

Bus of the Future is Latest Addition to MTA Bus Fleet

- **Compo-Bus Made of Carbon Fiber Reinforced Body**

The MTA keeps improving its bus fleet with 20 new vehicles named "Compo-buses," which will debut in revenue service this week in the South Bay. The "Compo-bus" is a 40 foot, 40-seat coach with a corrosion proof and carbon fiber reinforced body.

Weighting 2,100 pounds less than a traditional steel-frame bus, the Compo-bus will be stronger and more resistant to collision damage and also will feature faster acceleration, better engine performance and fuel economy. The lighter body also means the bus will suffer less brake wear and tear. Each Compo-bus costs \$310,000.

The first production model of the Compo-bus built by North American Bus Industries can trace its origins to MTA's Advanced Technology Transit Bus (ATTB), which also featured a molded body of composite materials.

"We can say that this is the bus of the future and MTA is the first in the country to use such a vehicle in revenue service," say Michael A. Bottone, Jr., MTA Director of Vehicle Technology.

The use of materials such as carbon and polyester composites is expected to extend the life of the bus body from the usual 12 years to 16 or 18 years.

Both the vehicle body and the chassis are a single piece structure, which makes the bus resilient to side impacts. It also can absorb more impact in case of an accident. "We'll see a significant reduction on major body repairs," say Michael Chang, MTA Vehicle Technology Engineer. "It will be like repairing any other fiberglass material."

The bus is designed for easier cleaning with fewer projections to catch dirt and debris. Seats have high-contour bottoms and backs for passenger comfort. Wheelchair securement devices are simple and quick to use.

An average person won't notice the difference between a regular steel-frame bus and a Compo-bus.

The MTA is the first transit agency in the country to put the Compo-bus into service and this is causing quite a stir in the transit industry. New York, Chicago, Antelope Valley Transit and other properties are looking at this new bus and how it works.

PHOTOS: LACMTA/GAYLE ANDERSON



Editors: To request a print-size digital photo, e-mail: mediarelations@mta.net or call Jose Ubaldo, (213) 922-3087. _



Starting next summer, MTA will take delivery of the first of the 100 Compo-buses that are 45-feet long and can seat 15 percent more passengers than a standard 40-foot bus. The 20 Compo-buses MTA has now are standard size buses.

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Editor's Note: For a digital image of the new Compo-bus, please call José Ubaldó, (213) 922-3087.

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