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CRACKS DISCOVERED IN 17 MTA BUSES; THREE GROUNDED

MTA inspectors have discovered cracks in the rear support assembly of 17 buses built by the Transit Manufacturing Corporation (TMC). Three of the buses have been withdrawn from service, and representatives from TMC have been asked to consult with MTA maintenance officials to determine the cause, and the remedy for the cracks.

"The TMC buses in passenger operation are safe, and regular inspections will ensure that they remain safe," said MTA Executive Officer for Operations Art Leahy. "Our goal is to maintain safe and reliable service."

A routine inspection on August 5 revealed structural cracks on one TMC bus. An inspection of the entire inventory of 448 TMC buses was immediately initiated. So far, 351 buses have been inspected, with a total of 17 showing cracks. The remaining 97 TMC buses will be inspected by August 11.

MTA's Equipment Engineering Department contacted TMC Warranty Department and informed them of the problem on the same day the first crack was discovered. MTA also has placed TMC on notice of concern for manufacturer's liability. TMC was requested to dispatch an engineering team to arrive by August 12, and to provide a plan of repair action by August 19.

The TMC buses average 5 years in age. The transit bus has a 12 year service expectancy. MTA service levels will not be affected, Leahy said.

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