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## Survey Says: More Riders Switching to Metro

By KIM UPTON

(Sept. 13, 2006) Increasing numbers of people who have cars available are taking Metro, according to the newest Metro Customer Satisfaction Survey, which polled 15,752 riders.

The percentage of Metro riders who have transportation alternatives, such as cars, but instead choose to take public transportation continued to rise, from 22 percent in fall, 2002, to 34 percent in the latest survey.

If the trend continues, it could mean that mass transit in Los Angeles is luring riders off freeways and streets and onto public transportation, although further study is needed.

Despite the threat of terrorism, customers also said they are feeling more secure. Eighty-three percent surveyed -- a record high -- said they feel safe at Metro bus stops and rail stations and almost 9 of 10 customers (88 percent) said they feel safe while riding the system.

Since the London bus bombings in July, 2005, Metro has invested \$9 million in security upgrades, including installation of hundreds of security cameras in Metro Rail stations and in subway cars and buses.

With Metro ridership spiking to an all-time high this spring, finding bus and rail seats could have been a challenge, yet 82 percent of riders said they were able to get seats when they rode -- another all-time high since the twice-a-year survey began in 2002.

On-time performance was also applauded by 74 percent of riders. Customers continue to approve of Metro courtesy and comfort. Eighty percent of those queried said they found bus operators to be courteous, a trend that has steadily increased over the past three years.

The vast majority of riders -- 78 percent -- consider buses and trains clean and bus stop and train stations clean (72 percent). And 85 percent said they are satisfied with the service.

During the six months prior to the spring survey, riders said they believe Metro's service schedule met their needs and 91 percent said

bus and rail service are convenient to use.

Half of those polled have been riding for more than five years. Four out of five riders surveyed, about 86% of those polled, said they thought Metro's image was improving.

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**Metro and Valley College Team Up to Prepare Applicants for Bus Operator Job Interviews**

By JOSÉ UBALDO

(Sept. 13, 2006) Los Angeles Valley College will provide free training for individuals interested in preparing for job interviews as bus operators with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro). Previous bus driving experience is not required.

To help recruit bus operators to fill its 300 vacant positions, Metro has implemented an innovative new pilot program in collaboration with Los Angeles Valley College, the Wilshire Metro WorkSource Center and the Literacy Network of Greater Los Angeles.

The pre-screening recruitments will be held September 20, 22, 27 and 28 at 1:00 p.m. at the Wilshire Metro WorkSource Center, 3550 Wilshire Boulevard, suite 500, Los Angeles.

The initial requirements include: Valid driver's license for a minimum of two years, at least 21 years of age, satisfactory driving record, ability to speak, read and write English. The benefits included are: \$10.30 per hour during the training and then \$13.36 per hour after a six-week period, medical, dental and vision insurance plans, holiday and sick pay and other benefits.

The program includes instructions in English, basic computer applications, critical thinking, time management, study skills and customer service.