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The Best Practices Committee was formed to streamline some of the common procedures at the divisions that currently have no discernable standard from division to division. Committee members are, from top left, Robert Chavez, Division 1; O'Neal McDaniels, Division 3; Thom Mattocks, Division 1. (Bottom, from left) Rachel Bird, Division 8; Sonja Owens, Division 1; Regina Bird, Division 5. Members not pictured: Sherry Walker, Division 5; and Johnny Lindsey, Division 7. Photo by Jimmy Stroup



'Best Practices' Committee to Streamline Procedures for Operations Supervisors

By JIMMY STROUP

(Aug. 15, 2007) In an effort to add some consistency to the way Metro divisions and service sectors do routine business, a new committee has been formed and is working to streamline the procedures transportation operations supervisors (TOS) and assistant managers use every day.

Assistant managers from five divisions representing each of the sectors have gathered in six meetings of the "Best Practices Committee" so far, sorting out the differences and deciding the best procedures for TOS duties. With quite a bit worked out already, the committee is pleased with the progress.

"It's basically to streamline the day-to-day division operations so that we can get the most effective and cost-efficient methodologies into place," said Thom Mattocks, an assistant manager at Central City Division 1.

Among the methods being analyzed and adjusted are the accident investigations procedures, individual performance reports and a general standardization of TOS job duties, which can vary widely in practice from

division to division.

The committee is the brainchild of Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonja Owens who got the idea after talking to some employees who were expressing concern over a common problem.

‘Every one works differently’

“One day I was talking to some operators and they were new to the division,” she said. “I was giving them the dos and don’ts and the rules and regs and they go, ‘You know? I’ve been at three divisions and every one of them works differently when it comes to procedure.’”

At that point, Owens thought that some standardization might be in order and asked Chief Operations Officer Carolyn Flowers for permission to pool management from various divisions.

Though the committee is focusing mainly on TOS activity, the process should aid in keeping things at each division uniform, making transfers between divisions an easier prospect for anyone.

“We’re looking for a seamless workflow process so that the work will be consistent throughout the organization,” said Rachel Bird, an assistant manager at West Valley Division 8.

TOS training will now be more all-encompassing, said Mattocks, arguing that while most TOSs end up doing one or two tasks regularly, the position entails quite a bit more and that TOSs need to know how to do it all.

This will allow for easier transitions, he said, when a TOS who worked the window at one division is transferred to a division that needs an accident investigator, for example.

“It’s a pretty daunting task,” said Robert Chavez, and assistant manager at Division 1. “But I think it’s going to be very helpful in the end.”