

# R U N N I N G T I M E S



A NEWSLETTER OF METRO BUS AND METRO RAIL OPERATIONS

**C**hanges are coming to Metro Bus Operations. An entire reorganization of the unit is taking place. Most important is the creation of the Single Manager concept within the bus divisions. (A short description of this concept is included in this newsletter.) The intent of this concept is to have managers, and thus the divisions, more accountable toward the success of our operations.

“This will entail everyone working even more as a member of a team,” said Franklin White. “Knowing the caliber and quality of the individuals working in our divisions, I am certain that this is achievable.”

Four Acting Regional General Managers have been selected by Art Leahy for an interim 90-day period. They are: Anthony Chavira, Jon Hillmer, Ellen Levine, and Ralph Wilson.

The goals of the new Operations structure will be to improve service quality while reducing cost and attracting increased ridership and revenue. Our top priority for the coming year will be to improve the interior cleanliness of the Metro Bus fleet while controlling cost. Another major focus will be to develop budgeting and performance data at each operating division.

“The purpose of the reorganization,” said Art Leahy, “is to streamline decision-making by establishing four regions which can respond more promptly to customer and constituent concerns, and to insure that Metro Bus operating divisions achieve overall corporate objectives and priorities.”

“Bus operations will be a major focus of attention during the year” said Mr. White. “We need to ensure that the divisions operate efficiently and effectively, and that they get the appropriate support from headquarters.”

Another element of the reorganization will be to redefine the

remainder of the Operations unit not directly affected by the Single Manager program. Functions which are system-wide, such as Regional Rebuild Center, Transportation Instruction, Bus Dispatch, will continue to be separate, and will continue to report to Ralph de la Cruz, Deputy Executive Officer of Service Delivery Support.

The agency continues to tackle all the significant and difficult issues pertaining to the merger. The benefits package has been approved and implemented. The classification study has been approved and implemented. The decision on whether the agency will continue to be covered by the federal Social Security program or be included within another type of retirement system will likely soon be made.

Metro Operations has significantly improved the quality and cost-effectiveness of its services over the past two years. This push for “continuous improvement” is essential if Metro Rail is to compete effectively for customer support and resources. □

## A message from Arthur T. Leahy

In recent months I have received many complaints about our need to improve communications. I am grateful to those who have been willing to raise their concerns in a professional and constructive manner.

We'll be making efforts to improve the quality and timeliness of information distribution. Very frankly, I think this is an area where Metro Operations needs to improve.

Nevertheless, I think it's fair to ask that everyone try to understand that the complexity of issues surrounding the merger, the budgetary cutbacks, and the reorganization of Operations has resulted in an understandable demand for up-to-date information. We're doing our best. We'll do better! □



# Streamlining Operations

The rumor mill has been running over the institution of the single manager concept at our bus divisions. After a successful test at Division 15, in which John Roberts was the single manager, the agency has determined that it can be implemented system-wide. The schedule is to have the program in place and functioning prior to July. Conversion to the single manager model is only a part of a major reorganization of the Operations unit.

The reorganization program was borne as a recommendation from the Operations Task Force, a study commissioned by the MTA to determine ways in which the agency could be streamlined and made more effective and efficient. After months of work and development, it is ready for implementation.

The new organizational structure makes a number of fundamental changes to create an environment where MTA can provide more productive and responsive service to our customers and constituents. This is essential if we are to survive and thrive into the next century. The following are the major features of this reorganization:

Transportation and Equipment Maintenance functions will be merged at the division level and under the control of one Service Operations Manager. The Managers have been selected. They are:

Division 1	B.J. Harris
Division 2	Renee Frawley
Division 3	Mike Lensch
Division 5	Mace Bethel
Division 6	<i>to be determined</i>
Division 7	Harold Hollis
Division 8	<i>in process (Dorothy Fluker, acting)</i>
Division 9	Evelyn Frizielle
Division 10	Rick Hittinger
Division 12	<i>to be determined</i>
Division 15	John Roberts
Division 18	<i>in process (A.J. Taylor, acting)</i>

Authority and accountability for budget and performance will be pushed down to the division level; the Service Operations Manager and the rest of the division team will thus be responsible for meeting budget and operational goals and objectives, and will be empowered to organize the division and make decisions that will achieve their targets.

The single manager program will streamline operational decision making by eliminating two levels of middle management.

There are four operating regions, each comprised of three bus divisions. Each of these regions will be headed by a General Manager. They are: Tony Chavira (Eastern— Divisions 1, 9, 12), Jon Hillmer (Northern— Divisions 3, 8, 15), Ellen Levine (Western— Divisions 6, 7, 10), and Ralph Wilson (Southern— Divisions 2, 5, 18), each reporting to Operations Executive Officer Leahy.

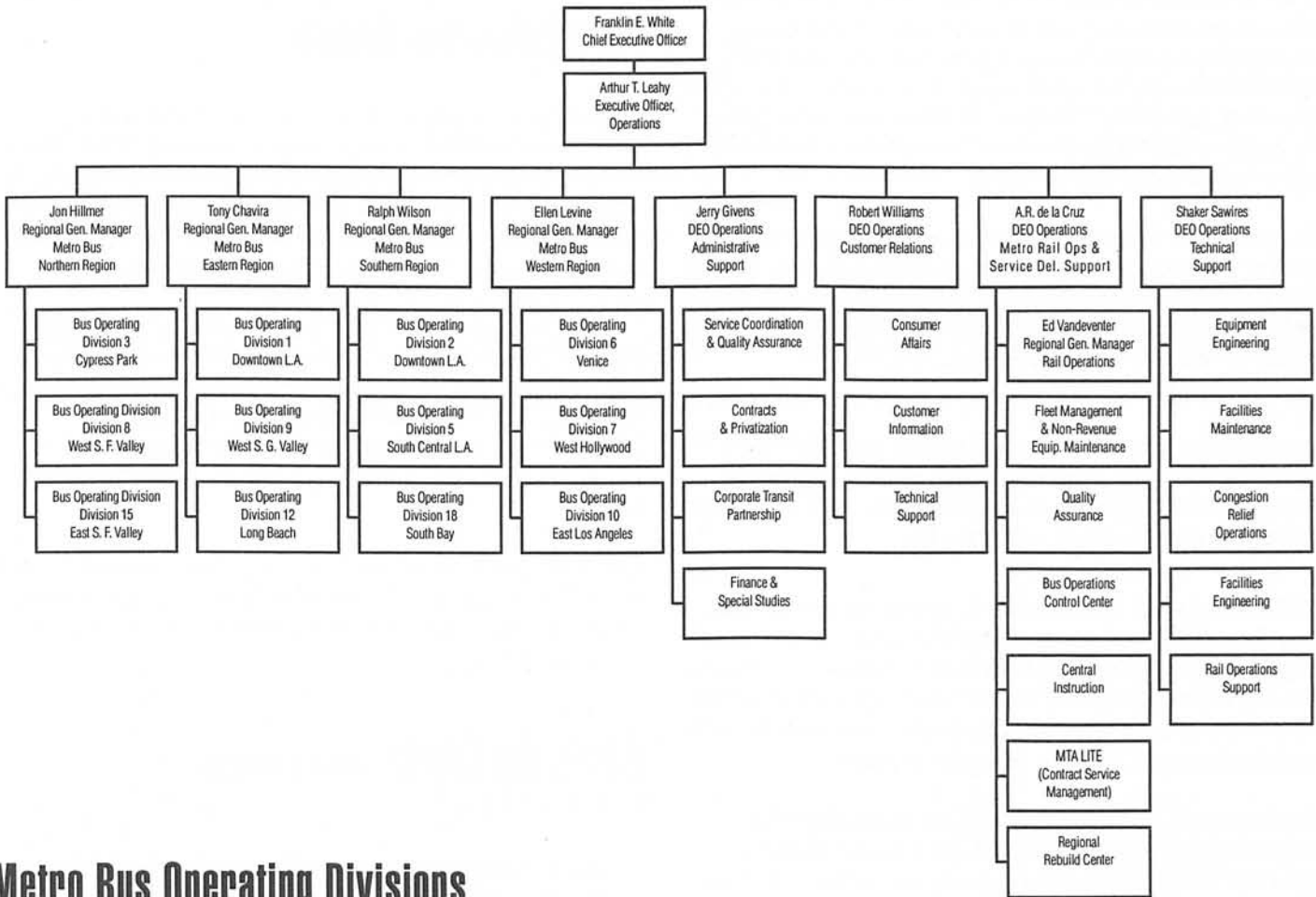
The Regional General Manager will work closely with the Operating divisions, the heads of the various staff support departments, and with customers and constituents to insure that we provide the best possible service at the lowest possible cost.

## Changing Organizational Culture

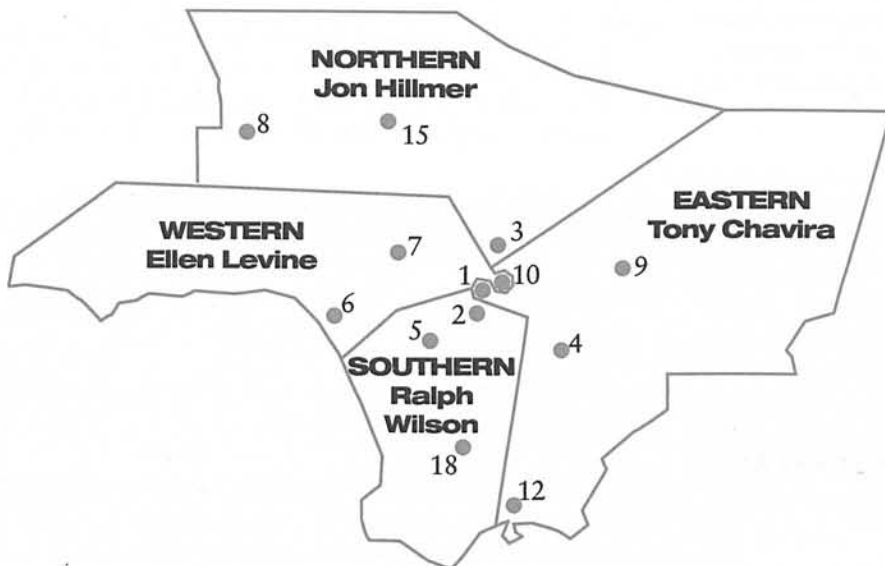
One challenge for all MTA employees will be letting go of the familiar. For example (hold onto your hat), there will no longer be Transportation or Equipment Maintenance departments. These two departments have been at the core of our organizational life for as long as anyone can remember.

We must now start to look at what we do in a different way. Instead of organizing, and defining our jobs along these functional categories, the regional structure is built around customer and community satisfaction. The prime measure of success of this program will thus be how well we can operate to serve the ultimate users. This new philosophy will entail changes in the way we see our role and those of our fellow employees. □

# Metro Operations Organization Structure



## Metro Bus Operating Divisions



## Bus Operator Fare Problems Survey

In November 1994, bus operators were asked to complete a survey. Questions included where, when and what type of fare collection problems they were experiencing (for example, nonpayment or underpayment of fares.) The response from operators was extremely good for this type of survey, with about 30 percent responding. Thanks to all of you who participated. The results of this survey have been forwarded to Operations staff as well as to the Transit Police.

The preliminary findings indicate that revenue loss from fare abuse or nonpayment is extremely low and is consistent with all other estimates developed by MTA analysts. It was found that we are losing in the range of 1/2 to 1 percent of the passenger revenue we receive. This equates to an annual loss of approximately \$2.2 million.

It was also determined that a comparatively small number of boardings (1% of total boardings) attempt some form of fare evasion. This again points out that only a very small percentage of riders are trying to evade paying the fare.

The locations of the fare problems have been plotted on maps. They do not indicate a concentration of problems within specific geographic areas. This, along with the low frequency of evasion, adds to a difficulty in having Transit Police deploy its officers to help mitigate this problem. The data will be used to identify any trends and potential areas for future deployments.

In reviewing the results of the survey, Art Leahy, Executive Officer—Operations, noted that “all our data, including this important survey from the bus operator, confirms that revenue losses from fare evasion on the bus system are relatively minor. Still, we need to avoid any revenue loss that we can. Therefore, it is important that all bus operators continue to quote the correct fare one time to our customers in instances of nonpayment or underpayment. I want to express my appreciation for the more than 1200 bus operators who completed the questionnaire. Your input was very much needed!”

Transit Police has also given increased emphasis to fare problems experienced by bus operators. In recent months undercover teams of Transit Police officers have ridden our buses in order to cite customers who are found evading the fare. Of particular interest to our bus drivers are the results. Firstly, the customers found to be evading the fare was very low, less than 1 percent of all passengers boarding. Secondly, for a three month period the undercover officers did observe 294 customers evading the fare but could cite only 49 customers. The reason the remaining 245 customers observed evading the fare were not cited is because the operator acquiesced in the fare evasion, that is, the operator did not quote the fare one time, as required.

Our farebox revenue is an essential element of our overall

financial picture. Loss of passenger fares means a loss of revenue and reduced ability to provide service to our customers and jobs for our employees. □

## Fare Collection Update

Operations has a major role at the MTA in assuring that proper bus fares are collected from our million-plus daily riders. Recent MTA-wide efforts to increase fare revenues by assuring full and accurate fare payments start with the bus operator. In the near future, new car cards will be installed in MTA buses citing that fare evasion is a crime. Transit Police have stepped up their efforts to enforce proper fare payment.

Facilities Maintenance has increased the staff assigned to farebox and fare processing equipment maintenance. Written procedures for employees involved in repairing fareboxes, vaulting cashboxes, and other related tasks have been updated and are being distributed to Operations' employees involved in these areas.

Farebox revenues are an important part of the resources that pay for MTA Operations. All Operations' employees have a vested interest in making sure every fare is properly collected and accounted for. □

## Upcoming Events News in Summary

by Arthur T. Leahy

- The MTA begins receipt of 254 compressed natural gas buses in early May. The delivery of these buses, which are made by Neoplan in Colorado, will continue for about 15 months. These buses will operate out of division 8, 10 and 15.
- The Green Line will open for passenger service in July or August. The date will be set in the next few weeks. We'll let you know about an early "preview" day for employees as soon as it is scheduled. Initially, the line will operate out of Division 11.
- The Regional General Managers are considering division "open-houses" where employees can show their families where they work. Free rides through the bus washer! Also, we're considering a special "free dress" day for operators! Let the General Managers know what you think.
- Atlanta wants to borrow buses to use during the upcoming 1996 Olympics. We're talking with them.
- June shake-up: the Scheduling people are working hard on this. Although service levels will be generally stable, there will be some significant route re-structuring in the San Fernando Valley. This will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service in this area. □



## P R O M O T I O N S

The following is a listing of recent promotions within Operations. Congratulations to you all!



Rene Arevalo	Mechanic "A" to Warranty & Eqpt Mech
Marian Ann Bennett	Custodian to Cash Clerk/Mopper Waxer
Marcus Davis	Mechanic "C" to Mechanic "B"
Elton Ford	Assignment Coordination Clerk to Equipment Records Specialist
Manuel Garavito	Electronic Comm Tech to Electronic Comm Tech Leader
Aaron Pine	Maintenance Assistant to Maintenance Assistant Leader
Barry Richter	Maintenance Assistant to Maintenance Assistant Leader
Juan Villalba	Mechanic "B" to Mechanic "A"
Jack Wang	Senior Engineer to Supervising Engineer (Acting)

## C H A N G I N G   G E A R S

As in every organization, there are those who have worked and contributed significantly to its success. We congratulate the following individuals for their efforts and wish them a happy retirement.

Charles Bledsoe	Bus Operator	2/27/95	14 years
Allen Curnutt	Bus Operator	12/23/94	25 years
Elmo Douglass	Supervising Engineer	1/31/95	23 years
Denise Hawkins	Secretary	3/22/95	24 years
Alexander Hoyos	Mechanic "A"	2/21/95	18 years
William Hudson	Bus Operator	1/23/95	23 years
Al Levy	Senior Engineer (acting)	1/31/95	21 years
Albert Lopez	Sheet Metal Worker Leader	2/21/95	25 years
Jerome Nunn	Bus Operator	2/27/95	23 years
Mikhail Prosol	Air Conditioning Tech	4/22/95	11 years
Igor Radinsky	Bus Operator	1/19/95	14 years
Daniel Rodriguez	Mechanic "A"	2/17/95	23 years
Gordon Stevenson	Bus Operator	2/27/95	24 years
Joseph Symons	Bus Operator	1/18/95	8 years
Robert Taylor	Bus Operator	11/3/94	22 years
Marilyn Wagner	Division Stenographer	3/22/95	23 years
John Walker	Bus Operator	2/28/95	25 years
Thelma Williams	Bus Operator	7/21/95	17 years

## I N   M E M O R I A M

Carrol Carmichael	Bus Operator	3/12/95	7 years
Sergio Chavez	Bus Operator	2/11/95	11 years
Leonard Davis	Mechanic "A"	2/18/95	25 years
Carl Law	Equip. Maintenance Supervisor	2/17/95	14 years
John Menzies	Bus Operator	3/10/95	13 years
Robert E. Ryan	Former RTD Board Member	2/23/95	
Charles Storing	Former RTD Board Member	4/2/95	

## Salvador Flores is Operator of the Year

Division 3215 is the home of the 1994 Operator of the Year, Salvador Flores. Salvador has been providing quality work performance for the agency since he began service some 20 years ago. For the past several years, he has had no absences, missouts, chargeable accidents, or rule violations. He has received many awards and currently has accumulated a total of 90 merits.

Salvador is a dedicated family man, having been married for 26 years. He and his wife have raised two beautiful children, and currently reside in the city of Arleta. He and his family love to travel; they have toured South America and visited many of the states within the United States. He also enjoys the outdoors and fishing.

Salvador is currently continuing his education, and is working toward his Bachelor's Degree at the California State University in Northridge. He comes from a family of teachers, and would like to teach when he retires from the MTA. □



## John Halyak Again Operator of the Month

Division 3215 should be beaming! John Halyak, a bus Operator from 3215 is the Operator of the Month for February. As with his co-worker, Salvador Flores, he is an excellent performer. In his better than 20 years of service, he has achieved a work history worthy of recognition, and has accumulated the maximum allowable of 90 merits. He has incurred no absences, missouts, chargeable accidents, or rule violations for the past several years.

John is a resident of Pacoima. When not on duty, he enjoys reading, going to movies and physical fitness training.

Congratulations to both Operators on a job well done! It should be noted that the fact that both gentlemen work at Division 3215 is purely coincidental. □

## Elton Ford Jr. is Vehicle Maintenance Employee of the Year

Congratulations go to Elton Ford, Jr., the Maintenance Employee of the Year. Elton has been with the MTA since September 6, 1972, and is currently assigned to the department's Manpower Section as an Assignment Coordinator. He is responsible for providing coverage for clerical and Equipment Records Specialists (ERS). He is knowledgeable of his job and always performs in an outstanding manner.

On a personal note, he is married, has five children, and his hobbies include softball and camping. □



## Gustave Sabala is February Vehicle Maintenance Employee of the Month

Gustavo Sabala has been selected the Maintenance Employee of the Month for February. He has been with the agency since April 9, 1979, and is currently assigned to Division 3305 as a Mechanic "A". Gustavo is the division's brake lathe guru. He constantly produces quality work and has maintained a perfect attendance record since 1991.

Mr. Sabala is married and has one son, and one grandchild. His hobbies include working on his home, and taking trips, especially to Las Vegas. He also dreams, along with most other MTA employees, of winning the lottery. □

## Thomas Holland is the Maintenance Employee of the Month for March

Thomas Holland began with the MTA on January 12, 1981. He is currently working at Division 3301 as a Mechanic "A", and is assigned to the Brake Shop. He can always be counted on to complete his assigned work in a quality and timely manner. Safety and quality are in fact his primary "on the job" concerns.

Thomas is the proud father of a 14-year old daughter and a set of twins. His hobbies include boating, water skiing and auto racing. He is engaged to be married in July; much of his personal interest is focused on his bride-to-be. We congratulate Thomas for both the Maintenance award and also on his imminent marriage. □

## Division Advisory Committee (DAC) Member of Distinction Award

Congratulations go to Ms. Miranda Tucker of Division 3305, the recipient of the first DAC Member of Distinction Award. DAC is an unprecedented MTA Vandalism Advisory Program. This volunteer/employee community outreach program has been established at each bus and rail division and is comprised of employees from all segments of the division (bus and rail operators, mechanics, maintenance assistants, typist clerks, among others).

The Member of Distinction Award has been created to honor that individual who goes the "Extra Mile" for the program. This includes a willingness to be available for DAC functions, and showing a willingness to help with whatever is needed to ensure a successful DAC event.

Ms. Tucker has been involved with DAC since 1992, and serves as chairperson of the program at her division. Her involvement with the South-Central Drug-Free Zone Schools and community-based organization, such as the People Who Care Center, has given "DAC-5" strong community contacts. This type of commitment, led by Miranda, promotes growth in the DAC program and success in its graffiti-free objectives.

Congratulations Miranda for a job well done! □

## Maria Alamilla Named Information Operator of the Year

Congratulations go to Maria Alamilla, the Information Operator of the Year for 1994. Maria has been with the MTA since November 1989. During this time she has maintained an exemplary work record and has been chosen Operator of the Month four times.

Maria has been happily married for 12 years and has three children. She likes to spend time with her family traveling abroad. She recently visited Mexico during the holidays, and is planning a camping trip to Yosemite. □



## Angelica Nevarez is the Information Operator of the Month for February

Although she has been with the agency only since December 1993, Angelica has been selected as the Operator of the Month for February. When meeting Angelica, a warm smile is the first thing you notice. This expression carries on to her work, where she has a splendid attitude and high energy level.

Angelica lives in Walnut with her husband, two children, ages 12 and 19, and two dalmatian dogs. She believes in keeping physically fit and runs daily. This year, as in years past, she participated in the Los Angeles Marathon. □

## Jay Hammonds is the Information Operator of the Month for March

Jay stated in his interview for the position that he was a "people person" and that he enjoys working with the public. This has indeed been borne out. Since he started with the MTA in September 1994 he has received numerous commendations and high performance appraisal marks.

Much of his spare time is devoted to his church, where he participates in the choir and in bible study, and in helping people in need. For the past 2 years, he has been director of the House of Hope Christian Outreach Center.

Jay grew up in Pasadena and now lives in San Gabriel. He is the proud father of a 12-year old daughter.

Hats off to all of you for a job well done! □



## A word from Franklin White

As we all know, the lingering financial problems and resulting cutbacks have been difficult and painful. We all know good people who have been impacted by the need to reduce our expenditures.

On a very human level, this is hard to deal with.

Nevertheless, as we all know, we must deal with the reality of the financial crisis facing the MTA. We must continue to produce bus and rail service which is safe, reliable, clean, and cost-effective.

The past two years have been tough. Through it all, we have continued to demonstrate our dedication and professionalism. This is our major asset as we face the future.

I appreciate the continuing efforts and dedication of the management and represented personnel of this organization and I am proud of how we have weathered this storm.

## Cost Reductions Proposed to Meet the Budget Shortfall

The latest forecast for next fiscal year, beginning this July, is for an operating deficit of as much as \$97 million. This projection is based upon a combination of several factors—lower than expected ridership on our bus services, a reduction in the amount of sales tax revenues generated within this county, and finally the likelihood that there will be a significant reduction in the amount of federal operating subsidies.

The MTA bus and rail operation has been targeted to make substantial reductions in its operating budget in order to help balance the deficit. Subject to approval by the Chief Executive Officer, approximately 600 positions will be eliminated prior to July. These will require the layoff of around 234 employees (both Contract and Non-represented). Human Resources will inform those in this group of job openings within the MTA. Therefore the exact number of staff to be actually laid off would likely be less than 234.

For those that remain, your function may be different. The operations' reorganization described elsewhere in this newsletter, which includes the implementation of the single manager concept, could significantly change some of your reporting relationships. This is a period of change, and the best way to get through it is to remain flexible to your working conditions.

The budget reduction would curtail the quality of service being

## RUNNING TIMES

RUNNING TIMES is a publication of MTA's Operations Division. Items you would like to see included may be submitted for consideration to Byron Lee.

Editor  
Art Director  
Designer

Byron Lee  
Anne Roubideaux  
Terry McMahon

Contributing Staff:

Steve Jaffe  
Robert Jackson  
Dan Miller  
Janet Wentz

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### Submission of Items to Running Times

Have you got any news you'd like reported? If you do please send it to me at the 425 building. Our intent is to publish either *Running Times* or an agency-wide newsletter monthly.

Subjects allowed are open-ended, announcement of an upcoming division or personal special event, report of a new baby in the family. Jot down a few sentences, or write an entire article! Artwork, (pictures and photos) may also be included. Oh, by the way, please include your name, work location, job title, so we can give you the proper credit, and also your telephone extension in case we need to get more information.

We will try to include your information in the next issue.

Thanks, *Byron Lee*

provided to the public in that: telephone information hours of operation of the telephone information group would be reduced, shift coverage within the Materiel function would be reduced, the operator ratio (number of operators divided by the number of peak buses) would be tightened further, and funds allocated to pay for overtime within operations would be reduced.

"While the picture for this upcoming fiscal year is not rosy," Art Leahy reported, "it is hoped that the actions taken will enable the MTA to maintain its level of bus and rail services for the foreseeable future...without having to institute further reductions in staffing." □

