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Photos by Luis Inzunza



Metro Gold Line trains began pre-revenue testing in East Los Angeles Oct. 6.

Independent Safety Panel Finds New Metro Gold Line Extension Designed/Built to Operate Safely

Eastside safety report online: [Panel Review of the Gold Line Eastside Extension \(PDF\)](#)

Excerpts from News Release by Marc Littman

(Oct. 15, 2009) An independent panel of rail transit safety experts has concluded that the new Metro Gold Line to East Los Angeles has been designed and built to operate safely.

The report, released Oct. 6, comes as Metro begins testing trains and training operators for service.

CEO Art Leahy asked three renowned rail safety and operations experts from across the country, who have a combined total of more than 100 years of experience, to do a critical review of the Eastside Extension and advise if its safety features were sufficient.

In late June and early July of this year the panel spent a week studying every aspect of the new Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension including rides on test trains.



Metro Gold Line becomes an iconic member of the community.

"The operational characteristics of the Eastside Extension are not unlike many other light rail operating environments in the United States," according to the panel report.

"It has been designed to be a safe, efficient and effective extension of the Pasadena Gold Line. The at-grade crossings have incorporated design features to promote the safe movement of trains and motor vehicles through these intersections."

The rail safety panel also noted the street running segment of the Metro Gold Line extension, where trains operate in the middle of the street at no more than 35 miles-per-hour within the posted speed limit for vehicular traffic, is typical of many light rail lines in North America that operate without any crossing gates.

Safety experts also praised Metro's safety outreach program as "outstanding and a model for the rail transit industry."



Tunnel vision: Passing Metro Gold Trains exit and enter tunnel at Gless St.

However, the panel suggested additional safety enhancements such as installing fencing in areas where frequent jaywalking is observed, installing raised buttons or rumble strips and reflective pavement markers so motor vehicles don't accidentally intrude on the trainway, reduce warning sign clutter, and work closely with law enforcement to strongly enforce the *"Stop Here"* and *"Keep Clear"* requirements.

Metro is heeding the panel's recommendations. It also has deployed safety ambassadors to help educate the public and is putting in traffic enforcement cameras at 14 intersections. For weeks, Sheriff's and LAPD officers also have been patrolling the light rail alignment.

Additionally, Metro has been conducting a series of tests of multiple safety and communications systems and has now started pre-revenue operations that will familiarize operators with the station stops and procedures.