

REVISED
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 19, 2004

SUBJECT: BUS PROCUREMENT STATUS UPDATE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file status report on MTA's bus procurements.

ISSUE

The Operations Committee requested a monthly status report on MTA bus procurements and assignments. This report was discontinued in June 2002 at the end of the last major bus delivery. However, the MTA Board of Directors did request periodic updates on the status of active bus procurements.

DISCUSSION

MTA's bus replacement program continues to bring innovative, advanced transit vehicles to Los Angeles. Over the last three years, MTA has shifted away from standard vehicle procurements (40-foot, 40-passenger low-floor transit buses) to advanced designs and higher capacity vehicles that are better suited to existing and future MTA needs.

Bus Procurements currently underway:

- **40-foot Compo-Buses** – This order is for twenty, 40-foot composite buses from North American Bus Industries (NABI). Fifteen of twenty buses have been shipped from NABI; thirteen have been accepted by MTA and are currently in operation at Divisions 2, 5, and 7. The final five vehicles are scheduled for delivery by the end of February 2004. These buses are 6% lighter than a comparable steel bus, which should translate into lower operating and maintenance costs over the life of the vehicle. Overall performance to date has been excellent.

- **45-foot Compo-Buses** –This order for one hundred 45-foot composite buses from NABI that will begin production in February in Hungary. Deliveries are scheduled to begin in May 2004, with the final bus being delivered by Spring 2005. This vehicle will feature advanced streamlined styling, and improved passenger areas. The lightweight composite construction offers 15% greater passenger seating while decreasing vehicle weight compared to a low floor 40-foot steel bus. This is also the first large transit vehicle utilizing all wheel disc brakes.
- **Articulated CNG Buses** - Two hundred 60-foot low-floor CNG articulated buses are currently on order from NABI. The “Pilot” vehicle for this order is currently under construction in Hungary. Delivery of the first 30 vehicles is scheduled to be completed by June 2005 and the remaining 170 vehicles by June 2006. This vehicle offers many firsts in the transit industry: It is the first CNG powered 60-foot articulated low floor bus designed for use in the United States; it utilizes the first truly CNG designed engine; and it was designed specifically to enhance rider comfort and appeal, while providing a significantly quieter ride than current industry standards require.
 - ~~Option 1 for two hundred additional 60-foot articulated buses will be presented to the Board for consideration in February 2004.~~
- **Hybrid Articulated Buses** – MTA is interested in obtaining up to five hybrid-electric 60-foot articulated buses. A formal procurement for hybrid vehicles is expected to be initiated during the next quarter. Hybrid transit vehicles are currently the only technology commercially available that have been demonstrated to meet 2007 CARB regulations. Hybrid propulsion systems are expected to be used as a platform for many future vehicle technological developments, including Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs).

Other advanced technology projects:

- MTA recently completed an evaluation of fuel-cell and electric-vehicle technologies. This past July and August, MTA ran a thirty-day demonstration test on a 30-foot fuel cell powered vehicle loaned to MTA from ISE Research. Overall performance, efficiency, and reliability were excellent and were comparable to our best performing CNG vehicles. However, the fuel-cell tested had significantly higher fuel prices and power plant costs when compared to current transit vehicles. Fuel-cell stacks may also have a limited lifespan. At this time, fuel-cell propulsion systems are not expected to be commercially viable for transit industry applications before 2015.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue the present course of procuring advanced design, high capacity vehicles, and evaluate future vehicle needs that reduce emissions, noise, and operating costs while providing increased comfort, safety, and reliability for both passengers and operating personnel.

ATTACHMENT

- A. Bus Procurement Status Update Chart

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