

CEO Report

Linda Bohlinger, Chief Executive Officer
July 15, 1997

I want to express appreciation and admiration for the detailed and persistent work of the MTA's team of labor negotiators. Contract talks with the UTU went down to - and beyond - the wire, but they were able to achieve a fair and equitable settlement with the Operators union. At this writing we're still negotiating with the ATU and the TCU and expect to have these contracts finished this week.

We also should thank James Williams, General Chairman of the UTU, and his leadership team for remaining at the bargaining table until a fair agreement was hammered out. They're committed union leaders who help make collective bargaining work. Their willingness to continue working with our negotiators helped avoid a strike that would have severely affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of our customers.

The agreement with the UTU - approved by the membership last Sunday and ratified by the Board on Monday - achieves our goals of no layoffs, no reduction in health and welfare benefits and no decreases in wage rates for current employees. We'll use the opportunity presented by the new contract to increase and improve customer service.

Congratulations to Raman Raj, who headed the MTA negotiating team, and to team members Sharyn Abernatha, David Barker, James Falicki, Dan Ibarra, Tom Jasmin, A.J. Taylor and Linda White. Thanks also to Jim de la Loza and his Planning staff, Rae James and the MTA's Labor Communications Team. The team worked

very hard to keep customers, stakeholders, the media and our employees informed on the progress of negotiations.

Finally, I want to commend Ellen Levine, Jim de la Loza and the Contingency Planning Team, who brought together people from throughout the agency to prepare a plan we, thankfully, have not needed to implement.

New Hand at the Helm

Mayor Richard Riordan assumes the chairmanship of the MTA Board at the July 31 meeting. The new chairman's themes are improving bus service, getting the MTA's fiscal house in order and operating the agency more like a business.

Beginning in August, Board meetings generally will be conducted at 9:30 a.m. on the fourth Thursday of a month, instead of the fourth Wednesday at 1 p.m. Committee meetings usually will be held on the second, instead of the third Wednesday and Thursday of the month. This month, committee meetings will be conducted July 23 and 24, with the Board meeting scheduled Thursday, July 31.

The new Board chairman has pared the number of standing committees to five and has named new chairs. They are: Finance and Budget, Chair Larry Zarian and Vice-Chair Carol Schatz; Construction, Chair Don Knabe and Vice-Chair Jenny Oropeza; Executive Management, Chair Richard Riordan and Vice-Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke; Operations, Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke and Vice-Chair James Cragin; and Planning and Programming, Chair Mel Wilson and Vice-Chair John Fasana.

Cheers for Larry Zarian

After two years in office, Board Chairman Larry Zarian has turned over his gavel to Mayor Riordan. A hallmark of Chairman Zarian's leadership was his fairness and courtesy to members of our staff and to the public who attended Board meetings. Here are just some of the MTA's accomplishments during his term of office:

- Introduced the first of a fleet of 300 compressed natural gas buses
- Opened the Metro Green Line
- Opened the Gateway Transit Center and MTA Headquarters
- Began construction of Metro Rail tunnels linking Hollywood and North Hollywood
- Opened the Metro Red Line Wilshire Boulevard extension
- Settled a class action lawsuit that provides more bus service and other customer benefits
- Unveiled the Clark Advanced Technology Transit Bus (ATTB)
- Adopted a new MTA Code of Conduct

Employees of the Month

Congratulations to our Employees of the Month for June! This month we're honoring nine employees, including a team, for their outstanding work. They are:

Alison Andreas, Operations. As a transportation planner, Alison is responsible for the Freeway Service Patrol program. She interacts with the California Highway Patrol, CalTrans

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 and no decreases in
 wage rates for current
 employees.*

and some 15 contractors to maintain quality and improve customer service by FSP tow truck drivers.

Joan Caterino, Communications. Joan has brought life into many projects, including *MTA Review*, Board reports and MTA signage. Her enthusiasm makes her a valuable member of the Marketing Department team. Her can-do attitude ensures the proper completion of any project.

Marion Colston and Cynthia Shavers, Administration. As members of the Organizational Development and Training Department, Marion and Cindy conduct team-building workshops for the MTA. Their work has resulted in increased understanding, higher productivity and a new outlook for many employees.

Bruno Guillemet, Metro Construction. As a Senior Cost/Schedule Analyst in the Program Management Department, Bruno has assumed increased responsibilities as his department's needs have grown. A superb performer, he is a professional and an asset to the MTA.

Linda Lulkowski, Executive Office. A member of the Management Audit Services Department, Linda is highly valued for her teamwork and dedication. She pitches in whenever the need exists and supports her department in achieving MTA goals.

Annette Mendoza, Finance. Bringing order and harmony into her department is one of Annette's most valuable talents. Throughout the changes within the department, she has displayed initiative, a positive attitude and composure.

Oscar Rodriguez, Procurement. An Inventory Management employee, Oscar is a role model because of his enthusiasm and professional demeanor. He has been the driving force behind the effort to update the materiel management of the MTA's safety-sensitive items.

David Sikes, RTP&D. As a capital planner, David was nominated specifically for his work on the Capital Planning FY 1997-98 budget and the Quarterly Report. He was instrumental in finding ways to save dollars so that RTP&D could meet its budgetary target.

New Construction Chief

Congratulations to Charles Stark, who has been named Executive Officer of Metro Construction. He had held the post in an interim capacity since January.

Charles has more than 26 years' experience in transportation engineering. Since joining the MTA in 1991, he has served as Deputy Executive Officer and Project Manager of Metro Red Line Segments 1 and 3. Earlier, he was Senior Vice President of an East Coast engineering firm and also was Assistant Director of rail car engineering for the New York MTA.

A Drug-Free MTA

As a federally regulated transportation agency, MTA has always had a zero-tolerance drug and alcohol abuse policy. FTA regulations mandate urine drug testing and breath-alcohol testing for employees in safety-sensitive jobs.

In June, the Board approved a number of changes in the MTA's alcohol and drug abuse policy. Effective July 1, the changes address post-accident testing, specimen collection procedures and other administrative changes clarifying employee and management responsibilities.

Copies of the policy on alcohol and drug abuse, which applies even to employees not in safety-sensitive jobs, will be distributed this month. Supervisor training and employee information sessions will be conducted in August and September.

Everyone works best in an environment free from the adverse affects of drug and alcohol abuse. In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act, MTA policy prohibits employees from reporting to work with alcohol or drugs in their system.

Safety Legislation

There's good news out of Sacramento for bus and train operators and for passengers. A bill that increases the penalties for assault on a transit operator or passenger has been approved by the State Senate's Public Safety Committee.

AB-946, authored by Assemblyman Carl Washington of Compton, has passed the Assembly and is expected to pass the Senate soon. If signed by the governor, the measure provides for fines up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for up to 18 months for persons convicted of assaulting an

operator or passenger. The MTA sponsored this bill.

Meanwhile, a bill authored by State Sen. Richard Polanco to change the makeup of the MTA Board gained Assembly Transportation Committee approval and now is going to Assembly Appropriations and Assembly Rules committees and then the Assembly floor. If approved, this bill would be on the governor's desk by September.

Senate Bill 567 calls for a nine-member voting board, with one non-elected member appointed by the Board of Supervisors, four non-elected members appointed by the mayor of Los Angeles and confirmed by the City Council, four elected members representing corridor cities and one non-voting member appointed by the governor. The MTA and the Board of Supervisors opposed this bill.

Big Bucks for Ideas

The MTA is looking for great ideas...and we're willing to pay big bucks for them. That's the thought behind the new Employee Suggestion Program (ESP) approved recently by the executive staff.

If you have an idea that will save money or generate revenue, increase safety, improve service, raise employee morale or improve working conditions, or improve the MTA's image, ESP wants to know. Cash awards start at \$100 and escalate to \$1,000. The CEO also can grant special awards of more than \$1,000 for suggestions that result in significant cost savings or increase MTA revenue.

Any MTA employee (except ESP committee members) may submit a suggestion. Suggestion forms will be distributed to the kitchens of all operating divisions and will be placed at the mail distribution areas on each floor of the Headquarters Building. This is an exciting program that should benefit employees and the MTA. I look forward to seeing your suggestions.



Linda Bohlinger

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Editor:	Bill Heard
Designer:	Theresa Renn
Executive Officer, Communications:	Rae James
Director, Public Relations:	Marc Littman
Asst. Director, Internal Communications:	Phyllis Tucker
Manager, Printing Services:	Al Moore



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