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## While Orange Line Sets Ridership Records, Division 8 Sets Safety Record

By NED RACINE, Editor

(July 24, 2008) While the Metro Orange Line was setting records for weekday ridership, West Valley Division 8 operators set a record for safety.



The popular Orange Line boosted weekday ridership by 4.4 percent over last year, reaching 26,596 boardings. Division 8 completed Fiscal Year 2008 with fewer than two bus traffic accidents per 100,000 hub miles.

"Based on my research and conversation with long-time Metro safety officers, no accident data can be found to show that an accident rate below 2.0 has ever been achieved by a Metro bus division," said David Miklic, senior safety specialist. "The agency rate for the past year was 3.47."

Maria Reynolds, Division 8 Transportation Manager, credits the teamwork between operators and staff for the success.

"This could not have been possible without the hard work and efforts of our bus operating personnel," she said. "A celebration lunch is being planned for everyone who contributed to the success."

Last July, when the fiscal year began, no one considered that an accident rate below 2.0 was attainable, but by May 2008 it seemed a realistic goal, and the accident counts were being watched closely.

Even in early July, the final outcome was uncertain. The division knew how many accidents had occurred, but until the hub miles had been tallied, the accident rate couldn't be calculated accurately. But when the Service Performance Analysis Department's June Monthly Managers' Report was distributed on July 14, it showed that the division's year-to-date accident rate was 1.99.

The goal had been reached. So has a remarkable year-to-year reduction in the accident rate.

"The accident rate for Fiscal Year 2007 was 2.46, so the Fiscal Year 2008 rate of 1.99 is an amazing 19 percent reduction," Miklic said. "That translates to 57 fewer accidents in just one year. The Division 8 rate last fiscal year was already one third less than the Metro average."

Miklic is already setting a challenge for next year: "The professionalism of the Division 8 operators has been shown. There is no reason we can't improve further in Fiscal Year 2009. Two fewer accidents each month is a reasonable goal."

"A properly trained, experienced operator with a genuine interest in driving defensively is the single most important element in avoiding traffic

collisions," Miklic added.

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