

THE OFFICE

A weekly report
from the office
of the CEO

April 10, 1995



Virtually all of the upcoming position reductions will be in the Operations Unit. I will meet with all Operations managers about layoffs this Thursday, April 13 at 1 p.m. in the Board Room on the second floor of the 425 Building and with all managers in the 818 Building at 2:30 p.m.

Meantime, Art Leahy will be announcing within the next couple of days the new service operations managers. They will replace the current transportation and maintenance managers at the divisions. Instead of two managers at each division, there will be one who will oversee both functions.

They, in turn, will report to four regional general managers, whose selections Art announced last week. I understand that Jon Hillmer will oversee Divisions 3, 8 and 15; Tony Chavira will be in charge of 1, 9 and 12; Ralph Wilson will head 2, 5 and 18; and Ellen Levine will lead 6, 7 and 10.

Survey Results

Concerned about employee morale, I asked Strategic Planning to undertake a series of employee interviews designed to assess employee perceptions about the agency, including how employees feel about working for MTA, what they like and dislike about working for MTA and what they would like to change if they could.

During February, The Burke Group, under contract to the MTA, conducted interviews with approximately 350 non-contract employees. In early March, senior management was provided with detailed feedback on the results of the interviews. I can assure you that the consultants were very candid with me in sharing your thoughts and feelings. It is clear we have done some things well and some things not so well.

Strengths Identified

The study revealed a number of organizational strengths which will be helpful to us as we move forward together. The strengths identified by employees include:

- A high degree of professionalism.
- A strong social service drive to provide quality transportation.
- People that are committed and believe in what they are doing.

- A large number of loyal long-service employees.
- A real desire to make MTA better.
- A willingness of Operations people to make sacrifices to save jobs.
- A new building to bring employees into geographical proximity.
- Pride in work:
 - A commitment to put clean, well-maintained equipment on the street, on time, to serve the public each and every day through emergencies: earthquakes, riots, floods, etc.
 - Exciting projects.
 - Commitment to have a long-term impact on transportation in Los Angeles and leave something behind.

Employees Identify Concerns

Here are the following concerns expressed by employees:

- Employees still feel a strong loyalty to their former agencies and some do not yet identify with the MTA.
- The events of the past several years — budget cuts, layoffs and attempts to consolidate the two organizations — have led to decreased trust and confidence in management and the future.
- Communications down (from management to employees) and up (from employees to management) need to be improved and be more frequent.
- Senior management needs to be out in the organization and be more visible.
- Managers need to become more involved in the budgeting process on the front end of the process and need more authority to manage.
- The Social Security problem has become a lose-lose situation. No matter how the issue is finally resolved

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there will be some employees who perceive themselves to be losers.

- Too much time elapsed before the new classification/compensation system (Mercer Study) was implemented.
- Compensation for employees with other than full time regular appointments needs to be reviewed.
- The reception of the new Time Off With Pay (TOWP) program has been mixed. Employees with identical accruals of vacation and sick leave have diametrically opposed feelings about the program.
- The voluntary separation package resulted in too many of the wrong people leaving at the wrong time.
- Senior managers do not understand or appreciate one another's areas of work or responsibilities.

Our Pledge

I empathize with many of the concerns employees are expressing. As I've said many times before, I think it will take at least three years before an MTA identity is fully realized. In the meantime, I intend to take the following actions:

- Develop strategic MTA goals and objectives that employees can identify with and feel committed to.
- Audit our internal communication plan to determine if we have the right vehicles in place to reach the right audiences. Senior managers will be expected to be out of their offices and more visible in the field. I will commit to spending more time meeting with employees all around the organization.
- Assure that responsible managers are involved in establishing their budgets and receive accurate and timely information on expenditures.
- Review our hiring process and the pay status of employees in "as-needed," "interim" and "acting" status.
- Press to bring the Social Security issue to resolution.
- We will be sensitive to employee concerns as the organizational consolidation process continues and will attempt to communicate more effectively. We will try to capture the strengths of each former agency to help all of us build an efficient MTA to better serve our public.

- Assure that personnel reductions are managed with utmost professionalism and integrity.
- Schedule more frequent off-site working sessions with senior management to resolve areas of conflict, conduct joint planning and budgeting sessions and ensure greater understanding of our success in meeting our agency's responsibilities.

New Deputy CEO

I'm pleased to announce the selection of Joseph Drew as the deputy chief executive officer. Joe was most recently the county administrative officer for Kern County, and has served in that capacity since 1991. He retired from the military in 1981 as a lieutenant colonel. Joe holds a master's degree in public administration from California State University, Bakersfield. He'll begin his new position about May 15.

You are Invited . . .

The Vandalism Abatement Program is looking for MTA employees who would like to take part in Earth Day beautification projects on Saturday, April 29. These events are included in the pre-opening celebration of the Green Line. Activities such as graffiti-removal, rubbish removal and tree planting will take place at three locations near Green Line stations at Crenshaw, Vermont and Norwalk.

If you and your family would like to be part of the fun and hard work at one of the locations, please call Bill Gay at ext. 2-5835 for more details.

Gateway Child Care

Denise Mora of the Art Program is putting together an informal employee lunch to discuss child care in the Gateway Building. The date is Thursday, April 20 at noon in the Los Angeles Room on the 10th floor of the 818 Building. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

Floor Plans Out

Speaking of the Gateway Building, your department's move coordinator — there is one person from each department who has been appointed as such — should have a copy of the floor plan for the new building. Check with the move coordinator to see where your department is located.

- 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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