



Restructuring the Operations Unit, which I talked about in an earlier issue last month, is a good example of how we're putting the total quality management (TQM) process to work. As you know, we've established an Operations Task Force, which will recommend more effective and efficient ways to run the unit. The determination to keep continually improving is a central theme in TQM.

For many employees, TQM remains a puzzling notion, but this concept is what motivated the Japanese to nearly surpass America's productivity in the last decade. Graduate business schools here have embraced this process, and creative company executives from the private sector have mastered the TQM organizational way of life and have begun to reap impressive benefits. This is what I want to do here.

Emphasis on Data-Gathering

TQM — the art of continuous improvement with customer satisfaction as the goal — places a heavy emphasis on gathering data to measure results. But it operates on a different assumption, that the person performing a given job, rather than a manager or outside expert, is often the most likely to know the most efficient way to implement and improve the process. This assumption elevates the worker to the position of problem-solver. Believe me, employees get greater satisfaction when they are given the authority and responsibility to think and act in new ways.

Look for TQM Video

With the help of the Marketing Department, I recently put together a video that describes TQM and how I want it to work at the MTA. Within the next couple of weeks, the video should be available at every division and in every department.

Bus and Rail Operators of the Year

Speaking of accomplishing, much congratulations are in order for Division 18 Operator Hubert Hayes and Blue Line Operator Joe Swift for being named Bus and Rail Operators of the Year, respectively.

Hubert began his driving career 35 years ago at Division 11. For the last 19 years, he has worked out of Division 18. He has never had an accident. He drives the 127 line, from Compton to California State University, Dominguez Hills in Carson. He has received the division manager's commendation award every year since 1971. In 1991, he received a 32-year safety award.

Joe Swift began his career with the agency in 1968 as a bus operator assigned to Division 2. In 1987, while at Division 9, he received the outstanding operator award. He has participated in 12 bus roadeos, winning first place in 1987. He has accumulated only one instance of being sick. Please join me in honoring these outstanding operators.

Budget Workshops Scheduled

Staff will hold a budget workshop for Board members on June 10 in the Board room of the 425 Building. A public hearing on our proposed budget is scheduled for Saturday, June 18, at the Hall of Administration. For copies of the budget, contact the budget office at 4-7445.

Remember, every non-represented employee, with the exception of Transit Police, has to sign up at the end of June and beginning of July for the new carriers.

Combating Violence in the Workplace

The MTA is poised to fight violence in the workplace, which is on the increase around the country. Our program is being coordinated by Human Resources' Luanna Urie, who recently put together four training sessions on the topic for managers in both the 818 and 425 buildings. She has put together a permanent committee, called the Threat Management Team (TMT), which will advise departments on ways to handle potentially volatile situations and also recommend referrals.

The team includes members from the legal, transit police, transportation, employee relations, dispatch, board secretary, facilities maintenance, and risk management departments. The team will work closely with the Transit Police's Threat Investigative Team, which is already in place. With assistance from her new committee, Luanna has co-authored a "Violence in the Workplace" policy, which is going through the approval process now.

The team hopes to have a 24-hour hotline soon. They will be offering program training to managers and employees once our policy is in place.

Blood Drive Ahead

Luanna is also coordinating the MTA's next Blood Drive, which will be held July 18 from 9 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. in the Union Station Room on the second floor of the 818 Building. I understand that the 818 Building employees donated an amazing 90 pints the last time around.

Open Enrollment Dates are June 20 - July 8

This month, the benefits section of the human resources department, will be holding meetings with employees on the health and welfare benefit package approved two weeks ago by the Board. Remember, every non-represented employee, with the exception of Transit Police (their open enrollment will be later) has to sign up at the end of June and beginning of July for the new carriers. Employees' insurance with former carriers expire on August 1, which is when the new insurance takes over.

- On June 20, four meetings will be held in the 818 and 425 buildings to brief employees on the particulars. In the 425 Building, the meetings are at 9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the Board room on the second floor.
- In the 818 Building, the meetings are at 9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the Union Station room on the second floor.
- There also will be four meetings at the same locations and times on June 23. And, on the 28th, meetings will be held at 9 a.m. at the two locations.

- Three other meetings will be held at outlying divisions:
 - June 21: at Division 9 in El Monte at 9 a.m.;
 - June 22: at Division 8 in Chatsworth at 9 a.m.;
 - June 22: at Division 18 in Carson at 9 a.m.

Employees will re-register in virtually everything: new medical and dental plans, life insurance, long-term accidental death and dismemberment, and dependents' benefits.

On or about June 16, every eligible employee will receive at their work location a packet containing available benefit options. Employees can make their choices by enrolling, beginning June 20 and closing July 8. Expect to receive a confirmation by Aug. 8. For further information, contact Ed Paull, benefits manager, at 2-7180.

Vendor Fair is Biggest in U.S.

The MTA will conduct its biggest outreach event of the year — the second annual Vendor fair — on June 14 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The fair, under the coordination of MTA's Imani Brown, will afford some 2,000 attendees from more than 200 businesses throughout the state an opportunity to learn more about business contracting possibilities available at the MTA. Also, representatives from the state, the cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena, Long Beach, as well as the counties of Los Angeles, Ventura, and Orange, will present their opportunities.

Continental Cablevision is featuring a televised segment of the fair on June 7 at 7:30 p.m. Carey Peck, supervisor of the vendor relations department, will be interviewed. He says he still needs MTA volunteers to help with the clean air rally the day before, and to escort dignitaries. If you're interested, give Carey or Imani a call at 4-6767.

Much thanks to the Vendor Relations Department, in particular Dave Herschenson and Veronique LeDuc, for putting on the largest outreach program of its kind in the country!

- Franklin White

I welcome your comments and questions in response to CEO Report, which is designed to provide employees with direct communication with my office. Please contact either of my Special Assistants, Michael Gonzalez at 244-7476, or Phyllis Tucker at 244-6191. Also, employees can fax comments to 244-6014.

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