

# CEO REPORT

**Joseph E. Drew**  
**MTA Chief Executive Officer**

**September 16, 1996**

Congratulations to our first group of MTA Employees of the Month! The seven were selected through a new process that emphasizes the quality of the nominee's work, teamwork, dependability, initiative and the ability to motivate him/herself and others.

**T**his new program permits any employee to nominate a co-worker, or even to make a self-nomination. I like the idea that any of us can help give recognition to someone we know contributes to the MTA's mission, but whose hard work and dedication might be overlooked.

The Employees of the Month for August are outstanding examples of people who have been recognized by their supervisors and co-workers as always striving to do the best job possible for the MTA. Again, congratulations to each of the following:

**Joe Parise, supervisor, Printing Reproduction Services.** The Administration Division's representative goes beyond his responsibility to ensure that all printing jobs are thoroughly checked, striving for customer satisfaction. He is thorough, professional, timely and efficient.

**Fran Curbello, senior communications officer, Communications Division.** Fran was selected for her work in developing the Metro Red Line Wilshire Extension opening celebration. She is highly respected in the transportation industry for her event-planning ability.

**Jack McDowell, manager, Engineering Rail Activation.** The Construction Division's representative managed rail activation and

start-up activities for the Wilshire Extension opening. Jack is known for his positive attitude, dedication and ability to work with many different groups within the MTA.

**Debbey Vernaci, Transit Police crime analyst, Executive Office.** A penchant for perfection earned Debbey a reputation for error-free crime reports. She

also developed a pocket-sized directory that gives officers a wide variety of information about penal codes, courts and other topics they use on the job.

**Bill Delloso, property maintainer leader, Revenue Equipment Maintenance.** The Finance Department's representative supports

Metro Rail ticket machine contractors. A team player who is committed to excellence, his work has helped reduce cash box mechanical failures, thefts and tampering.

**Bruce Buck, equipment maintenance supervisor, Division 18.** The Transit Operations Division's representative developed a system to reduce overtime expenditures — on his own time. The system not only helps reduce costs, it identifies where productivity improvements may be needed.

**Shahrazad Amiri, Westside Area Team, Multi-modal Planning.** A member of Regional Transportation Planning and Development, Shahrazad is noted for her professionalism and integrity, expertise and high personal standards. She is customer-focused and is an inspiration to co-workers.

## **CNG Bus Safety**

I want to acknowledge the quick and effective action taken by Transit Operations personnel last month following the rupture of a compressed natural gas cylinder during refueling of a CNG bus at Division 15 in Sun Valley. No one was hurt. The first CNG buses returned to service, Monday, with the rest expected back on the streets by the end of October.

Since the incident, we have asked a panel of experts from the U.S. and Canada, including representatives of the bus manufacturer, Neoplan, and the tank manufacturer, EDO, to help reconstruct the accident and identify actions to avoid future ruptures in the carbon fiber tanks. A test procedure, including continual visual checks, is now in effect to spot defective cylinders and to prevent future accidents.

Neoplan will install shields on CNG buses to cover the cylinders and prevent the tanks from being damaged by road debris. All findings from this investigation will be documented and I expect further CNG safety recommendations.

The MTA leads the nation in CNG safety. We have almost 200 CNG buses in service of a total 294 to be delivered to us by Neoplan this fiscal year. We've ordered 250 more CNG buses for delivery in FY 97-98. We need to be assured of a wide margin of safety, and I'm told that the Division 15 accident was the first in a billion miles of operation by CNG vehicles of all types since use of carbon fiber cylinders began in 1993.

## **Hay Group Salary Survey**

You may recall that we have been conducting a survey of non-represented employee salaries and an evaluation of job classifications. Well, all existing non-represented classifications have been evaluated and a new job classification structure is scheduled to be implemented before the end of the year.

Job evaluation committees are still meeting once a month to evaluate new classifications. I have reviewed the results of a custom salary survey conducted by the Hay Group. The data gleaned from

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the survey, as well as data from industry-specific surveys, is helping us identify new MTA pay grades and compare our pay with the marketplace.

All non-represented employees will receive a detailed package of information in October about the new job classifications and pay structure. Deputy executive officers and/or department heads will hold meetings with each department to discuss the study and what it means to you.

## Help for the Board

I have created a new unit, the Board Research Services Department, to provide professional support and analysis to the MTA Board of Directors. Headed by Gary Clark, former assistant director of government relations, the department will work closely with Board members and their staffs, providing objective analysis of reports and conducting briefings on issues.

The department will be staffed by five professionals in addition to Gary: Ray Harris, Mary Lou Eckternach, Frank Medina, Art Henry and DA Haydel, as well as a secretary. The department will report to Chief of Staff Frank Cardenas. Each professional will be assigned to a Board committee. The department also will furnish minimal support to Board members who do not have personal staff.

The positions are funded from existing resources within the FY 96-97 budget. The department will be located in the third floor Gateway offices of the Board Secretary.

I believe the professionals assigned to the Board Research Services Department will play an important role in helping our Board stay abreast of the many difficult issues it faces from month to month. It also should be key to an improvement in relations between the Board and the MTA staff.

## State Auditor's Report

A recent State Auditor's report, which focused on the MTA's Long Range Transportation Plan and our FY 95-96 budget, declared that the agency would experience a \$1.3 billion revenue shortfall over the life of the 20-year plan. I disagree with the Auditor's conclusions.

Rather than recognize the Long Range Plan update process, the Auditor's report looked at our 1995 work program and compared it incorrectly to a 1996 fiscal update. The Long Range Plan was approved by the Board some 18 months ago. We updated the financial information about six months ago. We expect to revise the plan in 1997 and every two years thereafter to reflect the latest economic information and policy direction.

The MTA's FY 95-96 budget is balanced. The Auditor, however, predicted a \$1.3 billion shortfall based on a projected \$14 million deficit in FY 95-96. This deficit was resolved by Board actions taken before the end of the fiscal year.

I believe the Auditor's assumptions were based on misinterpretations and a lack of understanding of our budget process. The Auditor also never asked for information necessary to properly assess the MTA's fiscal and program management process. We have offered updated data and expect in October to provide additional information to the Auditor to verify our position that the MTA is solvent.

## CEO HotLine Activity

Many good questions continue to come in to the CEO HotLine and I'm very pleased with the actions of our staff in helping me respond to your concerns. Here are a few of the latest:

*There are several places someone could hide near the steps leading to Gateway Plaza from the corner of Cesar Chaves and Vignes. What can be done about this possible hazard to employees?*

The security system to be installed at the entrance to the new Child Care Center includes security cameras for the northeast perimeter of the Gateway Building and the stairway. The building's perimeter also is patrolled by security officers and we have requested special attention for the stairway entrance. Thanks for your inquiry.

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**Have an issue or concern?  
Call the CEO HotLine at 922-6282.  
Give your name and location if you  
want a personal reply.**

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*On October 9, 1995, someone broke into my toolbox and stole all my tools. I've followed all proper procedures to get new tools, but as of July 30, 1996, I still haven't received any. As a mechanic, I depend on my tools to do a good*

*job for the MTA. Please help!*

As of August 8, I understand you've received new tools. I'm sorry it took so long to replace them.

*A certain bus here at our Division doesn't have enough power to take a hill. That's dangerous. Can someone do something about this bus?*

The bus was taken out of service immediately and the RRC was asked to diagnose the mechanical problem. Transit Operations also is working with Detroit Diesel to improve the power output of the engines on this series of buses. Thanks for alerting us.

## New Executive Faces

Let's welcome Steven F. Mauck as the MTA's new Director of Risk Management, Construction. Steve comes to us from the Law Offices of J. Christopher Woodward, where he was legal director with responsibilities for construction mediation and claims administration. Previously, he was director, Hertz Claim Management Corp., and vice president of HCM Investigations, Inc., with responsibility for risk and claim management.

A graduate of Oregon State University with a BS in political science and business administration, Steve earned a law degree at Pepperdine University School of Law. In his new position, he will report to David Kelsey, County Counsel.

Welcome, also, to Rufina Juarez, who has been named special assistant to the CEO. Rufina brings to the MTA an array of experience from the non-profit sector and community partnerships. She is a graduate of City University, New York, Baruch College, where she earned an MA in public administration. She holds a BA in political science from the University of California, San Diego. Rufina was one of 24 graduate students selected to participate in the National Urban/Rural Fellows Programs.



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Editor:	Bill Heard
Designer:	Don Knowlton
Executive Officer, Communications:	Rae James
Asst. Director, Internal Communications:	Phyllis Tucker
Manager, Printing Services:	Al Moore

