



Metro

Daily Brief

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

20060314-0

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Dozen Transportation Concepts Drivers Walk Off the Job

This morning, about a dozen bus drivers walked off the job at Transportation Concepts, Inc. (TCI), a Metro contractor that provides service on four routes in the northern region of LA County. Although other drivers reported to work, the job action caused a total of 11 missed runs on Lines 96, 167, 218 and 603, all in the San Fernando Valley.

Metro is monitoring the situation and may ask other contractors to serve the affected lines if the strike continues. Metro's contract with Transportation Concepts includes financial penalties for missed service.

Starting tomorrow, we are moving one of the lines to one of our other contractors to operate. This should allow us to cover all runs on all routes unless additional drivers walkout on TCI. This line will be transferred back once TCI has the number of drivers available by either replacement or the current drivers come back to work.

TCI is also developing a letter to be distributed today to the drivers that walked out stating that since they have joined a picket line no disciplinary action will be taken but the company will move forward to replace the positions, if you remain out you may not have a job if you return.

Transportation Concepts has held a five-year contract with Metro since August 2005, but has experienced on-going protests and picketing by Teamsters who drove buses on lines 96 and 167 under the previous contractor but did not hire on with Transportation Concepts.

Senate Panel Reviews President's Pick for FTA Chief

The Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee held a confirmation hearing today for James Simpson, who was nominated earlier this year by President Bush to serve as Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration.

Simpson, who once served as a commissioner of the New York State Metropolitan Transportation Authority, received strong expressions of support from Committee Chairman Richard Shelby (R-AL) and Ranking Member Paul Sarbanes (D-MD). Both senators indicated they would support his confirmation.

During the hearing, the topic of transit security was frequently raised by committee members. Senator Shelby, in particular, expressed the view that many in Congress believe the Administration's efforts on transit security have fallen short and asked Simpson what his role will be in securing transit systems. Simpson emphasized his past experience with New York MTA, where he served on its Safety and Security Committee, and reassured senators that he has a strong understanding of security issues. In addition, Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) brought up the issue of project delivery and urged Simpson to take steps to ensure that federally-funded transit projects are completed on time and within budget.

The Banking Committee is expected to vote on Simpson's nomination during the last week of March, with the full Senate voting sometime thereafter. .

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