Carmen's Union and AC Transit Agree to Arbitrate New Wage Contract Settlement

Agreement was reached this month by AC Transit and the Carmen’s Union to arbitrate a new labor contract.

Members of Division 192 of the union voted to submit unresolved issues to arbitration after first rejecting a settlement offer by the district.

A decision by the board of arbitrators on a new contract is expected by the end of July.

The transit district, which transports some 200,000 passengers a day, had offered an across-the-board wage increase of 7 per cent over the next two years plus another 1.7 per cent for top mechanics.

The district also offered to submit a new settlement to arbitration in the event an agreement could not be reached.

The old 2 1/2-year contract, which had been extended while negotiations continued, expired last May 31.

Wages in Top Place

The last contract boosted wages of unionized employees to top place among comparable bus properties on the West Coast which reach wage agreements through collective bargaining. The agreement was the second negotiated by the district since it took over from Key System Transit Lines in 1960.

The district offer turned down by the union proposed to increase drivers pay 21 cents an hour in four steps to $3.22, and class “A” mechanics, 31 cents an hour to $3.88. Total compensation including all employee benefits was estimated at $3.89 for operators and $4.63 for mechanics.

In terms of an annual paycheck, operators would have taken home at the end of the first year an additional $243. At the end of the second year the overall increase would have been $453 a year.

Annual Paycheck Increase

For class “A” mechanics, the end of the first year was calculated at $353, and the second year, $634.

Total cost of the two-year package was estimated at $1,232,000.

Other provisions of the district’s offer included:

1. An additional holiday, raising the total to eight paid holidays.
2. A five-week vacation after 20 years of services. Employees now receive four weeks after 15 years.
3. Sick leave benefits beginning on the second full day of absence, with total accumulation permitted up to 50 days. The old contract provided for sick leave benefits after the third day, and total accumulation up to 40 days.
4. An additional $2 monthly medical plan contribution per employee by the district effective July 1, and another $2 beginning July 1, 1966.

(Continued on Page 3)
Government Joins District in Program to Equip Transit Fleet with Two-way Radios

Moving ahead with designs and technical procedures, AC Transit laid out a timetable this month for a summer-time start on installation of a twoway radio communication system to link its basic fleet of buses through electronic equipment.

Governmental go-ahead on the project of purchasing and installing 300 radio units on buses was given with approval of a maximum $179,333 capital grant by the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency.

Initially, the grant is limited to an estimated $134,500, half of the projected cost of $269,000, with the district supplying matching funds. Additional funds, to the maximum amount, can be expected, however, after planning agencies such as the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Bay Area Transportation Study Commission determine the status of areawide land use and transportation plans.

The project is to include mobile, telephone-type radio units and establishment of a status board to indicate, by lights and numbers, each bus, its route and schedule.

The board will enable each dispatcher to tell at a glance the exact vehicles in operation and their respective routes.

Notification by Robert C. Weaver, administrator of the HHFA, of affirmative action on the district's application for the grant, enabled AC Transit to proceed with ordering designs for specifications.

After the call for bids on equipment and the awarding of contracts, the district expects to start with actual installation.

Radio communications with the basic fleet is expected to increase efficiency of operations, while deterring holdups and disturbances. The system also will be of benefit in coordinating bus service on a day-to-day basis with the future rapid rail transit system.

Transit Advertising Revenue Zooming

Revenue from transit advertising rose 9.2 per cent in 1964, establishing it as the second fastest growing advertising medium in the United States, surpassed only by television.

And advertising is expected to continue its upward zoom, according to a report of the Transit Advertising Association.

The report estimated another 10 per cent increase for 1965, keeping pace with the addition of transit equipment throughout the country. Transit advertising now is carried on more than 66,000 vehicles, including buses, subways, elevated and commuter trains.

Television, the leader in 1964, showed an advertising increase of 10.1 per cent.

AC Transit’s income from bus advertising has jumped over 48 per cent in the past four years, according to Metro Transit Advertising, which leases the advertising space on AC Transit equipment.

Advertisers spent $291,704 on district coaches during 1964, as compared to $196,156 in 1961, first full year of AC Transit operations, according to E. B. Sorensen, vice president of Metro Transit Advertising.

Arbitration to Begin on Labor Contract

(Continued from Page 1)

Several changes in work rules and regulations also were contained in the contract proposal. The district also offered to begin negotiations for an improved pension plan.

In the two contracts negotiated previously by AC Transit and the Carmen’s Union, mechanics have received a total of 89 cents per hour increase, or 33.2 per cent increase in basic wages during the past four and a half years. Previously, under Key System, it took mechanics some 12 years to attain the same rate of wage increase.

Other union workers, also by charter requirement, are paid according to the same percentage boost required a period of nearly eight years under Key System.

The expiring agreement placed AC Transit among the highest paying operators in the United States. Out of some 1,000 transit companies in the nation, AC Transit presently stands in tenth place on the basis of hourly pay.

AC Transit mechanisms also top the field, with an hourly wage of $3.57, as compared to Seattle with $3.345; Portland, $3.16; Sacramento, $3.24; Los Angeles, $3.36, and San Diego, $3.13.

Only comparable property to surpass AC Transit is the San Francisco Municipal Railway, which by city charter requirement, pays the average of two highest basic wage scales of properties in the United States, serving a population of at least 500,000.

Charter Requirements

Under this provision, Muni operators now receive $3.125 an hour. Other union workers, also by charter requirements, are paid according to contracts negotiated by various crafts, placing mechanics presently at a scale of $3.8625 an hour.

Highest paid bus line in the nation is a government-subsidized property, operated primarily for atomic energy workers in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Wage scale for operators stands at $3.18 per hour.

During the fiscal year ending this month, the district expense for wages, salaries and employee benefits represents $10,698,000 or approximately 70 per cent of total district costs.
SCHEDULING

Pulse of AC Transit

Although there MIGHT be more complex functions than those performed by the scheduling department, the man in charge sums it this way: "If you're the worrying type, it would kill you fast."

As a veteran of almost 30 years in the department, W. E. Robinson, superintendent of schedules, has illustrated his ability to survive by holding the reins of a complicated and important section in equable hands.

Each day has its problems, its loose ends and a job never done—so each day, "Robbie" has unending interest.

It takes dextrous juggling, continuing change, continuing analysis, expert help and expert knowledge. And from the package comes the pattern for AC Transit service; the routes followed by the buses, the schedules they observe, the transfer points made, the places the buses stop.

And always the department is faced with the question: "Is the best possible use being made of every possible motor coach and driver?"

Statistics, perhaps, are the first ingredient in the goal.

Like any recipe, the statistics are put together from parts, gathered by traffic checkers in the field; reports from supervisors, operators, central dispatch; from private calls and letters. Added together, they tell how a line is operating, how it is being used, how it can be improved.

Schedule analysts summarize and tabulate the data—including mileage records, computed each day and charged to equipment used, to give the district its cost-per-mile yardstick for helping to determine whether the system is operating in black or red ink.

While scheduling keeps one hand on the pulse beat of the system, watching each line—and endless peak-hour variations—it has another hand busy changing and updating timetables.

From scheduling comes the pocket timetables handed out to bus riders at the rate of 1,500,000 a year.

The public gets one version. Drivers, supervisors and operational management get another version—the daily working timetables which detail which coach will be running on what line at what time. These are "charts" for operating the far-flung network.

Another part of the job is the operator's "padlile"—taken from the working timetable and a directional part of each coach trip, set up so each driver knows his exact runs and schedules.

Scheduling also handles the coach stop listings, keeps the destination signs up to date, calculates vehicle hours and pay times and prepares endless analysis—more than enough to keep the processing department whizzing at typing, proof reading and mailing stacks of vital material.

Aside from its function of setting up the best schedules to meet passenger needs, the department has a creative role in research and development—thinking up new ideas, considering ways of speeding up service, determining location of new lines and how to cut the "dead wood" out of lines with little patronage.

"We try to put the best product possible on the road, tailored to the best advantages of the public and the district," according to Robinson.
Operators Try to Score as Bus-O-Rama Brings Out the 'Brave' in Course Trials

The most "courageous" among the district's 975 operators ran through the preliminaries in the "Bus-O-Rama" early this month, making their score in a contest to pick the top driver of 1965.

The first three weekends in June were set aside to give the record number of entrants a chance to drive the course, before the three top winners were scheduled to wheel off against each other at the finals June 27.

Only the most valiant were credited with testing their skill at the first preliminary, driving through, around and by obstacles set up on the paved parking lot north of Youell Field. Other entrants turned out to watch - and to mentally check the course and look over the lay-out before they take a turn at the wheel.

Drivers again face seven problems encountered in street operations, but the course this year is different and "slightly tougher" than the 1964 run - including a cross-over route of travel.

Although "muscles" were expected to play a special part this year, with problems requiring more steering, women operators indicated by a high percentage of sign-up that they would match ability with the best of the men.

"Interest of the women drivers was boosted last year when Mrs. Bessie Hanson of Richmond, veteran mother and grandmother, made it to the semi-finals.

Also signed up to defend his title as "best driver of 1964" was B. R. McCaslin of Seminary division, who carried off first place honors by "driving exactly like operating on a traffic busy street."

Three top winners this year will receive handsome, battery operated watches, mounted on engraved bases, with gold or silver decoration. The perpetual trophy will be given to the division represented by the winner.

All contestants will have a shoulder patch to show they made it to the starting point, according to C. C. Wadsworth, safety engineer.

Transit Worker Dies

Theodore M. Gunn, 75, a bus driver from the time he entered service in 1942 until he was pensioned in 1961, died on May 12. He lived at 787 Pomona Ave., El Cerrito.

Business dropped back into the red side of the ledger for AC Transit during April, with a decrease in the number of passengers using the service.

Passenger revenue for the month totaled $1,086,656, a decrease of $30,302 or 2.7 per cent compared to the $1,116,928 collected from riders in April, 1964. Total riders carried on East Bay and transbay lines reached 4,506,129, a decrease of 4.09 per cent below the 4,698,295 who rode a year ago.

Transbay commute sales were up, however, reaching $183,720 for the month, a boost of 1.2 per cent over sales of $181,565 in April of the previous year. Miles of operation totaled 1,932,161, a drop of 0.9 per cent from the 1,950,644 miles operated in the same period in 1964.

The district's total revenue of $1,323,259 was sufficient to cover operational expenses of $1,147,238, up $1,612 or 0.1 per cent over a year ago, as well as provide for equipment renewal and bond debt requirements.

The transit industry nationally indicated a decrease in April of 1.80 per cent.

District Chalks-up Two Records During May

The sun beamed specially bright for AC Transit on two occasions during May, giving the district impressive tallies to post on its records.

The best turnout of passengers yet kept the fare boxes jingling on May 7, as East Bay and transbay lines carried 202,656 riders. The fares collected totaled $47,706, highest record for a single day. The previous high of $47,338 was reached on an overcast and rainy day during the last Christmas season. Contributing to the new record were receipts from race track service to Golden Gate Fields.

Sunday passes sold on May 23 totaled 1597 - highest number of passes sold during regular Sunday operations.
At an adjourned regular meeting May 19, 1965, the Board of Directors:
- Recommended highway program of the Alameda County Highway Advisory Committee for inclusion in the 1966-67 fiscal State highway budget, on motion of Vice President McDonnell.
- Opposed Assembly Bill 2867 relating to the acquisition of transit systems, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Approved service expansion on Lines 33 (Berkeley Express), 93 (San Lorenzo), and A (12th St.), on motion of Director Bettencourt.

At the regular meeting June 9, 1965, the Board of Directors:
- Authorized President Coburn to appoint transit board representatives on a board of arbitration, on motion of Director Copeland. (See story, Pg. 1.)
- Approved revised membership dues in Albany Chamber of Commerce, California State Chamber of Commerce and San Leandro Chamber of Commerce, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Awarded contract for purchase of 30 new buses to General Motors Corp. at a cost of $810,000, on motion of Director Rinehart. (See story, Pg. 6.)

**New Tour Folder Issued for Berkeley Hills**

A "special" tour booklet was being issued by the district this month to encourage riders to go traveling for "atmosphere and interest," with a planned bus trip to Berkeley gardens, roses and hills.

The tour, including schedules, details a self-conducted ride from downtown Oakland to Berkeley, a trip up the north side of the University of California campus to the Berkeley Rose Garden, a loop around Grizzly Peak Blvd., and a walk to an orchid nursery.

As a finale, a visit to the Sather Gate area of University of California is suggested, for a look at shops, people and a stop at a sidewalk cafe.

The free booklet may be obtained by telephoning Transit Information (653-3535) or from the information bureau at the general offices, Latham Square Building, Oakland.