



NEWS

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MAJOR CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES TO MAKE MTA BETTER AND MORE RESPONSIVE PUBLIC AGENCY

The MTA Board today adopted an ambitious management plan that will make major changes in the way MTA does business. The action plan is designed to make the Authority more efficient and effective.

"This is the beginning of a long road to change for the MTA, to make our agency more responsive to our customers and to the communities we serve," said MTA Chairman Larry Zarian. "We are here to make transportation better in Los Angeles, and this management plan will help us redefine many management practices to help us achieve our mission."

The plan approved by the Board incorporates dozens of suggestions made by the nationally respected auditing company, Coopers & Lybrand, hired by the MTA last year to take a look at all MTA management and policy procedures and practices.

The plan lays out 85 steps to improve the Authority's management structure and practices and should result in lower operating costs. It also is designed to ensure greater effort to improve employee morale.

In response to the Coopers & Lybrand report, the MTA has highlighted four areas of concern for management action: greater fiscal responsibility, increased focus on customers, emphasis on a more timely and thorough response to community and regional needs, and greater support for employees.

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"On behalf of the staff, I want to assure the public that we are committed to implementing these changes in procedures," said Interim MTA CEO Linda Bohlinger. "These management changes will help us focus on our primary mission to provide transportation improvements that will shorten commuting time and improve mobility, and give the public greater value for their tax dollar."

Bohlinger noted that it will take up to five years to implement some of the recommendations, but many others already have been acted upon, and others will go into effect within the next six months. For example, she said that procurement functions will be merged into a single department this month. Up until now, there have been two procurement procedures, one for rail construction, and one for the rest of the agency. "This single change should reduce the time it takes to hire outside services and contractors, and should reduce our operating costs," Bohlinger said.

A greater focus on bus and rail operations also is defined in the plan. Specifically, staff is to develop performance and customer service standards and publish the results, in order to increase awareness of just how the agency is meeting the needs of the riding public.

Staff training also is planned, to upgrade employee skills, including the area of management practices. One such program already is underway at the MTA in cooperation with the UCLA School of Management.

New methods of fare collection, and a new system for maintaining the bus and rail fleet will be mapped out in the coming months in order to lower costs and provide better on-time service for MTA patrons.

"The MTA is changing, and it will be a better and more responsive agency in the years to come," Zarian said. "The public has placed its trust in this agency, and the Board is committed to a management structure and management changes to make sure we meet our goals and objectives."