOWN

Metro Orange Line

Photos by Ned Racine
posted 7/5/2005
Construction of the Metro Orange Line transitway is underway in the San Fernando Valley. Photos were taken in June at various points of progression.

Scroll below to select images.



Transitway curves southeast from Bessemer/Tyrone intersection. Sound wall in the background. To the north, construction crews are finishing a drainage system.



Installing station fence at Reseda Station.



Fences are installed at each platform along the Metro Orange Line transitway.



June 1 - Work west of Sepulveda Station. Here is a look at the wall between the transitway and the



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Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is surrounded by his appointees during a Wednesday morning news conference. From left, they are: former Assembly Speaker Richard Katz, Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks, attorney David Fleming and new Deputy Mayor for Transportation Jaime de la Vega.



Photos: Luis Inzunza

Mayor Names Parks, Katz and Fleming as Board Members

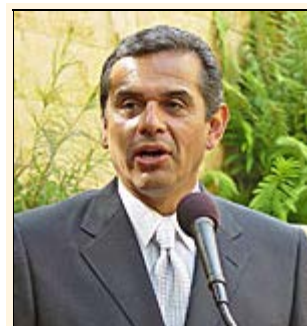
- Jaime de la Vega named mayor's transportation deputy
- In this report: Meet City Councilman [Bernard Parks](#), former Assembly Speaker [Richard Katz](#), Attorney [David Fleming](#) and new Deputy Mayor for Transportation [Jaime de la Vega](#).

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 6, 2005) In a morning news conference held in the East Portal, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa announced his three appointments to the Board of Directors and named his transportation deputy.

The mayor appointed Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks, former Assembly Speaker Richard Katz and Attorney David Fleming to the city's three seats on the Board. He announced that Jaime de la Vega, a former Board member, will serve as deputy mayor for transportation.

Promising to "bring the same energy and commitment to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority that I'm bringing to the city as



Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa

mayor," Villaraigosa said, "I will work tirelessly to improve traffic and public transportation in the City of Los Angeles."

He outlined his priorities as "improving the bus system, laying the groundwork to expand our rail system, reducing congestion by breaking the bottleneck on projects and initiatives that make common sense for our commuters, identifying a way to substantially expand our public transportation system to both serve the transit dependent and to provide alternatives to driving."

'World-class' transportation system

"We have to have a vision for a world-class public transportation system," the mayor said in response to



Mayor Villaraigosa caught the Metro Gold Line at Southwest Museum station for the trip to Union Station where he announced his appointments. After the news conference, he boarded the Metro Red Line to the Civic Center station.



CEO Roger Snoble was on hand at Mayor Villaraigosa's news conference, Wednesday, to greet the new Board appointees.

"We're very excited about the new Board members coming in," he said. "The mayor has appointed members who are active, energetic, committed and have experience in dealing with transportation issues. These appointments show that the mayor has a strong commitment towards shaping the future of our transportation system."

"I also want to welcome back Jaime de la Vega, the new deputy mayor for transportation, whose past experience as a Board member will prove to be invaluable to this agency," Snoble added.

"We'll miss our departing Board members," he continued. "They served the agency well and were dedicated to improving transportation in the county. I'm confident we can count on their continued support as we move

a reporter's question. "We have to build a consensus around that vision, put a plan together and fund that plan. It won't be overnight, but it's going to be a lot faster than it's been in the past because we have no other options. We're already the 'gridlock capital' of the United States of America and there are very few alternatives."

"No one person can take on this challenge alone," said Villaraigosa in his prepared remarks. "You have to bring people together to get things done. You have to bring the best and the brightest to the table and confront the massive challenge."

The mayor noted that, collectively, his appointees have served the public for more than six decades.

Bernard Parks

Parks, who was elected in 2003 as the city councilman to represent the 8th district, served as a police officer for 38 years. He rose through the ranks to become Chief of Police in 1997.

Noting Parks' commitment to improving the city, Villaraigosa said, "I am confident Councilmember Parks will bring his same tenacity and leadership to the MTA Board."

Reacting to his appointment, Parks said,

forward."

"I am especially interested in having a hand in the completion of the Expo Line, which makes the Los Angeles

Memorial Coliseum even more attractive as we move closer to returning NFL Football to Los Angeles."

Acknowledging Villaraigosa's vision for improving transit in Los Angeles, Parks said, "He will lay down a game plan that will be followed for the next several decades to make sure that we will have a city and a region that is going to be less dependent on vehicles and more on public transportation."

Richard Katz

Katz was first elected to the Assembly in 1980 and served for 16 years. For 10 years, he chaired the powerful Assembly Transportation Committee and, in 1990, authored Proposition 111, a 10-year Transportation Blueprint to raise money for mass transit and highways.

Katz was instrumental in drafting legislation that created the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority through a merger of the SCRTD and LACTC in 1993. He also created the Congestion Management Plan, which requires cities and counties to measure and mitigate impacts of land use decisions on their streets, highways and transit systems.

In making the appointment, Villaraigosa described Katz as "a visionary and leader in transportation."

In response, Katz said the mayor's vision is one of "movement for Los Angeles; it's a vision that understands the importance of rail transit and highways and the fact that there's no single solution...."

David Fleming

An attorney for 43 years, Fleming has been of counsel to Latham & Watkins since 1992. From 1996 to 1999, he served as a member and vice chairman of the California Transportation commission (CTC) as an appointee of Gov. Pete Wilson. He also served as president of the Los Angeles Board of Fire Commissioners from 1993 to 2001.

Fleming, who served as an advisor to Mayor Richard Riordan, is chairman of the Board of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, which is composed of many prominent companies throughout the county.

The mayor said Fleming's "experience with the CTC and the state will help the MTA secure the funding it needs to expand and improve our transportation system."

Fleming said that, in naming him to the Board, Villaraigosa told him to think outside the box. "That's what we have to do at MTA. Nothing should be left off the table. Our gridlock problem is too big and it's growing every day, so now's the time for action."

Jaime de la Vega

Jaime de la Vega served as budget director to City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo from 2002 to 2005, overseeing a \$93 million annual budget for the 1,000-person office.

He previously served as an assistant deputy mayor and senior policy advisor to Mayor Riordan from 1995 to 2001, and as a member of Metro's Board of Directors.

Villaraigosa said de la Vega will be "the lead in helping me put together the effort to reduce traffic, to do the smart things we can do to address the issue of congestion in our region and, also, to help direct our efforts (on) the MTA Board."

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at 2-4357[E-Mail Webmaster](#)< back to "[Metro on Alert](#)" article**Who to Call if You See Suspicious Activity**

- LASD Watch Commander -- 323-563-5000
- Rail Operations Control -- 323-563-5022
- Bus Operations Control -- 213-922-6280
- Metro Security Control -- 213-922-7600

'Guide to Security' booklet is blueprint of anti-terrorism measures.

- LASD booklet is available in the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library>



Metro employees are asked to review anti-terrorism measures demonstrated in terrorism classes conducted recently by LASD deputies Brita Kjellstrand and Ban Nguyen.

A 16-page pamphlet, titled "What You Can Do To Help," was mailed to every employee. Wallet cards with emergency phone numbers was also distributed. Additional copies are available in the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Research Center on the 15th floor of the Gateway Building.

In a memo sent by e-mail to every employee, CEO Roger Snoble urged everyone to review the booklet and phone numbers immediately.

The memo underscored the booklet's key points:

Suspicious Activity

Remember that suspicion is based upon:

- Where someone is
- When they are there
- What they are doing
- *Not* upon race, color, ethnicity or gender

What to look for:

People who are:

- In an unauthorized or restricted area
- On agency property without proper ID, uniform or safety gear
- In the wrong place or who appear lost
- Quickly exiting an area after abandoning a package
- Loitering, staring or watching employees and customers
- Unfamiliar couriers, repair personnel, utility crews or other employees who are in the wrong place
- Taking photos of equipment and secure areas

Cars, trucks, motorcycles and bikes parked or standing in out-of the way places or strange locations; vehicles that appear to be overloaded or sagging

Suspicious Packages and Devices

Suspicion is based upon the type and location of the package.

What to look for:

A package that:

- Is left or intentionally placed in an out-of-the-way location where it is not easily seen
- Is an abandoned item or container such as a thermos, propane canister, fire extinguisher or piece of pipe
- Has visible wires, batteries, a clock or timer, or has bottles, tanks or bags attached
- Is abandoned by someone quickly leaving the area
- Includes a bag, box or package emitting an odor, mist or oily liquid

Prevention

- Look for and report security weaknesses
- Broken fences or doors
- Malfunctioning locks
- Inadequate or non-working lighting
- Follow correct practices and procedures
- Wear proper uniform and badge
- Carry and display ID

- Keep all appropriate doors, gates and compartments closed and locked

Conduct proper vehicle inspections

Include security sweeps in pre- and post-trip inspections.

Gather Complete Information

Accurate, detailed and relevant information regarding location, status, victims, indicators and circumstances regarding an observation will increase the effectiveness and timeliness of the response to the situation.

Reporting Information

Should you see something or someone that strikes you as suspicious or otherwise unusual, immediately notify dispatch, control or your supervisor or notify law enforcement or other Metro security contacts.

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Terrorist Attack in London Puts Metro on Alert

- Employees asked to review "Guide to Security" booklet. Extra copies are available in the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library. See '[Guide to Security](#).'
- Central City Division 1 is evacuated after suspicious package was found on board a bus. See "[Suspicious package](#)"

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(July 7, 2005) The reaction in Los Angeles to this morning's terrorist attack in London was swift as city leaders, law enforcement personnel and transit officials gathered at Parker Center for a 7:30 a.m. news conference called by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

The Mayor noted that no specific threat to the Los Angeles transit system was evident. Following the news conference, the Mayor took reporters and officials on the Metro Red Line for a safety-emphasizing trip to the Hollywood/Highland station.

Shortly after the attack on the London public transportation system, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security raised the terror alert level from yellow to orange for the nation's mass transit systems.

The nearly simultaneous blasts on three subway trains occurred within a half hour of each other, beginning at 8:51 a.m. in London (3:51 a.m. EDT or 12:51 a.m. PDT). The bus blast exploded at 9:47 a.m. (4:47 a.m. EDT or 1:47 a.m. PDT).

Metro activated its Emergency Operations Center at 4 a.m. and continues to operate under heightened alert, said CEO Roger Snoble.

Under the direction of Sheriff Lee Baca, LASD has added uniformed and undercover Sheriff's deputies to patrol the Metro Bus and Metro Rail system. Metro is also coordinating security efforts with LAPD, CHP and other law enforcement agencies.

Additional steps have been taken to enhance security on board trains and buses and at Metro Rail stations, said Snoble. The extra measures include:

- Law enforcement presence on trains and at stations is visibly increased.

Suspicious package incident cleared after forcing evacuation of Central City Division 1...

Following discovery of a suspicious package left on a bus, Sheriff's deputies ordered evacuation of Central City Division and sent for the Bomb Squad. Pull-in buses and layovers were diverted during the investigation. The situation was cleared at approximately 11:30 a.m., with no damage or injuries to Metro property or personnel. Because the situation was resolved so quickly, said Gateway Cities GM Alex Clifford, the afternoon rollout was not delayed nor was service affected.

Sheriff Lee Baca has ordered the Transit Services Bureau to place two deputies on each train. Meanwhile, other Sheriff's stations and other law enforcement agencies will handle emergency calls on the Metro Bus system.

- Bus Operations Control has sent a text message via ATMS to all buses reminding operators to report suspicious persons and packages and to inspect their buses at the end of each run.
- On Metro Rail, VMS messages concerning suspicious persons and packages are running in the rail stations and Metro Rail operators are being asked to make such announcements aboard the trains.
- Other law enforcement agencies will provide additional security at Metro Rail and Metrolink stations outside the jurisdiction of LASD.
- LAPD has assigned a number of canine units to cover the Metro Rail system.
- The fire department will be dispatching trucks and crews to Metro Rail stations over the next two or three days to review Metro facilities and infrastructure.

Commuters are advised to:

- **Be aware** - If something does not look right, inform the train operator, fare inspector, station security guard or law enforcement on the scene.
- **Be informed** – Commuters are reminded to familiarize themselves with the locations of station entrances and exits and train platform phones.
- **Be alert** - Look for suspicious behavior or unattended packages, and report them immediately by calling 1-877-ATHREAT (1-877-284-7328) or 9-1-1.


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Reacting to Thursday's terror attacks in London, Councilman Bernard Parks – a former Los Angeles Chief of Police – said, "It's horrible when you see such disregard for life. Terrorism is the new norm and we have to make sure we never send a message that we are changing our lifestyle. We must be vigilant as to how and what we do and see so that we're aware and prepared."

Councilman Parks Visits Arthur Winston Division on First Day as Board Member

By PERRY WILLIAMS

(July 8, 2005) Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks, newly named to the Board of Directors, paid a visit to Arthur Winston Division 5 on his first full day as a Board member.

Parks, who was appointed to the Board by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa on Wednesday, was greeted at the division by Deputy CEO John Catoe and South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey.



Councilman Bernard Parks, center, and staff, tour Arthur Winston Division in the company of South Bay GM Dana Coffey, center left, and Executive Officer Carolyn Flowers and Deputy CEO John Catoe, at left.

Coffey briefed Parks on safety measures being taken in the South Bay Service Sector. She said every effort is being made to address the concerns of the local community. "We are a 'team-working' division," she said.

Parks said concerns voiced to him by the local community included improving bus service and attention to customer relations.

Photos: Arlene Lim



Councilman Parks greets Bus Operator Major Frost, above, and Operator Lakeisha Coleman, below.



‘Working hand-in-hand’

“It’s very rare that we have the opportunity to have one of our Board members come and visit our operating facilities,” said Catoe. “Councilman Parks is knowledgeable and has an interest in public transportation. We look forward to working hand-in-hand with him.”

During the meeting, Catoe presented Parks a framed Leimert Park poster, one of a series of Metro Destinations posters.

Joined by division namesake Arthur Winston, Parks concluded his visit to the division with a short ride on the new Metro Liner. The sixty-foot articulated bus will be used on the Metro Orange Line later this year and also is expected to operate on Metro Rapid lines out of Division 5.

Some employees were impressed with Parks’ visit to the division on his first day as a Board member.

“He’s a cool guy and I’m glad he came to find out first-hand about things going on in the division,” said Bus Operator Vincent Cryer.


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Vice Mayor Siping Zhang of Shenzhen, China, and members of his delegation recently visited Metro to understand how the region's transit system functions. Chaushie Chu, director of Regional Transportation Planning and Development, and Peter Liu, transportation planning manager, pose for a picture with Zhang and the Chinese delegates.



Photos: Arlene Lim

Chinese Delegation Visits Metro

Ray Maekawa, director, Regional Transportation Planning and Development, and Vice Mayor Zhang exchanged gifts at the end of the visit. Zhang thanked Metro for its hospitality, saying he had learned much during the Chinese delegation's visit.



Bus Operations Control Director Tom Jasmin explained the inner workings of the BOC to the Chinese delegates. Andrew Pan from the North American Representative Office of Shenzhen was on hand to translate for Jasmin.


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Metro's Employee Emergency Hotline Activated

- In an emergency, call 213-680-1531 for information

(July 8, 2005) Metro's Employee Emergency Hotline went back into operation, Friday, as a precaution during the nation's heightened state of transit security following Thursday's terrorist attacks in London.

In the event of an emergency or incident that would affect transit service, employees can call 213-680-1531 for the latest information about the Metro Rail or Metro Bus systems.

The Emergency Hotline message asks employees to remain vigilant for safety or security violations and to report suspicious activities, packages or situations to Metro Security or to the Sheriff's hotline.

The phone number for Metro Security is 213-922-7600. The number for the Sheriff's hotline is 888-950-SAFE (7233).

The Emergency Hotline message notes that, under California law, all Metro employees are considered to be disaster service workers during a state of emergency. As essential workers, employees must report to their normal worksites or to a designated location, if requested.

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Sheriff's Lt. John Baylis describes the suspicious package incident at the Metro Rail Vermont/Sunset station to local TV reporters. Photo: Bill Heard



Suspicious Packages, Intruders Plague Metro Service

- Two men detained, no explosive devices found

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 12, 2005) Two suspicious package incidents and unauthorized intruders in Metro Rail tunnels prompted emergency response, in recent days, at Central City Division 1 and on the Metro Red Line.

The incidents, which came close on the heels of the terrorist attacks in London, July 7, interrupted work and inconvenienced patrons but caused no damage or injuries to Metro property or personnel.

Just hours after the London bombings, Sheriff's deputies ordered an evacuation of Division 1 and sent for the Arson and Explosives Unit when a relieving operator found an abandoned briefcase on a bus. Pull-in buses and layovers were diverted during the investigation.

The situation cleared just before noon when Division 1 transportation and maintenance employees were able to return to work. Because the situation was resolved so quickly, said Gateway Cities General Manager Alex Clifford, the division was able to make afternoon rollout without affecting service.

Intrusion at Hollywood/Highland

Late Friday, July 8, deputies on duty at the Hollywood/Highland station investigated patrons' reports that a man had entered the tunnel. The deputies evacuated the station and service was halted during the investigation.

The suspect was held for questioning and service resumed after about an hour. No suspicious device was found during a search of the tunnel.

At 1:20 p.m., Saturday, July 9, patrons alerted deputies when a person was seen entering a tunnel at the Vermont/Sunset station. Deputies detained the man for questioning and evacuated between 120 and 150 passengers from the station.

The Rail Operations Center halted service between Vermont/Beverly and Hollywood/Western and initiated a 4-bus bridge to serve passengers who couldn't use the two closed Metro Rail stations.

During their search of the tunnel, the deputies discovered a small Igloo-type cooler with multi-colored wires protruding from it. The Arson and Explosives Unit determined that no explosives were in the cooler and rail service resumed at 4:20 p.m.

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The new Honda Accord Hybrid is the latest addition to the Metro non-revenue fleet.



Photos: Arlene Lim

Honda Accord Hybrids to be Tested in Metro's Non-Revenue Fleet

- Gasoline-electric engines get 29 mpg in the city, 37 mpg on the highway

By MIKE STANGE

(July 13, 2005) Move over Metro Liner, make room for a new, high-tech vehicle that will soon join Metro. It's the Honda Accord Hybrid and it's getting a tryout in the non-revenue fleet.

The Non-Revenue Department has acquired six Honda Accord Hybrid sedans. Under the direction of Deputy Executive Officer Milo Victoria, over the next 12 months the vehicles will be closely monitored for fuel economy, ease of maintenance and overall reliability.



Showcasing the new hybrids are from left Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Harold Torres, Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Mike Stange and DEO Milo Victoria.

The Honda Accord Hybrid, with its 225-horse power V-6 engine,

achieves fuel economy of 29 miles per gallon in the city and 37 mpg on the highway.

Under the hood of the Honda Accord Hybrid is a V6 engine capable of power and good fuel economy – 29 mpg city, 37 mpg highway.



The car attains that performance with the assistance of a 12-kilowatt, high-output electric motor, which contributes more than 100 foot-pounds of additional torque to the engine under hard acceleration.

If the vehicles perform satisfactorily in service and provide the expected fuel and maintenance savings, says Victoria, more units might be purchased as standard non-revenue replacement vehicles.



State-of-the-art technology

The Honda Hybrid's propulsion system uses a technology called the Integrated Motor Assist (IMA). A small electric motor delivers high torque to the internal combustion engine during acceleration or under heavy loads.



Three of the six cylinders are deactivated when high power demand is not required.

Once the Hybrid comes to a stop, an auto-stop feature shuts down the gasoline engine. This feature allows the Hybrid to reduce fuel consumption. Upon acceleration, the gasoline and electric engine power back up.

The IMA system's electronic motor also acts as a generator by recapturing deceleration and braking energy to recharge the car's batteries. Two spark plugs per cylinder improve ignition, thus reducing emissions.

Fuel-saving features

Other fuel-saving features include an electric power steering system and a more efficient air conditioning compressor.

To further improve the overall efficiency of the vehicle, the Hybrid is constructed of weight-saving features, including an aluminum hood, bumper beams and magnesium engine components.

Metro's introduction of the new hybrid cars coincides with Long Beach Transit's use of hybrid gasoline-electric buses. Although other agencies have used hybrid buses in tests, Long Beach Transit is the first to begin using them in regular service.

The new bus has a fuel economy of 5.5 miles per gallon – 50 percent

better than similar diesel buses. More hybrid coaches are expected to be added to the Long Beach Transit fleet later this summer. -- *Arlene Lim contributed to this story.*

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Two Metro Local buses and a smaller Metro shuttle bus are in for repairs at a First Transit maintenance facility in Compton.



Photos by Jim Marshall, courtesy of First Transit

Metro to Restructure Contract Bus Service, Aug. 1

- Seeking improvements in service, safety, maintenance

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 13, 2005) Beginning Aug. 1, Metro will restructure its contract bus service in a way that will allow contractors to better concentrate on improving customer service, employee and passenger safety, and bus maintenance.

The reorganization of the 20 contract bus routes divides the service area into three regions. It requires contractors to provide exclusive maintenance yards for Metro buses and to meet Metro operating, maintenance and customer service standards. It includes penalties when goals aren't met.

"When a customer transfers from regular Metro service to a contractor- operated bus line, that customer shouldn't experience a step-down in service," says Mark Maloney, deputy executive officer for Operations.

Under five-year contracts recently approved by the Board, Transportation

First Transit mechanics work on several Metro buses at the Compton maintenance facility.



Concepts will be responsible for five routes in the Northern Region; First Transit will operate nine routes in the Southern Region; and Southland Transit will have six routes in the Eastern Region.

The bus washer and fueling bay at First's Transit's Compton maintenance yard.



Metro buses only

Previously, these contractors maintained buses from different transit agencies in the same yard. Restricting the yards only to Metro buses will allow the maintenance staffs to concentrate on keeping the Metro coaches in top condition, says Maloney.

First Transit will move some 70 LADOT and Palos Verdes Peninsula Transit Authority buses out of its Compton yard to service 87 Metro contract coaches. Southland will service 36 Metro buses at its improved Baldwin Park yard, while Transportation Concepts will soon choose a location for servicing 46 buses.

Replacing the former three-year contracts with five-year agreements now makes it more cost-effective for the contractors to upgrade maintenance and service equipment, says Gary Hewitt, Contract Services program administrator.

"In awarding these contracts," says Hewitt, "we stressed customer service, on-time performance, improving miles between road calls and accidents, and better customer relations training for operators."



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Suspicious Package Investigation Closes East Portal

(July 13, 2005) The East Portal of Union Station was closed to trains, buses and passengers for about two hours, Wednesday morning, following discovery of a suspicious package.

The Sheriff's Arson and Explosives Unit investigated the item, but found no explosives. There were no injuries to anyone in the East Portal.

Metro Red Line service was held at the Civic Center station, while Metro Gold Line service was stopped at the Chinatown station. Metro Bus service continued on Vignes Street adjacent to the Gateway Building and on Alameda Street in front of Union Station.

Metro provided three buses to transport rail passengers between Union Station and the Civic Center station. Metro Gold Line passengers were advised to use Metro Bus Line 45, and DASH buses requested by the agency.

Service on the Metro Red and Gold Lines resumed at about 11:23 a.m. The Plaza was opened to bus service a short while afterward.

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Metro Bus Operator Kathy Sanders with children at the Inglewood Church of Christ safety fair. Photos by Rich Morallo.



Metro's Kathy Sanders Has an Edge with Kids

- DAC member carries the transit safety message

By RICH MORALLO

(July 14, 2005) Division Ambassador Committee member Kathy Sanders has an edge when she talks about Metro to young students. She's a grandmother.

"I have four grandchildren so I know how to get messages across to children," says Sanders, whose grandchildren range in age from four months to 11 years old.

"I am forever looking for ways to help my family and teach the grandkids about the purpose of a good education and staying out of trouble, so I do the same when I talk about Metro Bus and Metro Rail safety in schools," says the five-year Metro operator now assigned to Carson Division 18.

Over the July 4th weekend, Sanders talked about public transit to youngsters attending the 15th Annual Wallace Foundation picnic at Kenneth Hahn State Park. Throughout the day Sanders passed out Metro promotionals and talked about bus services with the families celebrating the holiday.

Attended a safety fair



Visitors to the Metro information table at Kenneth Hahn State Park partake of promotional materials and information courtesy of Kathy Sanders.

The following weekend, Sanders attended a safety fair at the Inglewood Church of Christ. There, she set up a small information table and talked individually to about 100 children, who picked up the crayons and coloring sheets with safety tips and slogans.

"As a DAC member, I provide children with quality information on how to ride our buses and how to keep safe around our buses," says Sanders, who also recently attended career days at Purche Avenue Elementary and Cimarron Elementary Schools.

"When you're sincere and convincing and take the time to talk to them, children will listen," she says, "whether you're telling them to stay out of gangs or why you shouldn't play along the curb when waiting for the bus."


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Employees Asked to Complete Exit Interview Questionnaire

- Questionnaire is for all who leave Metro voluntarily
- Will help enhance work environment, retention, recruiting

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 14, 2005) In a typical year, some 600 employees – contract and non-contract – will either resign or retire from their jobs at Metro.

Nationwide research shows that most employees who leave their jobs voluntarily do so not because they're unhappy with pay and benefits, but because of working relationships or other issues not related to compensation.

Metro wants to know why employees quit or retire and, to find out, Human Resources has developed a one-page exit interview questionnaire that each employee who voluntarily leaves the agency will be asked to complete.

Information from the confidential questionnaires will tell managers something about Metro's working climate and employee morale.

"The answers we get from the questionnaire will help us enhance the work environment, retain good people and better target our recruitment efforts," says Stefan Chasnov, director of Human Resources.

HR Policy 3-16 requirements

Under Human Resources Policy 3-16, managers are required to give the questionnaires, an explanatory cover letter and a pre-addressed, postage-guaranteed envelope to employees shortly before they leave the agency.

The questionnaire is divided into two sections: "organizational climate" and "factors affecting your departure."

Under "organizational climate" are questions about the employee's overall work experience at Metro, the quality of supervision, department communications and others. Answers can be marked on a five-place scale ranging from "very satisfied" to "neutral" to "very dissatisfied."

The questions about "factors affecting departure" include work load, job security, advancement opportunity and others. The five-place scale has answers ranging from "strong influence to stay" to "no effect" to "strong influence to leave."

Kept questionnaires brief

"We narrowed the questions down to issues we felt have been getting

more of a reaction from employees," says Chasnov. "We wanted to keep the questionnaire brief, so that employees would complete it, rather than tossing it."

The questionnaire also asks the employee to indicate length of employment, age range, sex, job title and department, and whether he or she would work for Metro again. There's also space for comments, which can be continued onto the back or to additional sheets.

The HR Information Systems unit will optically scan returned questionnaires and evaluate the responses. Chasnov plans to read all comments, compile and categorize them, and will initiate any necessary action with other departments.

A Transportation Leadership Academy team, under the direction of Don Ott, executive officer, Administration, and with the assistance of HR Supervisor Bruce Moore, developed the exit interview questionnaire.

Team members were Eddie Boghossian of Operations, Joe Buley of Support Services, Byron England of Rail Operations, Bill Grunwald of North Los Angeles Division 3, Andy Hughes of Wayside Systems, and Johnny Lindsey of West Hollywood Division 7.

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Metro's Craig Clifton Writes About 'Love with a Pure Heart'

- Author didn't allow cerebral palsy to stifle his creativity. Now he's seeking a publisher for his first novel, "Veronica's Hair."

By PERRY WILLIAMS

(July 15, 2005) Metro employees may be surprised to learn that a co-worker, Craig Clifton, recently finished writing his first book, a present-day love story entitled, "Veronica's Hair."

Born with cerebral palsy, Clifton used the same hands that hold his walking stick or push his wheelchair to type the manuscript. He refused to allow his condition to prevent him from expressing himself on paper.

Clifton is a programmer analyst who has been with Metro for 14 years. "I really like my job. The people I work with here at Metro are great and have been very supportive of my book as well."

Inspired by several writers like Nicholas Sparks, author of "Message in a Bottle," Clifton decided to write his own novel after realizing he had the ability to formulate a story that would touch a person's desire to feel and receive love.

"Veronica's Hair" is about an astronomy professor returning to his hometown in search of his first love. Upon returning, he finds love – but not in the way he expects.

'Love with a pure heart'

Clifton's main focus is to encourage people who are dealing with love on any level. "I want the readers to see that you can go back, conquer past situations, and readily accept love with a pure heart."

The target audience for the novel is women from the late 20s to early 50s. "My book is geared towards women, but men who have read the book compliment me all the time about how much they enjoyed reading the novel," he says.

Clifton encountered several obstacles while writing his novel.

"Understanding how a book is written took a while for me to grasp," he says. "People often make the mistake of forgetting how much work the book-writing process actually takes."

Creating the characters took quite some time. "Writers must



Craig Clifton

remember that characters need problems and goals," he says. "The whole reason for them having road blocks and situations is so that they can rise successfully to the challenges."

The support of his wife

Clifton attributes a lot of his success to the support of his wife, Natasha. "She didn't mind taking the time out to help me really express the core of things I desired to convey to my readers."

The budding author is looking for an agent willing to work with him and connect him with a publisher. And he plans to give a portion of any proceeds from the novel to the United Cerebral Palsy organization.

"When I was growing up, it was hard for me to play," he says. "The organization provided an after-school program and helped me meet some friends that I am in contact with to this day."

Clifton says the possibilities for his novel are endless. "Who knows, maybe this will one day be a movie on Lifetime."

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Dr. Tracy A. Newkirk, M.D., of Integral Orthopedics Inc., at left, and Metro San Gabriel Valley GM Jack Gabig bring Moller Back Support system on board Division 9 buses for pilot program aimed at eliminating back discomfort for operators in the drivers seat.

PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON



Serenity Now!

Division 9 Health Fair Shatters Fitness Myth of "No Pain, No Gain"

By Gayle Anderson

Wellness is all in a day's work at San Gabriel Valley Division 9, and, on June 29, a health fair gave employees even more opportunities to bolster their fitness level.

Held in the training room, employees traded health tips with health, nutrition and fitness experts from Weight Watchers, Bally Total Fitness, Curves, the American Red Cross, and a Tai Chi master willing to unlock the secrets of energy in motion.

Event coordinator Scott Boim, the sector's safety specialist, credits the activities committee chaired by Asst. Transportation Manager Larry Cosner for the best turnout ever.

The health fair was the perfect



Metro SGV Sr. Administrative Analyst Emma Nogales and Asst. Transportation Mgr. Larry Cosner enjoy a healthy snack. Wait! There's more! Employees enjoy "healthy snack Fridays"

opportunity to launch a promising pilot program of providing free orthopedic back supports for operators, said San Gabriel Valley General Manager Jack Gabig.

"Back discomfort is common occurrence with anyone who's driving a vehicle for eight hours a day," said Gabig. "That back discomfort can result in injuries. We want to reduce back injuries over the long term for our work force."

The program is a voluntary one, said Gabig. Operators are asked to fill out a survey before, during and after they use the support device.

"We hope to be able to measure over time the effect of this piece of equipment has on our operator's general comfort level," said Gabig. "If results look promising, the back support may become part of the standard operating procedure at all divisions."

More than a lumbar support, the Moller Back Support by Integral Orthopedics Inc. supports all three curvatures of the spine, said Dr. Tracy Newkirk, an orthopedic surgeon on hand to demonstrate the support system on board a Metro bus.

"The back support device minimizes the pressure on each vertebrae of the spine," he told operators eager to try the cushion. "If you just have lumbar support, you haven't addressed the underlying problem. You're just moving the stress to the mid- and upper back. That's when your shoulders tighten up."

"The preliminary results are outstanding," said Boim, who's signed up 170 operators so far.

Back inside the training room, there was no visible discomfort as management, mechanics and

at least once a month in the training room.



Grand Master Lee, Tin Pang, at right, and Joe Lee invite employees to a Tai Chi class that may be offered at Division 9.



Bus operators Terry Jones and Gilberto Vazquez give WeightWatchers a look-see, but, the proof is *not* in the pudding: Representative Rosemary Martinez, pictured here, lost 100 lbs. in 2004.



Employees are encouraged to try "Curves," a healthy hop, skip and jump from Division 9 and Metro SGV offices.



operators vied for time on four giant massage chairs. Nevermind that GM Jack Gabig and Transportation Manager Mike Greenwood were hovering nearby, anxious to enter the comfort zone. Operator Eric Davis was busy adjusting the chair to perfection with the remote control.

"This is like being on vacation," said Davis, closing his eyes as he sank into the plush cushions of the vibrating massage chair and drifted off onto a sea of serenity.

Mechanic Steve Goytia signs up for Bally Total Fitness program. Fitness clubs offered membership discounts to employees.



GM Jack Gabig and former Division 9 Transportation Manager Mike Greenwood (he's at Division 3, now) finally get a chance at the controls.

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Mechanic "A" Frank Saldana uses a laptop computer to reprogram an engine control module (ECM) for a Cummins engine at Gateway Division 10.



Up for a Challenge: Division 10's Frank Saldana Finds Good Use for Discarded Engine Control Modules

- Idea could save the division \$30,000 annually

By FRANK LONYAI

(July 15, 2005) Mechanic "A" Frank Saldana fixes many of the most challenging defects on the buses assigned to Gateway Division 10. He also mentors fellow employees and often helps mechanics at other divisions with their maintenance problems.

Recently, Saldana learned that when the Regional Rebuild Center rebuilds an engine, the old ECM (engine control module) is set aside and a new one is installed with the rebuilt engine to ensure longevity of the engine for five years or more.

The ECM – the brain of the engine – controls all the engine's major functions, including ignition, air pressure, revolutions per minute, and exhaust temperature.

During a visit to the RRC, he saw scores of old ECMs marked as surplus. Back at his division, Saldana recommended reprogramming the surplus ECMs and installing them on Division 10 buses with Cummins engines.

A new ECM costs about \$1,100 and Saldana's idea could potentially save Division 10 about \$30,000 in annual parts costs.

16 ECMs were saved

Asked to take the lead in the project, he ordered 30 core ECMs. He checked all of them. Some were discarded as no longer usable, and some needed reprogramming. But, 16 were saved and put back in service.

One issue surfaced. The division did not have the capability to reprogram the ECMs on-site and, when they were sent out for reprogramming, it often took a while to get them back. Saldana recommended setting up the programming tools at the division.

Assistant Maintenance Manager Jim Fulkerson coordinated the effort with Maintenance Instruction and Vehicle Engineering, which donated a laptop computer for the local programming facility and used warranty arrangements to get free software for the project.

Today, Saldana and his colleagues sort through replaced Cummins ECMs, select the usable ones, reprogram them and put them in stock or directly into a bus.

Moving his brain around

"I like to do things differently, otherwise it becomes monotonous," says Saldana. "I'm trying to move my brain around, so it doesn't get soft."

Reprogramming surplus ECMs not only reduces parts costs, but also allows the division to repair a defective bus faster, says Fulkerson.

In many cases, it won't be necessary to remove the ECM from the bus; it can be reprogrammed from the laptop, cutting bus downtime.

"I am very happy that an employee's initiative became reality," says Fulkerson. "Many people participated to get it done."


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13 Named Employees of the Quarter for 3rd Quarter, FY 2005

- Online: [Employees of the Quarter](#)

(July 19, 2005) Thirteen employees, whose work exemplifies five of the seven core Metro values, have been selected as Employees of the Quarter for the third quarter of FY 2005.

The employees were honored in the categories of employees, fiscal responsibility, customer satisfaction, innovation and teamwork. The remaining categories are integrity and safety.

Employees

Transportation Planning Manager Mona L. Jones of the Regional Planning Department was honored for her contributions to the Route 101 right-of-way realignment acquisition and the \$891 million Eastside Overpass project. She also volunteered to lead the Countywide Planning and Development database conversion project when the project coordinator was on extended leave.

Fiscal Responsibility

While acting as Finance and Administration manager of the Gateway Cities Service Sector, Chief Administrative Analyst Regina Chan was cited for exceptional analytical skills that enabled her to quickly evaluate financial information to help the sector stay on budget and improve budgeting and sector performance.

Customer Satisfaction

The citation for Engineering Associate Russell Bradshaw of Rail Fleet Services/Engineering notes his research and troubleshooting during testing of the Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system. His work and his dedication to customer service have saved Metro from receiving multiple customer complaints and paying unnecessary overtime, the citation says.

Innovation

Project Manager Timothy Lindholm of Facilities/Operations and Community Relations Manager Jody Feerst-Litvak of the Westside/Central Service Sector, were nominated for their dedicated work in developing an innovative land exchange that will result in the relocation of Venice Division 6 to a modern, new facility in Los Angeles. The effort included sensitive and complex negotiations that capitalized on the value of the Venice property and will postpone an outlay of cash until the end of construction.

Teamwork

An eight-member, interdepartmental Scheduling Systems Migration Team was honored for successfully designing and creating a much-needed replacement for Metro's scheduling system that saved Metro some \$1 million in licensing fees. The new system provides critical

connections to the Transit Operating & Trends System (TOTS), Customer Information Systems (CCIS) and the Automated Transit Management System (ATMS).

Members of the team were Schedules Systems Supervisor Larry Adrian, Systems Project Manager Mila Asuncion, Scheduling Systems Analyst Arthur Brown, Software Engineer Daniel Ha, Transportation Planning Manager Susan Phifer, Senior Programmer Analyst Gloria Shen, Programmer Analyst Lorna Vargas and Scheduling Systems Technician Peishan Wang.

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Coming soon to the Metro Store – 10-inch plastic models of the Metro Local and Metro Rapid buses will be on the shelves and available online. Also in the works, a new system map tote bag and a new logo ball cap.



Metro Store Online Sales Peak Following L.A. Times Story

- Sales hit \$1,800 in two weeks, averaging about \$30 each

- [Shop the Metro Store Online!](#)
<http://www.metro.net/metrostore>

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 19, 2005) Proving that a little free publicity can help, online sales of Metro Store merchandise shot up dramatically following a story and photo, July 2, in the Los Angeles Times.

In the two months of online sales prior to the Times story, says Executive Manager Danielle Boutier, the Metro Store shipped about \$1,500 in products to some 70 customers who made purchases through the Internet website.

During the two weeks following the Times story, a total of 1,163 Internet users visited the site. The Metro Store received \$1,800 in online orders at an average per order of just over \$30.

The Times article discussed the store's line of products, compared it to stores operated by other transit properties and included a photo of the new Metro system map coffee mug.

The system map mug, which sells for \$12.50 online, is now the most popular store item, outpacing the sales-leading black logo T-shirt.

Updated web site

Helping boost Metro Store online sales is an updated web site that shows a thumbnail photo of each product alongside a description of

Special August Hours

The Metro Store, located on the Plaza level at the Gateway Building, will operate on a reduced schedule for the first three weeks of August.

From Wednesday, Aug. 3 through Friday, Aug. 19, the store will be open only on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 11 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. and from 1 p.m. until 3:30 p.m.

the item and links to the "shopping cart."

"I think it's a much friendlier site," says Boutier. "You can glance at it and see what we have available in each product category by viewing the thumbnail photos. You don't have to click on a link unless you want to buy the item."

Coming soon to the Metro Store's lineup will be 10-inch plastic models of the Metro Rapid and Metro Local buses. Also a new tote bag in a Metro System design and a restyled ball cap. Currently on the shelves, but not yet available online, is a long-sleeve, khaki button-down logo shirt.

The Metro Store, which refocused its merchandise offerings last year to concentrate on logo apparel and other items, still has a way to go compared to older transit system stores. New York City Transit's store takes in \$1.5 million a year, while transit stores in Chicago and Washington, D.C., each make about \$40,000 annually, according to the Times.

Profits from the sale of items in the Metro Store are used to fund various employee activities, including operating division holiday parties and the Metro Employee Family Day picnic.

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Mayor Names Members to Chair Board Committees

(July 19, 2005) Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who will preside over his first Board of Directors meeting as chairman, July 28, has named the heads of the Board's various committees.

Villaraigosa will chair the Executive Management Committee. Other committee chairs are John Fasana, Operations Committee; Richard Katz, Planning and Programming Committee; Bonnie Lowenthal, Finance and Budget Committee; Gloria Molina, Construction Committee; and John Fasana, Ad Hoc Labor Task Force.

Schedule

July committee meetings

Wednesday, July 20

Planning and Programming, 1 p.m.
Construction, 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 21

Finance and Budget, 10:30 a.m.
Operations, 12 Noon

Friday, July 22

Executive Management, 3 p.m.


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Joining Deputy CEO John Catoe, center rear, for presentation of the SHARP awards were, back row left, Gary Spivack, Division 15 Transportation; Mike Singer of the RRC; Catoe; Donnell Harris, Division 2 Maintenance. Front row from left, Frank Lonyai, Division 10 Maintenance; Gary Schachel, Division 2 Maintenance; Harold Torres, Division 4 Maintenance; and Mike Greenwood, Division 9 Transportation.



Photo: Bill Heard

Metro Scores 'Major Improvement' in OSHA Safety Compliance

- Six bus operating divisions split \$13,750 in incentives

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 20, 2005) Staying sharp on OSHA safety regulations is paying off for Metro transit operations, but was especially rewarding, Monday, for six operating divisions which split \$13,750 in cash incentives.

A recent review of Metro's programs for injury and illness prevention and for reductions in maintenance and bus accidents showed "a major improvement in all divisions," said Andrea Burnside, managing director, Operations Administration. "We're far above compliance."

Corporate Safety made the evaluation of the bus divisions during SHARP – Safety and Health Assessment Review Program – an annual appraisal of how well operating division employees are complying with local, state and federal safety rules.

A SHARP review of the Metro Rail divisions is planned for January 2006.

Six bus divisions scored high enough in the two SHARP review categories to qualify for cash incentive awards:

- SHARP Safety Excellence
 - San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Transportation – \$5,000
 - Gateway Division 10 Maintenance – \$5,000
 - Regional Rebuild Center – \$2,500
- SHARP Most Improved
 - East Valley Division 15 Transportation – \$500
 - Crossroads Depot Division 2 Maintenance – \$500
 - Non-Revenue Division 4 – \$250

In presenting the incentive checks to the division representatives, Deputy CEO John Catoe said, “We pride ourselves on safety and on our safety record-keeping. We’ve done an incredible job of improving that over the last few years.”

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Metro Orange Line

COUNTDOWN

Metro Orange Line Countdown

Photos by Ned Racine
Photos taken along the route of the Metro Orange Line track the progress of the construction of the transitway in the San Fernando Valley.

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Metro Bicycle Program Honored by American Planning Association

By ARLENE LIM

(July 21, 2005) The Metro Bicycle Program recently received two awards from the American Planning Association (APA).

The APA chose the Bicycle Program to receive the Advocacy Planning Award and the Planning Project Award during a ceremony at the Redondo Beach Historic Library.

The Advocacy Award recognizes a group, project or individual that reflects a social commitment to advocacy planning in support of the needs of society's less fortunate members. The bicycle program received the award for the Metro Bicycle Plan Public Outreach Project.

Metro's partner for the outreach project was the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition who interviewed bicyclists in areas of lower income and high transit use.

Unusually high merit

The Planning Project Award acknowledges a specific planning project of unusually high merit. The bicycle program was awarded the award for the Bike -Transit Center Implementation Plan.

Working on this project with Metro was the Bikestation Long Beach. The project studied the feasibility of four bike-transit centers in the Metro service area using a toolkit developed as part of the study.

Bike-transit centers are facilities that provide at least 20 fee-based, secure bicycle parking spaces adjacent to a transit stop, aimed at encouraging bike-to-transit connections. The four examined in the study were Norwalk, Pasadena, North Hollywood and Santa Monica.

This is the first time the bicycle program has a received an APA award.

Keeps wheels turning

The bicycle program continues to keep the wheels turning with many projects underway.

Work on the LA River Path and Bike Path continues to progress. A map of existing bikeways in Los Angeles County is also being made available to the public.

The 14-mile Metro Orange Line, due to open in late fall, will also have an accompanying bikeway.

At present, there are about 490 miles of street bike lanes, 500 miles of bike routes, and 253 Class 1 off-street bike paths in Los Angeles County.


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Sheriff's deputies, on special assignment from Temple and Central Jail LASD stations, patrol Metro Gold Line.



PHOTO: ARLENE LIM

Metro Security on High Alert, CEO Tells Board Members

(July 21, 2005) In a memo to members of the Board of Directors, today, CEO Roger Snoble reported that Metro Security and Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau deputies remain on heightened security status with an increased number of personnel on duty.

Since the July 7 terrorist attacks in London that killed 56 people, the Metro system has been complying with a nationwide Orange Alert. The explosions aboard three London subway trains and a double-decker bus, earlier today, have again raised security awareness.

During a news conference at his headquarters, this morning, LA County Sheriff Lee Baca said there have been no specific threats against transit systems here. He also discussed the mutual assistance agreement among the region's law enforcement agencies.

Currently, Sheriff's deputies are deployed, or are being deployed, at each train platform to augment normal staffing, according to Lt. Pat Jordan, acting Transit Police Chief. Bomb detection dogs from the Sheriff's Arson and Explosive unit are deployed on the Metro System.

PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON



Sheriff's deputies oversee lunch hour rush at Metro Red Line Station in the east portal of Union Station.

Investigators from the Arson and Explosive Unit are standing by in close proximity to the Union Station Complex to ensure a rapid response to any reports of suspicious or unattended packages, Jordan said.

Deputies are regularly sweeping the trains to look for unattended packages. Since July 7, deputies have distributed thousands of pocket-size emergency information cards to our transit riders, instructing them how to respond in an emergency and providing the Sheriff's Hot Line number – 888-950-SAFE (7233).

PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON



LAPD K-9 Bomb Unit patrols Union Station.

Metro Transit Operations is emphasizing that all bus and train operators must sweep their vehicles at the end of their runs for unattended packages. The frequency of security announcements to patrons using the Metro Rail system has been increased.

In addition, Metro employees are being reminded of the security alert, and asked to help serve as extra "eyes and ears" for Metro's security and law enforcement partners.


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EDITOR'S NOTE: (July 21, 2005) London police reported the situation is "under control" following a series of small explosions that struck London during the noon hour, today, hitting three subway trains and a double-decker bus. Only one injury was reported. It was the first such incident in London since the tragic July 7 terrorist attacks that killed 56 people. Meanwhile in Los Angeles, Metro Security and Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau deputies remain on heightened status in compliance with the national Orange Alert. Extra deputies, some with bomb detection dogs, are deployed at train platforms and are sweeping platforms and trains for unattended packages. CEO Roger Snoble wrote the following column on Wednesday, July 20.

Special Report:

See> [Metro Security on High Alert, CEO Tells Board Members](#)

VIEW FROM THE 25th FLOOR

Security Incidents Underscore Need for Employee Vigilance

By CEO ROGER SNOBLE

- Employees can be extra eyes and ears for our security partners



CEO Roger Snoble

Since the terrorist attacks in London, July 7, our Metro system has experienced a rash of security incidents. At this writing, there have been seven, including two suspicious package investigations at the Vermont/Sunset station and a two-hour shutdown of the East Portal.

We live in difficult times. We have come to understand that in order to pursue our way of life and use our transit system freely and securely, we have to be responsible for ourselves, for our fellow employees and for our customers.

For now and into the foreseeable future, our mindset as transit professionals has to be one of constant awareness. In order to maintain a safe environment on our transit system, we must be alert and thinking about safety and security at all times.

Since we have gone on heightened alert, I have been very impressed with the professionalism of our Metro Security officers and with the members of the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau. They are well-trained in security procedures. They have been extremely responsive to our requests and to our customers' needs. They're setting a good example for all of us.

Over the past few months, virtually every Metro employee has attended an anti-terrorism training course. The class provided guidelines for helping maintain security in the transit system. Employees also received copies of the pamphlet, "What You Can Do to Help" and a wallet-sized card with emergency phone numbers. Flyers

were posted on bulletin boards throughout the agency.

The 16-page pamphlet has a great number of important security tips you should become familiar with. Several I noticed immediately were:

Look for people who are in an unauthorized or restricted area.

Observe and report people, activities and things that are out-of-place or out of the ordinary.

Notice a package that is left or intentionally placed in an out-of-the-way location where it is not easily seen.

Conduct proper vehicle inspections and include security sweeps in pre- and post-trip inspections.

You also should call the Sheriff's Hot Line at 1-888-950-SAFE (7233) to report suspicious behavior or an unattended item on a train, bus or rail platform.

Recently, a colleague and I were touring the parking garage at the Metro Gold Line's Del Mar station. As we walked along, we spotted a suspicious-looking backpack placed on a low wall. We immediately reported the backpack to the private security guard. And, we were quite relieved when he said, "Oh, that's my lunch!"

That incident turned out to be quite innocent, and even funny. But, security on our Metro Bus and Metro Rail lines is serious business.

As Metro employees, public servants and citizens, we can be valuable assets to our law enforcement and security partners by staying alert and keeping our eyes and ears open whenever we're using the Metro system.

Remember: Your vigilance may one day save lives.

July 21, 2005

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Stomachs were rumbling, mouths were watering as Mechanic Jeffrey Lopez served food to a long line of hungry people at Division 10's safety celebration barbecue.



Photos: Perry Williams

Division 10 Maintenance Celebrates OSHA Safety Record

By ARLENE LIM

(July 22, 2005) Maintenance employees at Gateway Division 10 took refuge from the blistering heat and enjoyed some BBQ, recently, to celebrate more than 358 days without an OSHA recordable injury.

For almost a year employees at Division 10 have been working together to create and maintain a safe working environment.

As Richard Long, senior safety specialist for the Westside/Central sector put it, "It only takes one guy to wipe it all out," but an entire team to make it all come together.

"We have a bunch of good mechanics who are safety conscious, always aware and always looking for the public's safety," said Alex Espinoza, ATU shop steward.

Employees were able to enjoy food prepared by their own Fidel Hernandez, Jesse Sermino, Jeffrey Lopez, Tom Taira, Jason Stange, and Maria Hernandez.

'Very difficult conditions'



ATU Shop Steward Alex Espinoza presented Mechanic "A" Robin Tice with a jacket for his 23 years of service with Metro.

"We are working under very difficult conditions. This is the largest division; we have the most buses and we have a special service requirement as well, " said Maintenance Manager Frank Lonyai. "Despite all of these challenges, we can work in a safe environment and it's because of the employees - they're doing a tremendous job."

Mechanic "A" Robin Tice, retiring after 23 years of Metro service was recognized at the celebration. Tice now plans to join the racing team of his son-in-law, NASCAR Driver JJ Yeley.

As Division 10 was celebrating its achievement, another Westside/Central division – Venice Division 6 – crossed the 300-day mark without a loss-time injury. Division employees plan to celebrate once they reach their division goal of 365 days.



Division 10 for soared past 358 days without an OSHA recordable injury.



From right to left: Claude Hall, Jay Shield, Edward Cardiel, and Monique Washington sit down to a feast.

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Photos: Dave Sotero



A view of the shop floor at the RRC includes individual stations where mechanics rebuild entire components from start to finish.

Major Overhauls All in a Day's Work at Regional Rebuild Center

- Mechanics and tradesmen save agency money by rebuilding buses from scratch

BY DAVE SOTERO

(July 22, 2005) When Metro Bus No. 7770 was brought into the Regional Rebuild Center, recently, the perils of navigating LA's traffic-choked roadways was apparent right away.

The bus was involved in a major front-end collision with a truck. Its entire front section – front and side frames, window assembly, roof, windshield, wheel arch and entrance doors – was mangled.

Damage to this extent could cost Metro a fortune in repair and replacement costs, but it is all in a day's work at this state-of-the-art rebuild center. The heavy maintenance facility has all the expertise and high-tech equipment needed to support Metro's 2,500-bus fleet.

The RRC includes body and paint shops, a midlife bus refurbishment program, mechanical unit repairs, engine and transmission repairs, machine, welding, radiator and electronic shops.

All these activities are coordinated to get Metro's damaged buses back on the street quickly – usually within 30 days – at a cost substantially lower than outsourcing repair work or purchasing new parts. With an

average of 350,000 miles between engine overhauls on both its CNG and diesel buses, Metro may well have one of the best-maintained fleets in the country.

'Light years ahead'

"This facility is light years ahead of most repair facilities in technology, organization, and how we rebuild components," says Mike Singer, RRC lead maintenance manager.

Singer, whose father and grandfather worked as agency employees, is responsible for overseeing repair operations at the facility. "We could build a bus completely from scratch if we wanted to. We have everything here you need to make and keep a bus roadworthy."



Mechanic "A" Angel Noriega repairs a diesel bus engine. Mechanics are put in charge of all phases of the engine rebuilding process to ensure production quality.

Within its 440,000 square feet of shop and warehouse space stands such advanced equipment as Computer Numeric Control (CNC) lathes and mills, diesel and CNG engine and transmission dynamometers and a top-of-the-line machine shop. Mechanics of all classifications work in its fully functioning repair shops.

"We're real proud of our capability to perform cost-effective repairs to mechanical and electrical components," says Milo Victoria, deputy executive

officer of Operations. "We can rebuild anything from alternators and starters to complete CNG engines and electronically controlled transmissions. Whatever we rebuild here is very reliable."

The RRC performed 85 major accident repairs, 351 bus paint jobs and 200 mid-life overhauls last year.



Metro buses line up for scheduled repairs at the RRC.

6-year overhaul

Since the average lifespan of its buses is 12 years, the agency refurbishes them every six years so they will be reliable for the rest of their lifespan. Buses receive new powerplant engines, transmissions, suspension and paint during the midlife refurbishment program.

To raise productivity, the facility has migrated away from an assembly line to a batch process in which individual mechanics are responsible for overseeing the rebuild process from beginning to end using "engine kits" that eliminate the need to pull multiple parts.

Metro expects to rebuild 643 transmissions this fiscal year for between \$2,800 and \$6,300 each. A new transmission would cost \$10,000-\$16,000. Metro saves more than \$5 million by rebuilding transmissions versus purchasing new ones.

For its 11 bus divisions, the RRC performs a critical role in helping maintain daily bus service schedules and lowering the divisions' operating costs.

"Without the RRC, the cost incurred by the divisions would be much higher," says Victoria. "For one, divisions don't have the equipment or the space to make those repairs. But here at the RRC, we do these types of repairs all the time. We bring the buses in here, get them rebuilt, repaired, and they're back out at the divisions making money."



The RRC Body Shop performs all structural and cosmetic repairs to the Metro Bus fleet. Most repairs, like this one on Bus No. 5433, involve front-end work.

Excellent safety record

The RRC has demonstrated an excellent safety record over the last few years, going from an average of 113 injuries resulting in lost work time or treatment beyond first aid in 1999 to just 23 in 2004, an 80 percent reduction.

"The safety record of this facility far exceeds that of any other in this agency," Victoria says.

Of the RRC's 210 employees, nearly 178 are mechanics who undergo training classes taught by members of the Maintenance Instruction Department.

When the agency makes a new bus buy, the training staff works directly with the manufacturer to "Train the Trainer." The in-house trainers hold the same professional certifications as their counterparts at the bus company.

POSTSCRIPT: Metro Bus #7770 is now back in revenue service. Employees spent nearly 400 hours restoring the bus to good-as-new condition. They don't expect to see this bus back at the RRC any time soon, but if it returns, the shop will be ready.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A longer version of this article was written for the August/September issue of Metro Magazine, a transit industry publication.

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Employees Welcome: Metro Bus Rodeo, Saturday, at Santa Anita

- Familiar names dominate bus operator competitors; 10 division maintenance teams ready for challenge

In this report:

- [Preliminary leaders](#)
- [Maintenance team qualifiers](#)
- [Bus operator qualifiers](#)

(July 26, 2005) Familiar names from past bus operator competitions dominate the top five slots leading up to the 2005 Metro Bus Rodeo, scheduled this Saturday at Santa Anita Park's Gate 6 parking lot in Arcadia.

A total of 30 operators and 10 division maintenance teams will compete, this weekend, for the honor of representing Metro at the APTA International Bus Rodeo this September in Dallas.

All employees, their families and guests are welcome at the Rodeo, which will include family entertainment, a classic car show, a continental breakfast and a barbecue lunch with soft drinks and dessert.

Preliminary leaders

Based on preliminary rounds completed last week, Division 9's Mark Holland, with 625 of a possible 650 points, leads the pack. Holland has won the local competition five times. Just behind him, with 620 points, is Division 1's Sam Morales, a two-time Metro Rodeo winner.

Operator Juan Navarro of Division 3, last year's runner-up, is in third place, while the 2004 winner – Luduvico Castro of Division 9 – is in fourth. Standing in fifth place is Division 1's Marcus Mejia-Portillo, who placed third in last year's local event.

Rounding out the top ten are operators Joe Acosta, Division 3; Francisco Escareno, Division 10; Maximiliano De Angelis, Division 1; Juan Romo, Division 7; and Ricardo Martinez, Division 9.

2005 Metro Bus Rodeo

Location: Santa Anita Racetrack , Gate 6 Parking Lot (Off I-210 on West Colorado Place)

Schedule of events: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

- Maintenance Competition
- Bus Operator Competition
- Classic Car Show

Awards Ceremony - 1:30 p.m.

In the maintenance competition, last year's champs – Division 18's Luke Logan, Javier Soria and Mina Ros – will be defending their trophy in 2005. The 2004 runners-up were Doug Creveling, David Klinkenborg and Saul Sanchez of Division 10, followed by Andrew Warren Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde of Division 5.

Maintenance team qualifiers

In addition to those teams, the other maintenance competitors for 2005 are Division 1, Fred Hines, Gustavo Sanchez and Sergio Barron; Division 3, Tim Wong, Francisco Sepulveda and Cristobal Hurtado; and Division 6, Naren Desai, Jesus Guerra and Jose Ramirez.

Also, Division 8, Anthony Simiele, Dave Sweany and Yoon Oak; Division 7, Baldemar Gonzalez, Christopher Valenzuela and Eric Benjamins; Division 9, Omar Nomuro, Armando Martinez and Darrell Bishop; and Division 15, Kirk Langmayer, Brad Pardo and Ray Hilton.

In previous years, the maintenance event was conducted in an isolated area. This year, the contest will be more centrally located so spectators can watch the action. Competing teams will not be allowed in the area until they've finished their turn.

The maintenance competition will begin at about 7 a.m., Saturday, and will last until about 1 p.m. The operator's event will begin at 8 a.m. and will conclude about 1 p.m., in time for the 1:30 p.m. awards ceremony.

Bus operator qualifiers

Also qualifying to compete in the 2005 Metro Bus Rodeo are, in order of their preliminary scores, operators Loencio Sia, Division 9; Carlos Araneta, Division 9; Mariam Pereira, Division 15; Ramiro Mota, Division 2; Leyverth Rodriguez, Division 15; Ruben Flores, Division 1; Richard Lopez, Division 9; Hugo Mercado, Division 1; and Alberto Hinojos, Division 9.

Also, Felipe Patlan-Gutierrez, Division 1; Mario Madrid, Division 9; Juan Serrano, Division 8; Rene Caldera, Division 10; Juan Medrano, Division 9; Francisco Gomez, Division 10; Jose Sanchez, Division 2; David Hemion, Division 15; Joe Barbosa, Division 9; Jesus Valdez, Division 10; and Jesse Cervantes, Division 9.

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Transportation Operations Supervisor Michael Walton (far right), of Arthur Winston Division 5, with Department of Corrections social workers during the Parole Outpatient Clinic. Photos by Rich Morallo.



Metro's Michael Walton Briefs Social Workers on Transit

- Their customers depend on transit

By RICH MORALLO

(July 26, 2005) Applause and wide smiles welcomed Transportation Operations Supervisor Michael Walton as he was introduced at the Parole Outpatient Clinic this week.

"We're so glad you're here," said Brenda Armour, one of several social workers meeting at the Department of Corrections facility located just west of downtown Los Angeles.

Charged with the care of 5,500 parolees from throughout the county, the social workers have to make sure their customers get to where they need to go.

"Our parolees' priorities are transit, food and shelter, and without the first - transit - they don't achieve the other two," said Armour.

Invited to provide an orientation of Metro's transportation services, Walton talked about fares and passes, bus schedules, transit operations and how to ride safely on the bus and train.

'Metro is the way to go'

"We understand your customers have to meet appointments - get medication, counseling and attend programs for housing and benefits, and Metro is the way to go," said Walton.

Social workers described how their customers rely on public transit to report to their parole officers, get to different programs for drug treatment, housing and medical care, and keep close with friends and family.



TOS Michael Walton answers a social workers' question during the Parole Outpatient Clinic.

"Public transit is important to them as they have to be at different places and appointments, and meet the conditions of their parole," Armour said.

Walton, who typically works customer complaints, Worker's Compensation issues, and accident investigations at Arthur Winston Division 5, was glad he met with the social workers.

"They appreciated Metro and what the agency does for their clients - helping them travel throughout the city and keep on track with their lives," he said.

"Everyone should be able to easily use public transit as I do," said Dr. Darry Lee, another social worker, who travels every day on Metrolink, the Metro Red Line and Metro Bus Line 18 to come to work.


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SGV Sector Sets 2 Community Meetings, Public Hearing

By RICK JAGER

(July 26, 2005) The San Gabriel Valley Service Sector will hold two community meetings and a public hearing in August on proposed Metro Bus service modification planned for implementation in December, 2005 or later.

Proposed service modifications include Metro Bus Lines 68, 170, 175, 177, 201, 254, 255, and 259. The Metro staff also will discuss the creation of a new express line (Line 577) between El Monte Station and the Norwalk Metro Green Line Station.

The community meetings are scheduled for 6 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 2, at Glendale City Hall, 613 E. Broadway, Room 105; and at 6 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 3, at the Roybal Community Center, 2103 East First Street in Boyle Heights.

The public hearing is scheduled for 6 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 9, at the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector office at 3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte.

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Dodger legend Tommy Lasorda greets Custodian Maria Barrios and gives Operator Lamont Hopes a pat on the back following a team pep talk at Central City Division 1.



PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

Tommy Lasorda Goes to Bat for Central City Division 1

- Baseball legend delivers impromptu motivational talk to enthusiastic crowd of service attendants, mechanics and operators in Central City Division bus yard garage.

By Gayle Anderson

(July 26, 2005) At three in the afternoon on a Tuesday, Tommy Lasorda was giving a pep talk to the team. "What is it gonna to take for us to win? Well, if you want to win and believe that you can win, then you can do it, because self-confidence is the first step of success."

But the man considered to be one of the greatest managers in baseball wasn't talking from the Dodger dugout or from way out in centerfield. He was in the bus yard garage at Central City Division 1, July 26, talking to a Metro team of heavy hitters in the transportation field – some 30 service attendants, mechanics and a few operators on their midday break.



Lasorda gives the pitch in Central City bus yard garage.

Lasorda came to meet the Metro team at the invitation of Division Maintenance Manager Hector Rojas, who worked with the Dodger organization on community service projects in his former position as manager of fleet management at Regional Rebuild Center.

"When I left for Division 1, he offered to come here and give us a pep talk," said Rojas. "He's been supportive of what we do and the service we provide and he came to thank us for that and also to motivate us to work as a team."

Standing at a simple podium and facing a crowd of hard workers still wearing orange safety vests and the sweat of their labor, Lasorda went into the wind-up.

"You have a major responsibility. You may not realize how important you are to this city, but we all depend upon you," he said. "Why? The buses. If the buses are in good shape, a person is not gonna be afraid to get on that bus. If that bus is not taken care of properly, then we all have a problem. This is why you are very, very important. We look to you to do the job for us."

"Anyone who loves their job has never worked a day in their life. I've never said to my wife, 'I'm going to work.' I say 'I'm going to the ball park!'"

"When I walk in the clubhouse, I walk in with a lot of enthusiasm, a lot of self-confidence, a lot of belief that we're gonna win – and I spread it all around," said the veteran manager.

"This is the same principle, here, at your 'clubhouse.' When you come to work, come here with all the enthusiasm, all the self-confidence, and tell yourself, 'I'm gonna be

Here's the Wind-up Pitch and Delivery



better today than I was yesterday.
I'm gonna do everything in my
power to make this organization the
best in the country.' If you can say
that, you're a very happy person.

"Look at this vast organization,'
Lasorda said. "You're the ones that
make it go."



Metro gateway Cities GM Alex Clifford, Lasorda and Division Maintenance Manager Hector Rojas.

With a nod to Rojas and Metro Gateway Cities General Manager Alex Clifford, Lasorda drove his point home.

"They need you just like I needed those players. I got in the Hall of Fame but I didn't hit the ball and I never hit a home run. When I was successful with the team, it was only because of the contribution of our players. I made them play hard, I made them believe in themselves. I made them understand what it was going to take, to take the Blue to victory.



Was Tommy Lasorda the inspiration behind Operator Sam Morales win at the Metro Bus Rodeo a few days later? You be the judge. Here is the champ, Sam Morales, on the left, with Lasorda and Operator Lamont Hopes.

"That's team spirit," he said. I wanted to be the best manager in baseball. You're a team. You, too, want to be the best."

Lasorda had some parting words before the Metro team could rush the podium for handshakes, hugs and autographs.

"That's why I came here today," Lasorda concluded, "to let you know this: People depend on you – we need you. And don't ever think that you're nothing. You're the unsung heroes of this city."

Tommy Lasorda autographs
safety vest for Mechanic Pedro



Barrios. At right, Service Attendant Jennifer Valenzuela got the real deal's signature on her mother's genuine bobble-head Tommy doll.



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Some Employees Will Earn Their Stripes as 'Tiger Team' Members

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 27, 2005) Some employees will get an opportunity to earn their stripes, this year, as members of a Metro "Tiger Team" formed by CEO Roger Snoble.

Employees will be asked to sink their teeth into one of five important tasks currently facing the agency.

Tiger Teams, made up of both contract and non-contract employees from departments throughout Metro, will be formed to address customer signage, customer amenities, the Universal Fare System/TAP program, safety and energy. Other teams may be created later.

Snoble said some employees will be assigned to the Tiger Teams, but he also opened the door to volunteers. "We'll be looking for people to serve on these teams. If you have an interest, let my office know."

Two Tiger Teams will be assigned to the Communications unit. One team will work on improving signage throughout the Metro system and "help identify what's necessary for that," Snoble said.

The other team will develop plans to better manage what the CEO called a "hodge-podge of customer amenities" and will find ways to help transit users travel through the Metro system more easily and quickly.

The UFS/TAP Tiger Team will be asked to help write policies for a system that will be used both by Metro and municipal operators, develop maintenance programs, and suggest methods to program the machines in customer-friendly ways.

Calling the Tiger Team "a major tool" to ensure that UFS/TAP works properly, the CEO said the system "has tremendous power for our customers...."

Snoble noted that Metro reached its goal of reducing accidents by 51 percent with the "Safety's First" program. He said a Tiger Team will help develop fresh approaches to sustain the momentum and "keep safety foremost in people's minds."

The CEO also called for "an energetic Tiger Team" to tackle the agency's energy needs. He noted that Metro, with its hundreds of buildings, large facilities and electric railways, is a heavy energy user. "We need to figure out a better way to work with the energy providers and do a better job."

An important benefit of the Tiger Teams, Snoble said, will be to help

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“tear down the silos” that often isolate employees within the organization, and which can prevent departments from working well together.

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Testifying before the House Homeland Security subcommittee were, from left, Police Chief Polly Hanson of the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority; William Morange, director of security, New York City MTA; LACMTA's Paul Lennon; and Christopher Kozub, associate director, National Transit Institute.



Photo Credit: Courtesy of Tom Yedinak, APTA

Metro has 'Robust Training Program,' Lennon Tells Congress

- Training for first responders, employees focused on anti-terrorism

(July 27, 2005) Metro has a "robust training program" that often involves as many as 30 local first-responder agencies and is focused on anti-terrorism, a House Homeland Security subcommittee was told, Tuesday, during a hearing in Washington, D.C.

"The key part of our agency's training program focuses on preparing to respond and preparing to prevent," said Paul Lennon, Metro's director of Intelligence and Emergency Preparedness Management, in testimony before the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology.

"These exercises anticipate responses to...terrorists, weapons of mass destruction, explosives and combinations thereof," Lennon said. "The 'real world'...simulations we conduct are tests of each agency's first-response personnel and their training...."

Lennon testified at the hearing alongside officials from the Federal Transit Administration, Department of Homeland Security, and transit security officials from Washington and New York City.

Members of the 18-member subcommittee include U.S. Reps. Jane Harmon (D-36th, El Segundo) and Loretta Sanchez (D-47th, Garden Grove).

Plan needed 'quickly'

Subcommittee Chairman Peter King (R-N.Y.), commenting about the need for a national transit security plan, said, "We all agree that it is long overdue and we need it as quickly as possible."

David Kim, Metro's director of Federal Advocacy, attended the hearing and said Lennon and the other transit security officials "were very clear about what they're doing, what they need to do and what the federal government needs to do."

He said their testimony "underscored the important role the federal government has in not just providing money, but also in providing standards and guidance."

9,000 employees trained

Lennon noted that more than 9,000 Metro employees have attended an anti-terrorism training course that "encompasses the who, what, why, where and how of dealing with unattended packages and suspicious behavior."

"We are very cognizant of the critical role our employees play," he said. "They are our 'eyes, ears and voice' in our nation's war against terrorism."

Lennon called the emergency exercises, employee training, and public awareness programs a "proper investment" and said such training will "give us the capability to initiate an immediate and forceful response. That response is in place today on our expansive rail and bus network...."

He said the "training and know-how" gives Metro employees and security personnel "the confidence to assure the general public that all possible measures are being undertaken to protect our welfare."

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CEO Roger Snoble addresses full house at staff meeting.



PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

CEO Launches New Organizational Structure to Meet Metro's Challenges

- New organization consolidates some staff functions
- Gives CEO more direct oversight in key areas
- See also:



CEO Roger Snoble

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 27, 2005) Choosing the morning when the crew of Discovery blasted off from Cape Canaveral for America's return to space, CEO Roger Snoble launched Metro's new organizational structure and offered employees an opportunity to work together on a series of "Tiger Teams" focused on critical areas of the agency.

Alluding to the successful space shot, Snoble said, "This is a good day to focus on our challenges. We have the opportunity to look down the road and ask where we want to be four or five years from now and how do we get there."

In remarks leading up to presentation of the revised organization, Snoble said meeting Metro's mobility goals would be hampered by a structural deficit that will continue to grow in FY 2007 and 2008, and could approach \$2 billion within 10 years.

Those deficits are, in part, due to the increased bus service mandated by federal Consent Decree – service that he said “hasn't produced any new riders or higher revenues.”

To prepare the agency to meet the challenges ahead, the CEO described a somewhat streamlined organization that consolidates a number of staff functions.

The new structure is intended – among other things – to reduce fragmentation and duplication of effort, build the agency's capability and link common activities, improve service planning, and define the roles and responsibilities of capital projects, and the roles and responsibilities of labor.

Plans 'Tiger Teams'

Snoble also laid out a plan for “Tiger Teams” composed of assigned and volunteer staff to attack five important areas: customer signage, customer amenities, Universal Fare System/TAP, safety and energy.

See article: [Some Employees Will Earn Their Stripes as 'Tiger Team' Members](#)

He said Tiger Team members, who will be drawn from various departments within Metro, will be chosen in the next few weeks and indicated that other teams may be formed later to address other problem areas.

Pointing to the revised organizational chart, Snoble said Management Audit Services, Board Relations and Policy Research, and Economic Development will now report directly to him. A new executive will soon be named to head Economic Development, which also will include Real Estate Administration.

This move permits the CEO to maintain more effective oversight of departments through the audit function, ensures the high quality of information passed along to the Board, and highlights joint development of housing and businesses along major transit corridors.

Two departments that had reported to the Office of the CEO – Government Relations and Community Relations – now will join Media Relations, Marketing, rideshare, and other customer-focused departments within Communications.

The consolidation will place these departments in proximity, Snoble said, where they “can work more closely together and be closer to our customers.”

Business Services unit

The Business Services unit, previously titled Support Services, will include “all the functions that support the rest of the agency,” he said. Under that unit will be Human Resources, Labor Relations, Employee Benefits, Organizational Development & Training, Finance, Treasury, Office of Management and Budget, ITS, Accounting and Safety.

The Procurement Department, which will take in Diversity and Economic Opportunity, also will be included in Business Services.

The CEO will have "dotted-line" relationships with Government Relations, Diversity and Economic Opportunity, Safety and Labor Relations. All four are responsible for areas critical to the operation of Metro.

Snoble said minor efficiency and streamlining changes had been made in departments reporting to Deputy CEO John Catoe, while no changes had been made in the Countywide Planning and Capital Management (Construction) units.

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Service Sectors Schedule Monthly Meeting, Public Hearings

- [Pressroom:](#) Proposed service changes

By RICK JAGER

(July 29, 2005) Metro's service sector governance councils will hold monthly public meetings in August to discuss various transportation issues in their sectors.

Four of the five service sectors also are planning to hold public hearings on a number of Metro Bus service modifications proposed for implementation in December, 2005 or later.

The San Fernando Valley Service Sector monthly meeting is scheduled at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 3, at the Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys.

The Westside/Central Service Sector monthly meeting is set for 3 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 4, at the La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills. The sector's public hearing will be held at 6 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 11, in the same location.

The San Gabriel Valley Service Sector's public hearing is scheduled at 6 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 9, at the San Gabriel Valley Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte.

The South Bay Service Sector's public hearing is set for 6 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 10, at the Arthur Winston Division, 5425 Van Ness Ave., Los Angeles. The sector's monthly meeting is scheduled at 9:30 a.m., Friday, Aug. 12, at the Carson Community Center, 801 E. Carson, Carson.

The Gateway Service Sector's monthly governance council meeting is set for 2 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 11, at The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey. The public hearing is scheduled for 5 p.m., that day, in the same location.


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CEO Roger Snoble joins Giancarlo Fantappiè, chairman and CEO of AnsaldoBreda, Board Member Pam O'Connor, Deputy CEO John Catoe, Rail GM Gerald Francis and Rail Operations DEO Dave Kubicek to greet the new Rail car on display at the Metro Gold Line platform of Union Station.



Photos by Juan Ocampo

Metro Greet New 2550 Rail Car During Union Station Event

By DAVE SOTERO

(July 29, 2005) Metro officials and executives from Italian rail car manufacturer AnsaldoBreda, Inc. officially welcomed the new 2550 light rail vehicle during a Thursday afternoon event at Union Station.

The rail car is the first of 50 Metro has ordered from the manufacturer at a cost of \$2.9 million each. They will be placed into service on the Metro Gold Line in late 2005 or early 2006 and on the Eastside Extension when it opens in December 2009.

"The 2550...is the most technologically advanced light rail vehicle yet in Los Angeles County," said CEO Roger Snoble in remarks prior to taking local media for a short demonstration ride. "These vehicles will enhance Metro's ability to better manage its rail fleet and will give us more capability than we've had before."

The 76-passenger, 54-ton, 90-foot long vehicles contain the



CEO Roger Snoble leads news conference before taking official ride in waiting train.

latest in rail car technology, from advanced propulsion system and diagnostic equipment to greater accessibility for Metro patrons. They have a life span of at least 30 years.

Two 50-car options

The 2550 contract with AnsaldoBreda includes two 50-car options to meet the growing needs of the rail system, Snoble said.

"Today is a celebration of partnership and teamwork," said Giancarlo Fantappiè, chairman and CEO of AnsaldoBreda. "Metro, the consultants and AnsaldoBreda have tirelessly worked together to reach a common goal – a state of the art vehicle, delivered on time and on budget for the good of all Los Angelenos."

The new vehicle provides many improvements that will directly benefit Metro riders.

Automated announcements on an interior and exterior public address system will announce approaching stops. Seats are cantilevered, which opens up floor space for faster boarding and alighting.

Four wheelchair areas are conveniently located at each entrance of the train. Multiple destination signs are strategically placed to make it easy for all patrons to view their stop information.



Board Member and Santa Monica Mayor Pam O'Connor is flanked by Metro CEO Snoble and AnsaldoBreda CEO Fantappiè on short train ride back to Union Station.



The new 2550 rail car features a stainless steel structure and composite body components.

'A first-class vehicle'

"Ansaldobreda has answered our call for a first-class vehicle that meets the needs of all three Metro Rail light rail lines," said Snoble.

Some of the 2550 car's other new features include:

- Stainless steel structure and composite body components that increase the vehicle's lifespan while reducing maintenance costs.
- Camera security system that films interior and exterior views.
- Global Positioning System.
- Event Recorder (Black Box) that captures and records events and conditions of the vehicle in the case of incidents.
- On-board hardware and software that improves fleet management capabilities.
- Improved control and interior communication for train operators.
- An improved regenerative braking system that feeds electrical power back into the overhead cantenary system.

"Tomorrow and in the years to come," said Board Member Pam O'Connor, "Metro Rail will play an increasingly important role as we move to solve the mobility challenges throughout the county."

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Joe Simpson and his family – from left, Joe III, Troi, and wife Tange – enjoy a sunny day touring Cancun prior to the intrusion of Hurricane Emily, at right, which provided a scary end to the Simpsons' Cancun vacation earlier this month.



Hurricane Emily Intrudes on Joe Simpson's Family Vacation

• Metro's webmaster stranded when storm hits Cancun

By PERRY WILLIAMS

(July 29, 2005) Enjoying an annual family vacation on warm, palm-fringed beaches, Metro Webmaster Joe Simpson found himself caught in the middle of Hurricane Emily when it hit Cancun, Mexico.

Simpson along with his wife, Tange, his son Joe III, 7, and daughter Troi, 5, were in for an unexpected event not mentioned in their tourist package.

"We were near the end of our trip and scheduled to be out of Cancun by Monday, but the hurricane came early on Sunday," he says.

Packing winds up to 135 mph, for five straight hours Emily ripped roofs off resort hotels along the popular Cancun shoreline.

"A lot of people in the city were tourists who had never experienced a

live hurricane, so they decided to stand out near the water and take pictures," says Simpson.

Remained secure

He and his family chose to remain inside their room where they were secure from the hurricane.

"Our resort was right on the water so we stayed inside because we knew it was pretty serious," he says. "The room had a protective door the staff slid across the glass door so it wouldn't pop out – making us feel pretty safe."

As a result of the storm, power went out all across areas of Mexico leaving those in the hurricane no way to receive updates. Suprisingly, Simpson says, the power didn't go out, but satellite TV reception did when the storm hit and had not returned by the time the family left Cancun.

"We were fortunate, or unfortunate, however you look at it, that our TV was out because we couldn't see CNN," he says. "We really didn't know how serious it was. Being there inside of the room all we had was each other."

Airports closed, so anyone who was not in the air by 2 p.m. was stranded in Cancun until the hurricane passed.

'Prepared for a quick exit'

Simpson compares the sound of hurricane winds to a non-stop train running through your living room. "As the storm intensified, our kids slept, but my wife and I prepared for a quick exit, if necessary, by having our bags packed and shoes at the door. Neither of us could sleep -- partially due to the heat -- and took turns checking the sliding glass door."

The aftermath of Hurricane Emily left trees uprooted, roads closed, and no cars moving. The roads eventually opened, leaving tourists fighting to get on a single daily flight.

Despite his hurricane experience, Simpson says his family will vacation in Cancun again. "I feel very fortunate that the hotel was prepared. When I returned home, I looked on the news and saw that some resorts were blown down, but our hotel was definitely prepared."

Grateful to be alive, Joe Simpson remains in good spirits when talking about the difference between watching a hurricane and being in one. "All I can say to someone, if they find themselves in the middle of a hurricane, is that it's an experience but please don't run out and attempt to capture the moment on film."


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Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, pictured here with 2nd Vice-chair Pam O'Connor and CEO Roger Snoble, outlined his priorities for Metro during his first meeting as chairman of the Board of Directors. Photo: Bill Heard



Villaraigosa Outlines Transportation Priorities as Board Chairman

- Highlights transit security, bus system and new rail lines
- Calls for 'vision and a long-term plan'
- Go to> [Other Board business](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 29, 2005) Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, taking up the Board of Directors gavel on Thursday, outlined transportation priorities for his term as chairman – emphasizing commitments to transit security, maintaining “a first-class bus system” and “investment in new rail lines.”

Villaraigosa noted that he already has been to Washington seeking “appropriate funds for transit security. We will continue to make that a priority of this agency. We must do everything we can to address homeland security issues within our transportation system.”

Declaring that Metro has “substantially improved bus service over the past decade,” the mayor said the agency “must maintain its commitment to a first-class bus system.”

He added that discussion of a fare increase would be “premature,” but said it is a matter for the entire Board to decide upon.

The mayor said a “multi-modal system” is required to provide alternatives to driving and to increase service to transit riders. “That means finishing current projects on-time and on-budget.”

‘Vision and long-term plan’

Villaraigosa called for “vision and a long-term plan” that includes investment in new rail lines using federal and state funding.

“This does not mean that we will open a subway to the sea in my term,” he said. “But, it means that we have to start planning for this and other sensible projects.”

The mayor said Metro must build the Exposition Line “all the way to Santa Monica, the Gold Line extension in the San Gabriel Valley and a connection to LAX. Service between the San Fernando Valley and the Westside must be improved.”

Villaraigosa said the carpool system should be completed. He requested reports in August on ridership benefits, costs and implementation timeframes of a downtown connector linking the Metro Blue Line, Gold Line and the Eastside Extension with the Exposition Line.

He also requested the cost implementation timeframe and next steps for a priority transit lane on Wilshire Boulevard.

In other business, the Board considered:

Item 22, Property for a Warehouse. The Board authorized purchase of a 1.39-acre property adjacent to the Regional Rebuild Center for construction of a central warehouse for the Facilities Maintenance and Materiel and Logistics departments.

The warehouse is needed to provide bulk storage of bus and rail materials, parts and supplies, and will provide shop space for Facilities Maintenance personnel moved in from South Park.

Currently owned by Sempra Energy Utilities, the site includes a building that will be demolished before Metro acquires the property for \$2.5 million. Sempra has developed a Remedial Action Workplan in cooperation with California Department of Toxic Substance Control to reduce the level of contaminants from a gas plant that once occupied the site.

Items 25 and 26, Hi-Rail Equipment. The Board approved contracts to buy two hi-rail utility trucks and one specially designed hi-rail emergency response vehicle for use on rail lines throughout the region.

The emergency hi-rail vehicle was developed by Metro staff to combine the features of a fire department search and rescue vehicle with those of a law enforcement tactical vehicle suitable for terrorist and hostage situations.

The \$405,135 cost will be funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The armor-plated vehicle will have a five-ton crane, air compressor, generator and other equipment required to respond to rail emergencies.

The utility trucks, with a total purchase price of \$395,593, will be equipped with articulated booms and two-person buckets for use in

maintaining overhead catenary lines or in high-reach areas of the Metro Red Line. The new trucks will replace two 16-year-old vehicles.

Item 40, Governance Council Appointment. The Board approved Supervisor Michael Antonovich's appointment of Mel Wilson to serve as a member of the San Fernando Valley Sector Governance Council.

Wilson, 52, was appointed by former Mayor Richard Riordan to serve as a member of the LACMTA Board of Directors from July, 1993 to August, 1997. A realtor, Wilson also has served on the board of directors of the Valley Industry and Commerce Assn. (VICA) and as a vice president of the LA City Fire Department Commission.

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