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CEO UpDate

Reorganizing at the Top; A Successful Marathon Operation

By CEO ROGER SNOBLE



CEO Roger Snoble

Safety Contact: Employees who use a cell phone while driving a Metro vehicle violate policy and may be breaking the law

By ROGER SNOBLE

We've had some very high-profile people leave our agency recently for other opportunities – John Catoe, Rod Goldman, Paul Lennon and, at the end of this month, Gerald Francis. It's really disappointing to see them go, but we're moving ahead and I wanted you to understand our plans.

When John's departure was announced, I named Carolyn Flowers interim chief operating officer with overall responsibility for bus operations, security, labor relations and other tasks not specific to the daily operation of the service sectors. Along with Carolyn, I also had Gerald reporting directly to me because I wanted to give rail a higher profile on my management team. That arrangement worked extraordinarily well and I plan to continue it.

Now, we have to recruit to fill the position of Metro Rail general manager and there are some strong internal candidates. But, we'll also launch an external search with the intention of hiring someone as quickly as possible.

In addition, we're recruiting to fill the role of chief operations planner. We have some strong internal candidates and a few external candidates to consider.

We're also in the process of hiring a new deputy executive officer for Safety and Security, who will report to Carolyn. He'll be responsible for managing our contract with the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau and coordinating with local law enforcement agencies, along with managing our Metro Security force and interfacing with the Department of Homeland Security.

We're just concluding a recruitment for a new deputy executive officer for Labor Relations, who also will report to Carolyn. That person will be responsible for working with the sector general managers to handle grievances and other sector labor matters. He also will play a key role during negotiations with our labor unions.

As you can see, we've reorganized somewhat at the top, but I think the organization is better and will be more efficient. And I look forward to working with the new members of our staff.

Success with the LA Marathon

The LA Marathon with its new route from the Valley to downtown was a great success this year – and much of that was due to the hard work by a number of Metro employees.

I especially want to thank Richard Hunt, Bruce Shelburne and Steve Rank for the many hours they put into developing an extensive plan of action that involved close coordination of our Metro Rail and Metro Bus operations to handle the thousands of marathon participants and spectators.

A special thanks also to the many other staff members and volunteers who worked during the marathon to make sure people were able to buy tickets and find their way to the various viewing points along the marathon route. It was a magnificent performance by everyone involved.

Safety Contact: Cell phones and driving

I don't know about you, but many times when I've had a close call on the road it was because the person in the other car was on a cell phone. It's truly dangerous, especially if you're holding the phone in your hand or have it wedged into your shoulder.

A recent study shows that cell phone users are even more dangerous than intoxicated drivers, taking three times as long to apply their brakes. The study said cell phone users are four times more likely than non-cell phone users to get into an accident.

I'm especially concerned when our bus or rail operators talk on the cell phone while driving. It's unsafe, a risk to yourself and your passengers, and it's a violation of the California Vehicle Code for transit vehicles. It's also a major violation of our own Operator's Rule 1.25, which prohibits use of any electronic device, including cell phones, while operating a Metro vehicle.

I also want to caution all employees that using a cell phone while operating a non-revenue vehicle and personal vehicles while on Metro business violates Corporate Safety Policy #8. And as of July 1, 2008, it will be against the law in California to drive while using a hand-held cell phone.

It's important for all of us to drive safely. If you need to receive or make a cell phone call, pull over to the side of the road or wait until you reach a safe area to use the phone.

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