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Metro Liner sizes up the Metro Orange Line North Hollywood Station on test run.



Photo by Gary Leonard

Metro Liners Roll Out, Sunday, for Orange Line Pre-Revenue Service

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 13, 2005) At precisely 3:40 a.m. this coming Sunday, the first Metro Liner will roll, eastbound, out of Warner Center and into pre-revenue service on the Metro Orange Line.

At 4:43 a.m., the first westbound Metro Liner will leave the North Hollywood station. Thereafter, the 60-foot articulated coaches will crisscross the San Fernando Valley on a minute-by-minute schedule mirroring the daily commuter service.

The pre-revenue headways will be timed to match the arrival and departure of Metro Red Line trains at the North Hollywood Station, according to San Fernando Valley General Manager Richard Hunt.

"Mike Brewer and his staff have done an excellent job designing and coordinating the schedule so it will be in sync with the train schedule," he says.

Thirty-five operators – some from outside the Valley – have successfully bid for the right to drive the 14-mile Metro Orange Line, which opens to the public on Saturday, Oct. 29.

They'll be led by a senior male operator, 32-year veteran Robert Higbee, and a senior female operator, Bettye Edwards-Hall, a 23-year veteran. Orange Line service will operate out of West Valley Division 8, which also will maintain the 30 Metro Liners.

‘Ready to go!’

“We’re excited. We’re ready to go!” says Division 8 Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds. “It’s a new line and brings new life to the division.”

“Everything will be up and running opening day,” says Pat Orr, Division 8 maintenance manager. Fifteen red and silver artics will be on standby to augment the 30 silver Metro Liners, if needed, to handle passenger overflow on the opening weekend.

He notes that all Division 8 mechanics and service attendants will have received both Metro Liner technical and driver training by the time pre-revenue service begins.

Mechanics have driven the entire alignment to familiarize themselves with the transitway, including entrances and exits for repair vehicles and tow trucks.

“Everyone in the sector is excited to see the Orange Line open and the public’s reaction to it,” says Hunt. “It’s an opportunity for Metro to take a huge step forward.”