

AUGUST 15, 2003



Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA
90012-2952

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: ROGER SNOBLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: JAMES L. de la LOZA
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, PLANNING AND
PROGRAMMING

SUBJECT: EXPANDED NATIONAL TRANSIT DATABASE (NTD)
REPORTING

ISSUE

In September 2001, the MTA Board of Directors passed a motion by Director Frank Roberts that called for MTA Countywide Planning and Development staff to work with the local cities to claim all revenue and passenger miles generated by locally funded fixed-route and other public transportation services, and to report back to the Board with a status report.

DISCUSSION

Each year the MTA submits two NTD reports to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). One is a required report for MTA Operations (#9154) and the other is a consolidated report for the smaller locally funded Los Angeles County operators (#9166), which voluntarily report NTD.

The FTA allocates Section 5307 capital funds to the region based upon the amount of service reported through NTD. The Bus Tier includes data from regular fixed-route bus service, demand response services, and vanpools. In FY 2002, 7.3 million revenue miles were voluntarily reported for the Los Angeles County region. At \$0.40 per revenue vehicle mile, the reimbursement to the region is approximately \$3 million per year.

The recently revised Proposition A Incentive Guidelines include a provision to fund the smaller operators that voluntarily report NTD. Due in large part to this provision, the number of systems that voluntarily report NTD has increased from one in 1998 to twelve in 2001 and twenty-one in 2004. Attachment A shows the progression of voluntary NTD reporting from 1998 through the present.

The MTA will continue to work with smaller locally funded transit systems to increase the number of voluntary reporters, thereby increasing revenues to the region. The MTA also will continue to offer annual NTD training to the local transit systems and assign independent auditors to certify operational and financial data as NTD reporting guidelines require.

The Fixed Guideway Tier includes modes that operate in exclusive right-of-way such as rail, ferryboat, trolley bus, and motor bus operated in lanes such as the downtown Los Angeles Spring Street contra-flow lane, the El Monte Busway, the Harbor Transitway, and other qualifying HOV lanes. FTA apportionments for the Fixed Guideway Tier are much higher than the Bus Tier. In FY 2003 the FTA apportioned \$33,708 to each fixed-guideway route mile and \$0.61 per fixed guideway revenue mile. Additionally, fixed guideways become eligible for Section 5309 Fixed-Guideway Modernization funds after seven years of service, but the service must be reported.

MTA staff has worked closely with other operators in the region to ensure that all eligible fixed guideway segments are reported. For example, MTA staff recently worked with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) to ensure that its segment of Line 438, operating along the I-105 Glenn Anderson Freeway west of the I-110 Harbor Freeway is annually reported. This segment alone results in \$350,000+ in additional capital revenues to Los Angeles County. MTA staff will continue to work with other operators, such as Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) that operates Line 721 on the I-105 freeway, to ensure complete fixed guideway reporting for Los Angeles County.

Vanpools

The FTA will not accept NTD reports on private vanpools. To qualify, a public entity must operate the vanpool as is done in Seattle, or the public entity must own, purchase, or lease the vehicle. The service must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, be open to the public, and be advertised as available to the public. Houston, Honolulu, and Phoenix each report data from 150 to 200 vans. The revenue vehicle miles from vanpools generate about \$1 million for each of these urbanized areas. King County Metro in Seattle reports over 700 vanpools that generate approximately \$3.7 million per year.

In May 2003, the MTA Board approved the Metro Vanpool Program. Initially it will be offered as a demonstration project that will be centered primarily on vanpools to and from the South Bay area. A subsidy of \$200 to \$400 per month will be offered to qualifying publicly advertised vanpools. Once implemented, 300 or more vanpools are expected to participate in the pilot. If successful, MTA staff will consider expanding the pilot countywide.

Catalina Ferryboat Service

Successfully reporting ferryboat service between Avalon, San Pedro and Long Beach could result in \$2 million or more in additional FTA Section 5307 fixed guideway revenues to the Los Angeles County region. In FY 1998, the MTA reported the ferryboat statistics, but the FTA raised issues such as the sightseeing nature of the service; the high proportion of tourist passengers; the contractual relationship; and the irregular schedules. The MTA conducted an on-board survey that confirmed the majority of trips were recreational. The FTA then interpreted the trips as "sightseeing service" which is not considered public transportation. Ultimately, the FTA requested that the MTA remove the ferryboat statistics from the FY 1998 report.

Approximately 15 agencies nationwide report ferryboat service. Most of the ferryboat service operate in one of four metropolitan areas: Boston, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle. In Los Angeles County, Long Beach Transit reports ferryboat statistics from the water taxis operating in Long Beach Harbor. Catalina Express provides the water taxi service under contract to Long Beach Transit. The FTA has accepted this water taxi service for reporting. Therefore, the region might consider a strategy to report Catalina Island ferryboat service based on the existing contractual relationship between Long Beach Transit and Catalina Express.

In an effort to revisit the issue, MTA staff met in February 2003 with FTA staff and was told that for ferryboat service to qualify as public transit, "50% or more of the daily average ridership must travel on the service at least three times a week." MTA staff intends to conduct a statistically valid survey in an effort to move forward on this issue. In the FY 2004 MTA Budget, MTA staff budgeted \$100,000 for the survey that will be conducted in Winter 2004.

NEXT STEPS

MTA staff will continue to work with smaller, locally funded operators to ensure that all interested operators are aware of and encouraged to participate in the voluntary NTD program. We will also work with the transit operators and SCAG to ensure accurate reporting of fixed-guideway service, and we will review the first stages of the MTA pilot vanpool program.

For the Catalina ferryboat service, MTA staff will proceed on the following schedule:

Project Task	Schedule
Budget survey funds for '04	June '03 (completed)
Procurement of survey team/statistician	September '03 – December '03
Conduct survey	January '04 – March '04
Compile Results	April '04 – May '04
Meet with FTA staff	June '04
Brief MTA Board	August '04
Meet with city/operator regarding data collection process	September '04
Collect ferryboat data (pending survey results)	October '04 – June '05
Report '05 ferryboat data to FTA (pending survey results)	October '05

ATTACHMENT A

Voluntary NTD Reporting (I.D. 9166)

Estimate of Additional Section 5307 Capital Revenues to LA County

	REVENUE MILES						
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NTD Reporter/Operator	FY 1998	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	ESTIMATED FY 2003	ESTIMATED FY 2004
Alhambra Community Transit - MB				183,000	183,000	183,000	183,000
Baldwin Park Transit - MB			244,000	242,000	274,000	274,000	274,000
Baldwin Park - DR	55,000	55,000	65,000	64,000	64,000	64,000	64,000
Burbank Local Transit - MB							90,000
Carson Circuit -- MB						225,000	225,000
Cerritos on Wheels - MB							240,000
Cerritos - DR							80,000
Compton Renaissance - MB			153,000	147,000	133,000	133,000	133,000
El Monte Trolley - MB			265,000	250,000	241,000	241,000	241,000
El Monte - DR			110,000	111,000	102,000	102,000	102,000
Glendale Beeline - MB				800,000	810,000	810,000	875,000
Glendora -- MB						80,000	70,000
Glendora Transit -- DR						100,000	100,000
Hawaiian Gardens -- DR						100,000	100,000
Huntington Park - DR (gen. Public)					207,000	207,000	207,000
Inglewood Trolley -- MB					8,000	8,000	8,000
LADOT - Community DASH				3,154,000	3,632,000	3,632,000	3,632,000
LA County - MB (East LA Shuttle)				151,000	177,000	177,000	177,000
Lynwood Trolley - MB				43,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
Maywood -- DR					56,000	56,000	56,000
Monterey Park Spirit - MB			202,000	201,000	201,000	201,000	201,000
Pasadena ARTS - MB				252,000	436,000	436,000	600,000
W. Covina Go Transit - MB			210,000	202,000	292,000	292,000	292,000
W. Hollywood Cityline - MB				93,000	92,000	92,000	92,000
Whittier Transit - MB					170,000	170,000	170,000
Whittier - DR					197,000		
Total Revenue Miles	55,000	55,000	1,249,000	5,893,000	7,320,000	7,628,000	8,257,000
 unit value per revenue mile	 \$0.38	 \$0.39	 \$0.42	 \$0.40	 \$0.41	 \$0.42	 \$0.43
 Estimated Additional Revenue to LA County	 \$20,900	 \$21,450	 \$524,580	 \$2,357,200	 \$3,001,200	 \$3,203,760	 \$3,550,510
 # of Reporters	 1	 1	 5	 12	 16	 19	 21

**MOTOR BUS -- MB
DEMAND RESPONSE -- DR**