



NEWS

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METRO BUS RIDERS ENJOYING DEFINITE CHILL IN THE AIR

Passengers boarding Metro Buses this summer received a rather chilly reception — not from predominantly pleasant operators — but from refreshing air conditioners, which now seldom break down.

Complaints received by MTA from passengers about a lack of air conditioning have dipped, like on-board temperatures, by 70% compared to the summer of 2000. In July/August 2000, 43 complaints about faulty air conditioning systems were received by MTA in contrast to only 13 this past summer.

Bus operators also are reporting fewer instances of air conditioning snafus. There were 31% fewer problems in July 2001 versus July 2000, and 36% fewer problems in August 2001 versus August 2000.

Reasons for the *freezing* are varied, but MTA officials point to the deployment of 500 new buses since the summer of 2000, better training of mechanics and the weather.

"The feedback that I'm receiving from bus operators and managers at bus divisions is that the condition of the air conditioning systems is the best it's been in recent years," said John Roberts, Deputy Executive Officer Bus Transportation. "It's been a very mild summer, which is always a plus, communications between Transportation and Maintenance is much better and all of the new buses has definitely had a chilling effect."

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The MTA has ordered approximately 2,000 new buses and has already taken delivery of more than 1,300 new compressed natural gas coaches. It has greatly expanded service as well — more than 1 million more annual bus service hours today than five years ago.

Fewer air-conditioning headaches are also allowing mechanics to concentrate on the big picture.

“If we’re not spending a lot of time going out on road calls and repairing defects, it allows mechanics to stay in the shop and do preventive maintenance,” said Milo Victoria, MTA Acting Superintendent of Maintenance Divisions.

“Regular preventive maintenance throughout the year means mechanics can spend less time on breakdown repairs,” continued Victoria. “The malfunction of an air conditioning or heating system that has been properly maintained is very different than a system that has not been maintained.”

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