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Bus Operator Charged in \$33,000 Theft of Day Passes

- Operator is charged with embezzlement and grand theft

(Aug. 9, 2007) A bus operator who may have been stealing Metro day passes for as long as six months – costing the agency some \$33,000 in lost revenue – was arrested, Thursday, at Gateway Division 10.

Yolanda Blackshire, 52, of Los Angeles, was confronted at the division, Aug. 2, with evidence gathered by members of the Metro Special Investigations Unit (SIU) and deputies from the Transit Services Bureau (TSB).

The next day, she was charged with embezzlement, grand theft and conspiracy to commit a crime. Blackshire, who passed her 25th anniversary with Metro on Aug. 5, was released on her own recognizance and will be arraigned in LA Superior Court on Aug. 28.

Metro's SIU began the investigation following an anonymous tip, July 19, from a woman who said she knew a man who was receiving blocks of stolen day passes from a Metro bus operator, according to a report by Principal Investigator Roy Romero.

The following day, TSB undercover deputies boarded a bus driven by Blackshire and watched as the operator allegedly passed a full book of day passes to a man fitting the description given them by the anonymous caller.

Again on Aug. 1, the deputies were watching Blackshire's bus at Broadway and Pico and reported an exchange of day passes between the operator and another suspect. The deputies detained the suspect who told them he received day passes from Blackshire at 8 a.m. and again at noon, Monday through Friday, according to the report.

Confronted on Aug. 2 with the evidence compiled by investigators, Blackshire admitted to giving her accomplice two books of day passes, which was two-thirds of the passes she received daily, according to Romero's report. Blackshire also signed a confession and was booked for felony embezzlement.



Operator Yolanda Blackshire in undated badge photo.

