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Mike Stange opens the May 28 workshop by giving his audience a taste of the rules that govern municipal bus operators. This was the first time Metro had held a workshop to help municipal operators understand regulations.

*Photo by Ned Racine*

## Operations Convenes First Forum to Help Municipal Operators with Rules, Laws

By NED RACINE, Editor

(June 3, 2008) In a first for Metro, Bus Operations convened a workshop, May 28, to help municipal bus agencies better navigate the rules and regulations that govern their work.

Mike Stange, Equipment Maintenance superintendent, developed the Regulatory Compliance Program workshop after receiving a directive from CEO Roger Snoble to reach out to the municipal operators. In his opening remarks, Stange acknowledged the mass of regulations that guide operators. He pointed to notebooks of rules and regulations almost two-feet thick.

Stange noted the uniqueness of the May 28 event, telling his audience he could not remember a forum uniting the municipal agencies and Metro "to discuss and learn and consider regulations and laws" governing commercial vehicles.

Besides distributing a Regulatory Compliance Instruction Program for Transit Operators (which he created), Stange also distributed the California Highway Patrol Vehicle Equipment Inspection Guide, Motor Carrier Safety Compliance Handbook, the National Fire Protection Association Vehicular Fuel Systems Code and training material for understanding driving time restrictions.

"There's a lot of information," Stange told his audience, which included representatives from Antelope Valley Transit Authority, Santa Monica Big Blue Bus, Culver City Municipal Bus Lines, Foothill Transit, Long Beach Transit, Norwalk Transit and Torrance Transit. "My goal is to introduce you to the 'stuff.' "

In welcoming the municipal operators staff, Carolyn Flowers, chief operations officer, said "We all need to provide safe, clean and reliable service. We are transportation partners in the region. What we can do today is share what we do here at Metro so that we have consistency

throughout the region for all of our customers.”

“We’re here as a resource and we want to share that information today and in the future,” she told the approximately 38 participants. “If at anytime you need our assistance, please call.”

John Roberts, deputy executive officer, Operations, spoke of Metro’s work with the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the agency conducting periodic inspections of bus agency vehicles. “CHP is our partner. Their job is to make sure we’re doing our jobs. In a perfect world, we wouldn’t need them coming out [to inspect], but reality is we do sometimes have screw-up’s. And they, fortunately, tell us about it.”

Roberts shared that he had been part of 200 CHP inspections over the last 18 years and estimated Stange had been part of 600, so they understood the stress municipal operators feel when being inspected. Stange added that individuals have lost their jobs for failing to pass CHP inspections.

John Adams, equipment services supervisor, spoke to attendees about log books, Jessica Gil and Carol Holben, Medical Standards and Compliance administrators, spoke about commercial driver licenses and drug and alcohol standards.

Commander Mike Kelley, who heads the Southern Division CHP Motor Carrier Group, fielded questions on inspections.

Stange, who found the praise on the workshop feedback forms exceeded his expectations, will present a second regulatory compliance program to Metro’s contracted service providers, a few other municipal operators, and in-house division personnel.

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