



NEWS

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ANALYSIS SHOWS MTA'S BUS OPERATIONS COMPARES FAVORABLY TO SIMILAR LARGE URBAN BUS OPERATORS

An analysis of bus operating data from a six-year period shows that MTA compares favorably to the country's other five largest transit operators in cost effectiveness.

The finding is based on the most recent electronic data available from the Federal Transit Administration. The information was collected between 1990 and 1995 through the National Transit Database annual reporting process.

In addition to Los Angeles, the cities surveyed included New York (MTA - NYCTA), New Jersey (New Jersey Transit), Philadelphia (SEPTA), Washington, D.C. (WMATA) and Chicago (CTA).

The categories in the survey included Operating Cost Per Passenger Mile, Operating Cost Per Revenue Service Hour and Average Annual Miles Per Peak Bus.

In each of the six years, MTA's Operating Cost Per Passenger Mile was less than that of any of the other major transit providers. It cost MTA \$0.39 to move a passenger one mile. This was 18 percent lower than the next lowest transit operator, New Jersey Transit (\$0.46), and almost 50 percent lower than the highest transit operator, New York MTA (\$0.75).

MTA's Cost Per Revenue Service Hour was comparable to the five other transit operators. In the most recent period (1995) for which data was available, MTA ranked fourth.

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The data also showed that MTA consistently puts more miles on its buses during the year than any of the other large transit properties. The MTA averaged annually over 43,500 Miles Per Peak Bus. Among the other five transit operators, only the CTA averaged over 40,000 annual miles during the same period.

While high mileage correlates strongly with higher maintenance costs, MTA ranked second in maintenance costs to New York MTA whose peak buses averaged only 29,400 miles per year, considerably less than the average annual mileage accumulated by peak Metro Buses.

"MTA is often compared to other local transit operators whose scope of operations is considerably smaller than MTA's," said James P. Reichert, MTA's executive officer for operations. "When compared with transit agencies similar in size, the MTA stacks up very well."

"It is no secret that many of our bus lines continue to suffer from overcrowding and our aging fleet has provided less than reliable service, however, we have made a concerted effort in recent months to address these problems by stepping up our purchase of new buses," added Reichert. "In spite of these issues, the FTA data are remarkable given that the MTA operates the country's largest alternative fuel fleet, has a higher than industry average peak-to-base ratio, puts more miles on its vehicles, has continually increased the level of security on Metro buses, and operates in a state with one of the highest workers' compensation costs in the nation."

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