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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."