

The logo features a stylized 'M' inside a circle, followed by the text 'Metro News Pressroom' in a sans-serif font. 'Metro' is in black, and 'News Pressroom' is in orange.

July 23, 2004

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Gateway Cities Sector Works Better for the Customer and the Employee; Management and Employees Report Exciting Change in Responsiveness

It's all about attention to detail. Gateway Cities Service Sector management and staff conduct frequent line rides, inspections of buses leaving the bus yard, and convene small focus groups in an effort to experience the rides as the customers do and to hear firsthand from operator and mechanic team members.

"The beauty of this approach is that no one holds back on their thoughts and opinions," said Gateway Cities Service Sector General Manager Alex Clifford. "When the customers, operators, mechanics, service attendants, and other employees take their valuable time to express an opinion or concern, the sector is listening and ready to act."

For example, Metro Bus Operator Gregory McCoy had issues with running time and pullout on Line 265 (Paramount-Whittier-Cerritos), as a result of schedule problems. The running time complaint was forwarded to the Gateway Cities scheduling department and they took quick action. After validating the running time and pullout problem, the Gateway Cities scheduling department, working with Operator McCoy, were able to make adjustments in the line to improve pullout and running time. As a result of that improvement, layover on this line was improved to the appropriate standard.

In another instance, a division operator Teresa Thomas communicated a safety issue on Line 362 (LA-Santa Fe Springs-Norwalk-Hawaiian Gardens) that was quickly remedied by sector staff. The operator explained to Sector General Manager Clifford that it was difficult to see the traffic light from the bus stop location because both the light and the stop were located on the near side. Clifford took immediate action and the stop was moved to the far side within a week.

"They need to have more staff riding along on selected Metro Lines so management can look for themselves," said Thomas. "It's great for managers and supervisors to get involved."

In yet another recent example of quick response, Clifford was able to respond to a safety concern on Line 254 (Imperial-Wilmington Station-Gage Ave.-Lorena St.) relayed to the sector office from LA County Supervisor Gloria Molina's office concerning bus movements on a narrow and congested street adjacent to Graham Elementary School in unincorporated LA County. Clifford and his Sector team met with the school principal, did a site visit, and determined that bus movements on this street served to only exacerbate existing non-MTA related problems caused by parents double parking when dropping off and picking up their kids.

The sector scheduling team quickly devised a detour route, and, after getting approval from the Gateway Cities Governance Council at their next monthly meeting, rerouted the bus away from the congested street. Supervisor Molina's office and Graham Elementary School Principal Mary Harris expressed their gratitude to sector staff for making the change to help relieve congestion on the street.

The bus ride-along program has provided Clifford with a better working knowledge of the issues operators and customers face on a daily basis. The ride-along program also provides operators the opportunity to be actively involved in the process of making running time and safety adjustments.

Line 362 bus operator Thomas was grateful for the action taken. "I was relieved that the stop was fixed," said Thomas. "It made me feel like somebody cared and did something rather than saying okay and ignoring it. I'm glad that someone finally listened. It showed that someone cared."

The Metro Gateway Cities Service Sector was established in September 2002 and encompasses two operating divisions in downtown Los Angeles. The sector operates approximately 365 buses plus 43 contracted buses

operating on 23 Metro Bus Lines carrying 62.3 million boarding passengers a year.

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