



# NEWS

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## **It's Getting Better on the Bus**

### **MTA CHARTS PROGRESS IN OVERHAULING METRO BUS SYSTEM**

It's getting better on the bus.

That's the message Los Angeles County Supervisor and MTA Board Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke delivered as she updated reporters today on progress MTA has made in the past year in overhauling the Metro Bus fleet.

A spate of new buses, more service on the road and better supervision are easing overcrowding on MTA's busiest lines and improving passenger comfort. Complaints are down. Performance indicators are up. Metro Bus service is even safer thanks to policing by the LAPD and Sheriff's department.

"Some people may perceive that nothing has changed," Burke said. "The reality is, it's getting a lot better."

Still, Burke said MTA has a ways to go before the Metro Bus system is where it should be but she is encouraged by the agency's progress. She noted that this fiscal year MTA had earmarked nearly \$1 billion for Metro Bus operations and capital improvements. She said the agency will take delivery of nearly 2,400 new buses by 2004. New buses are arriving weekly (437 this fiscal year). Most of these are replacing MTA's older, less reliable buses, however, the agency also is expanding peak hour service.

The combination of new buses, the retrofit of MTA's problem-plagued 324 ethanol-fueled buses, and additional service has boosted MTA's performance and reduced overcrowding. Against a backdrop of new buses, MTA officials cited the following performance indicators, comparing August 1998 to August 1999, as proof it's getting better on the bus:

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- bus on-time pullout from yards — 96.10% in August 1998, 99.10% in August 1999, an increase of 3%.
- miles between mechanical failures (10 minute service disruption) — 3,987 miles in August 1998, 5,130 miles in August 1999, a reduction of 28.7%.
- complaints per 100,000 boardings — 5.86 per 100,000 boardings in August 1998, 4.48 per 100,000 boardings in August 1999, a 24.8% decrease.
- in service on-time performance — 50.82% in August 1998, 59.02% in August 1999, a 8.2% improvement.
- Consent Decree passenger load factor compliance — 95.94% in August 1998, 98.86% in August 1999, a betterment of 2.92%.

In addition, increasing bus boardings made by the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, combined with special programs, has resulted in a system that is "virtually crime-free."

The LAPD, under contract with the MTA, provides security service on the Metro Red Line and Metro buses operating in the City of Los Angeles. The LASD, also under contract with the MTA, patrols the Metro Blue and Green lines and Metro bus service in the unincorporated area of Angeles County.

"When you look at the number of passengers using the system and you look at the number of reported crimes, it's such a small number than you're not able to register it," said Los Angeles County Sheriff's Captain Marc Klugman.

"Any crime on the transit system is one crime too many," said Los Angeles Police Department Captain Vance Proctor. "However, when you look at the reality of the crime picture, transit within Los Angeles is a very safe conveyance to ride."

MTA operators and bus riders told reporters they had seen improvement and looked forward to continued progress.

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