



Metro


Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority


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July 12, 2006

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THROUGH: ROGER SNOBLE 
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

FROM: MATTHEW RAYMOND 
CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

SUBJECT: EXPANDED OUTREACH TO DIVERSE POPULATIONS

ISSUE

At the Finance and Budget Committee's meeting on January 18, 2006, Director Lowenthal requested staff to maximize its efforts to reach non-English speaking populations. This report outlines recently initiated efforts to expand Metro's outreach.

DISCUSSION

Metro routinely conducts its outreach programs in multiple languages and through varied media outlets. Virtually all Metro customer communications materials are distributed in English and Spanish. In addition, Metro runs monthly informational ads called Metro Briefs in 7 languages (Armenian, Chinese, English, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Thai). A November 2005 report by the U.S. General Accounting Office reviewed the efforts of 20 transit agencies to reach populations of limited English proficiency, and rated Metro highly among the other agencies in its commitment to multiple language outreach.

To further expand and increase the effectiveness of these efforts, Communications staff has initiated several new programs:

Cultural Ambassadors - With its diverse employee population, Metro has many staff members who are capable of providing a direct link to various cultures in their own language. Therefore Metro has solicited volunteers from the staff to act as Cultural Ambassadors. These volunteers are being trained to serve as Metro representatives with appropriate cultural groups. They also will participate in outreach to ethnic media outlets, and be asked to provide input on multi-language communications materials. The Cultural Ambassadors are scheduled to begin their activities this summer.

Ethnic Chambers of Commerce - Staff has researched a number of local chambers of commerce that focus on the needs of specific ethnic groups. Metro is seeking membership