AC Transit Takes Over Key System; First of New Service Begins Oct. 23

The Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District rolled smoothly into operation this month, ending nearly a century of privately-owned transit in the East Bay. The change-over, from the long reign of Key System Transit Lines and predecessor companies to a publicly-owned system, went off without a hitch.

As far as the public was concerned, the only immediate difference was in signs and symbols. Greeting cards welcomed riders aboard buses and told them they were riding with AC Transit. The familiar Key System symbol was covered over by the emblem of the district and the buses sent out on their usual routes, with their usual drivers.

The take-over cleared the way for a $16,500,000 improvement program that ranges from an immediate drop in fares for children to establishment of new service and acquisition of 250 new city and suburban “Transit Liners.”

“Transit Liners” on the Way

The first 40 of the new buses—all air-conditioned—will arrive in December, and the remainder will be delivered beginning in February through next June. Symbolically, change-over day was a milestone for the 1,000,000 residents of the East Bay. It was 97 years ago, in 1863, that public transit made its first appearance, a steam train that took passengers from Seventh and Broadway to Oakland Point and ferry connections to San Francisco. In the years since, the East Bay has sampled horse cars, steam dummies, cable cars, the first trolleys, the more advanced electrics and the evolution of the bus.

In taking over operation of their own transit system, the public can expect a vastly improved system that will affect more than 300 miles of transit lines in the next few months.

Richmond and Western Contra Costa County will be among the first to benefit. New service will be established in a number of residential areas, tentatively set for October 23.

New Service Ready

As a result, some outlying districts will get their first bus transportation. Residents will have direct service to downtown business areas and to outlying shopping centers. Efficient commute service also will be provided.

Other areas can expect needed new routes, line extensions and more frequent service, with noticeable improvements as soon as new equipment wheels into operation.

Five new express routes will link cities between Richmond and Decoto beginning next January. Fifty miles of new local lines also will be established in the months ahead.
On June 12th a reckless driver was pursued by a Pleasanton police officer. The vehicle pursued was driven at speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour. The vehicle crashed twice, but kept going. At one point the vehicle narrowly missed colliding with an AC Transit bus.

When the vehicle stopped, after its second collision, the driver was extremely uncooperative and physically resisted arrest. AC Transit driver L. O. Bivens came to the officer’s assistance and the arrest was completed.

Please extend to Mr. Bivens my sincere thanks for his dedication to public safety in assisting a police officer in time of need. His help is greatly appreciated.

W. E. Eastman
Chief of Police, Pleasanton

I wish to recommend a young driver of a #51 bus (M. A. Nuno).

When he noticed me struggling with the high steps (I am old and slow), trying to board, he left his driver’s seat and came quickly to help me. The same happened when I left the bus. He also called out the names of stops.

Such courtesy is rare these days.

Mrs. G. H. Landsberg
Berkeley

I would like to commend Nick Fresquez and M. M. McMillan. They are very fine gentlemen.

I wrote to you about Nick before and you didn’t say anything to him. Any employee that is recognized by a paying customer also pays your salary.

Mrs. Betty Davis
Fremont

Our Stockholders' Write

In downtown Oakland, shopping for a trip, I bought much needed shoes — two pair, expensive because orthopedic. In my haste to get off a bus to make a connection, I somehow left the shoes. I had no money to replace them.

Calling your Lost and Found — miracle of miracles — the bus driver (had) turned them in, and I had them the next day before I took off:

I want you to know I am grateful to the bus driver (Robert L. Edwards) and all of you.

Deidre Kessler
Berkeley

W. A. Scott is one of your best drivers: experienced driving skills accompanied by more than just a pleasant personality and attitude. He truly cared about his passengers. As passengers got off, he told them to have a good day and to step down off the bus with care. Another special touch was that Scott announced every approaching stop.

All in all, Scott made my journey home more enjoyable and pleasant — and that helps give AC Transit a good reputation.

Veronica Dare
Albany

This memorandum is to highly commend Mr. Paul Pierce for being a safe and courteous driver while serving our route. He is definitely a model in keeping with your company goal of providing safe, reliable, and friendly public service.

Signed by 20 passengers
N-1 Route (afternoon commute)

Top management change
Gage named acting general manager

Nathaniel A. Gage, formerly assistant general manager for finance, was appointed by the Board of Directors August 19th to serve as acting general manager following the removal of L. A. Kimball, the District's top administrative officer since November 1, 1983.

AC Transit’s publicly-elected seven member Board voted unanimous decisions on both actions. Gage has been with the District since 1980. His extensive prior public service includes seven years with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, where he earned a reputation as an expert in the area of transit financing. His MTC tenure followed 35 years of service in the U.S. Army.

Board President William J. Bettencourt announced the Board’s decision following a closed-door executive session in which Directors reviewed with Kimball their concerns about his management style. One key concern was the much-discussed Management Study, rejected by the Board earlier in the month. In a memorandum issued August 6th, Board President William J. Bettencourt stated: "While recognizing that the Management Study presents many valuable concepts we wish to pursue, the Directors have rejected the plan as presented."

Bus fares may go up soon

AC Transit Directors plan a Public Hearing Tuesday, September 10th, 7:30 p.m., to discuss possible fare increases. Hearing site is the auditorium at Metro Center, 101 Eighth St. (at BART/Lake Merritt), Oakland.

An added $1 million in fare revenue coupled with operating assistance allocated by the MTC, promises a balanced $108 million operating budget for 1986. However, any reduction in operating assistance from other sources could force further fare increases or curtailing of service.

Management study

Was one key concern

Nat A. Gage

AC Transit Directors have redesignated the District Secretary post a full-time position, with expanded responsibilities, and this revised role has been assumed by Lawrence A. Rosenberg, who in recent years has held joint positions: Board Secretary and Assistant General Manager for Administration.

In making the appointment, Board President William J. Bettencourt stated, "Given the Directors' confidence about effecting continued growth and improvement of AC Transit in coming years and decades, it's time for an administrative adjustment that will give us full-time staff, providing support in formulation of District policies."

District Secretary post expands

Rosenberg will work
Full-time for Board

Larry A. Rosenberg

AC Transit Directors have redesignated the District Secretary post a full-time position, with expanded responsibilities, and this revised role has been assumed by Lawrence A. Rosenberg, who in recent years has held joint positions: Board Secretary and Assistant General Manager for Administration.

In making the appointment, Board President William J. Bettencourt stated, "Given the Directors' confidence about effecting continued growth and improvement of AC Transit in coming years and decades, it's time for an administrative adjustment that will give us full-time staff, providing support in formulation of District policies.‖
"Old Look" will be on view as part of 25th anniversary

CEREMONIAL COACHES — Operators Leonard Nadolsky (below, left) and Donel Poston pose with old Key System buses recently driven back from storage at East Shore Lines, San Francisco. The vintage coaches will play a part in the upcoming silver anniversary celebration.

Bus stop carpools cause District concern

An AC Transit survey estimates that as many as 2,000 to 3,000 persons per day make carpooling contacts at or immediately adjacent to District transbay bus stops, resulting in an estimated annual revenue loss of from $600,000 to $1 million.

Nor are lost bus fares the only problem the survey attributes to such so-called "casual carpooling." At several locations during the study, surveyors noted that cars waiting to pick up passengers blocked bus stops, forcing boarding or alighting passengers into the street. This safety hazard was reported to be particularly prevalent at three stops: Lakeshore-Lake Park and Claremont-Hudson, both in Oakland; and Sacramento at North Berkeley BART.

Restoration and rejuvenation of two old Key System coaches will be carried out at Central Maintenance this summer. Part of the fleet operating on East Bay streets prior to AC Transit’s take-over on October 1, 1960, they will return to service in late 1985, both for special events connected with the celebration of the District’s silver anniversary and for regular service.

The Lakeshore site, which the survey spotlighted as among those stops where casual carpooling is heaviest, also offers the most hazards from the situation, since the stop is a heavy transfer point for both local and transbay buses. The report notes also that Lakeshore-Lake Park presents its casual carpooling problem despite the presence nearby of a staging area specifically for carpoolers.

Other service locations where casual carpooling was observed to be particularly heavy were College and Claremont, Oakland; Pierce at Gateview, El Cerrito; Park and Leimert, Oakland; and Fruitvale and Montana, Oakland.

The AC Transit study, requested by Directors and presented to the Board at

(Continued on Page 11)
New quarters help streamline the District’s buying and storing activities

The numbers and logistics seem staggering.

Take, for example, fuel.

AC Transit needs 125,000 gallons of diesel weekly; otherwise, 850 buses brake to a halt. But the amount isn’t the only difficulty. The District purchases diesel on the “spot market” to get the lowest possible price. This eliminates any guaranteed, long-term contract for procurement.

Delivery to Emeryville, Richmond, Newark, Seminary, Central Maintenance Center, and the new yard in Hayward requires coordinating at least 15 truck and trailer loads of fuel each week. Annual cost of fuel and lubricants: $6 million.

The hub of this activity is the Purchases and Stores Department, housed in the recently opened Central Maintenance Center on East 14th Street, Oakland. Here, 40 employees coordinate bidding, confer with suppliers, process the paperwork, secure the materials and supplies, and keep track of items stored in a 55,000-square-foot warehouse. The inventory ranges from diesel engines, which can cost as much as $16,000, to ring washers for bolts, which sell for about two cents each.

Besides its in-house responsibilities — necessary to keeping buses running for nearly 250,000 riders a day — the department participates with other Bay Area transit operators in joint procurement through the Regional Transit Association. This has proved to be a dollar-saver at times for such common necessities as batteries, headlights, automotive filters, oil and grease. AC Transit’s RTA associates in group purchase are BART, MUNI, Santa Clara County Transit District, SamTrans, and Golden Gate Transit District.

Past joint procurement successes have resulted in preliminary talks with surrounding area transit systems, such as Sacramento and Santa Cruz, about enlarging the joint purchasing circle. This, of course, would add more hours of coordination effort to the number now spent by AC Transit Purchases people.

“The job is big,” says Glenn Andrade, purchases and stores manager, “and the challenge is there every day to get parts as fast as we can, but at the same time, to get the best price.”

Functions range from seeking bids to computerized stock control.
FOCUS: Three honored in program

Top employees

Second trio of honorees in the Employee Recognition Program, announced at the end of June, are Victor H. Guerra (Richmond Division), bus driver of the quarter; James H. Freeman (Seminary Division), mechanic of the quarter; and Cleve Moore (Operations Center), employee of the quarter.

The three plaque winners will compete with others chosen during 1985 for the title of "Employee of the Year". The program began in January with the aim of spotlighting on-the-job excellence.

It is part of a larger program, administered by Human Resources, which also includes a system of rewards for service longevity.

HONORS EARNED — Employee Recognition Program winners were honored at divisional ceremonies, with family members among the guests. At the Operations Center event, Cleve Moore and wife Arthur (above) posed with his Employee of the Quarter award. Victor Guerra (top), Richmond Division, welcomed the cake-cutting help of his wife Elvia at the ceremony marking his selection as Bus Driver of the Quarter. James Freeman (left), Seminary Division's Mechanic of the Quarter, had refreshment table aid from his wife Dorothy and sons Matthew and Richard.

AC Transit needs fairer share of transit tax revenue

This commentary by AC Transit Director Jerome G. Wiggins appeared in The Tribune (Oakland) on July 22, 1985.

Long recognized as one of the leaders in transportation and one of the most needed transit services in the Bay Area, the Eastbay bus system serves 38 separate communities that depend on it for its own survival, finds itself with shrinking funding, and simultaneously with expanding requests for delivery of services.

In constructing a possible solution within a new framework, two factors would be necessary to satisfy the public: no increases in taxes and no adverse effect on transit services.

Such a solution is within reach.

Currently, the half-cent sales tax levied in the three BART counties — San Francisco, Alameda and Contra Costa — is distributed on a 75 percent/25 percent basis. Three-quarters of the money raised goes directly to BART, while the remaining 25 percent is available for allocation between BART, AC Transit and the San Francisco Municipal Railway at the discretion of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

This process has been helpful in addressing the needs of the three transit systems in the past, and is the result of the California Legislature passing Assembly Bill 1107, designed to provide a steady and secure source of operating revenue for BART.

When AB 1107 was passed in 1977, BART was the transit system which needed the most help. At the time, AC Transit relied heavily upon property tax, receiving nearly 40 percent of its operating funds from that source. San Francisco Muni had then — as it has now — access to the city and county general fund, enabling it to secure needed revenues to ensure continuation of vital lifeline transit services. BART was without a stable source of funding similar to AC Transit's property tax or Muni's general fund. Thus, the intent was to provide parity between AC, BART and Muni.

This parity changed in 1978 when voters in California approved Proposition 13, the Jarvis-Gann tax initiative. The immediate impact on AC Transit was elimination of nearly 25 percent of the monies available to the bus system for street operations.

Today BART is in a much healthier financial position than when the 75 percent/25 percent formula was established, and it is AC Transit that is faced with having to reduce vital transit services for the nearly 250,000 riders who use the buses every weekday.

The state Legislature and the governor can assist in alleviating the current dilemma by simple formula change and, at the same time, address the concerns of those directly affected by the change.

Instead of a 75 percent/25 percent division, I propose a 50/25/25 split. Under this plan, BART would receive 50 percent of the AB 1107 tax money. AC Transit would receive 25 percent. And the remaining 25 percent would be allocated under the direction of the MTC on the same basis as the current allocation takes place, with BART, AC Transit and San Francisco Muni all eligible for this portion.

Based on the BART fiscal year 1983-84 financial audit, the operator transferred $21.7 million in surplus AB 1107 tax money to capital expenditures. In fiscal year 1983-84 BART's share of the 74 percent AB 1107 funds totaled $71.1 million. If BART received 50 percent they would have received $47.4 million or $23.7 million less. The net effect under my proposal would be BART having a $2 million shortfall which could be funded from the 25 percent portion of AB 1107 tax money allocated by MTC.

It is important to reiterate that this proposal calls for no new burdens on taxpayers. It would merely amount to reallocation existing local resources to those most in need.

The new formula enables the MTC to continue to control allocation of the same percentage of the funds, and to restore parity among the three operators that existed prior to Proposition 13. Another element which should — and could — be incorporated in the plan is a specified time frame, of perhaps five years.

This proposal would call for the new 50 percent/25 percent/25 percent formula to be reexamined after five years to determine if the distribution procedures still were in the best interests of the riding public.

As a member of a policy-making body and a person whose professional life is committed to public transit, I would hope for a full debate on this proposal. The conclusions reached following such a discussion are critical to the future of public transit throughout the Bay Area.
Staff promotions, appointment announced

Three AC Transit employees and one newcomer to the District have been named to management posts in recent weeks.

**Pamela Y. Granger**, who worked as assistant comptroller and grants manager for eight years for the City of Oakland before serving five years as projects coordinator at AC Transit, is taking over as assistant comptroller and grants coordinator at AC Transit, is taking over as assistant comptroller and grants coordinator at AC Transit. She will oversee grants and contracts administration for the District. Granger has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of California, Berkeley, and a master's degree in Public Administration from California State University, Hayward.

**Billy T. Bishop**, formerly a customer services representative in the Marketing Department, has been promoted to transportation training coordinator. Bishop, with earlier experience as a training instructor and driver, now directs training of new operators and retraining of veteran drivers. Bishop is a 17-year employee of the District.

Formerly assistant payroll supervisor, **JoAnn Tucker** has moved up to payroll supervisor in the Finance Department. Tucker joined AC Transit in January, 1970, and has held increasingly responsible jobs in Finance.

A new management employee is **John B. Hoh**, print shop supervisor, who assumed his new duties at Central Maintenance in June. A former printing section manager for Safeway, Hoh has an extensive background in art, graphics and printing.

**Safety tally system revised**

District drivers are now working toward a new set of safe-driving goals, which will be in effect for the entire first quarter of this new fiscal year. The revised miles-per-accident targets, toward which drivers will strive through September 30th, are based on divisional past performances in safe-driving averages.

Safety “bogies”, per division, for this three-month period are 31,400 miles per accident, Newark; 18,000 miles, Richmond; 16,492 miles, Seminary; and 14,427 miles, Emeryville.

**Line DB gains riders, but funding expires soon**

Line DB-Dumbarton Bridge ridership showed a dramatic jump in late June following a promotional campaign in which informational material, including one free round-trip ticket for the transbay bus trip, was distributed to motorists at the span’s toll plaza.

Following this marketing effort, ridership rose to an all-time high of 300 trips per day. That ridership figure matches the passenger goal that had been projected for September, which will mark the end of the one-year demonstration project and, also, depletion of the financial support which made Line DB service possible. Subsidy source was the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

Encouraged by current and potential future ridership increases, the District has indicated its readiness to continue the service if permanent funding can be obtained to help cover the annual operating cost of $388,000.

As examples of future potential in ridership, District planners point to two areas: Willow Road east of Bayshore — a growing employment area not now served by bus stops because of ongoing roadway reconstruction — and the National Wildlife Refuge Center, which now attracts about 40,000 visitors a year to its site adjacent to the Dumbarton Bridge toll plaza. Placement of stops on Willow Road will become feasible, planners hope, when road work is completed this summer. With the selection of appropriate stops at the Wildlife Refuge, the planners conclude that Line DB could accommodate service to that site without route deviations or schedule changes.

Currently, Line DB operates six round trips each on weekday morning and afternoon commute periods. Buses travel between BART/Union City and Stanford Industrial Park in Palo Alto.

**Three AC Transit retirees die**

Laura L. Rikli, 83, who retired in 1968 after 25 years as a driver, died July 6 in Alameda. Hired in 1942, she had the initial distinction of being one of AC Transit’s predecessor’s first women drivers; then she won subsequent honors for her safety record — 16 years without a chargeable accident. At the time of her retirement, she was an Emeryville Division transbay driver and reportedly one of the most frequently commended operators of that time.

She is survived by her daughter, Winifred Paris.

**Elton C. Forbes**, 72, who was a veteran dispatcher at the time of his retirement in 1979, died June 30 in Castro Valley. Forbes’ retirement capped a 31-year transit career, all but four of which had been spent as a dispatcher. He had begun his tenure of service as a driver in 1948.

He is survived by his widow, Violet, and sons, Donald and Glen.

**William J. Goetz**, 62, who retired from his job in Building Maintenance in 1984 after 13 years of District service, died July 30 in San Lorenzo.

He is survived by his widow, Doris, and four children: Robin, Paul, Michael, and Tony.
**Actions of the Board**

At a regular meeting June 12, the Board of Directors:

- Referred bids for lubrication products to management for evaluation, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized General Manager to enter agreement calling for WESTCAT operation of Line 30-Z (Martinez-Richmond) for one year, with the District providing 25% subsidy, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.

At an adjourned regular meeting June 26, the Board of Directors:

- Approved slate of proposed activities in connection with the District’s upcoming 25th anniversary, on motion of Director Fajans.

At a regular meeting July 10, the Board of Directors:

- Awarded contract for lubrication products to Union Oil Company, with proviso that separate contracts be awarded by other Regional Transit Association organizations involved in the purchase, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Adopted resolution establishing appropriation limit for District tax proceeds, Fiscal Year 1985-86, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Awarded contract to S.J. Amoroso Construction Co., Inc./Verrett Construction Co. for Seminary Division service building, fuel island, bus washer, paving and utilities, on motion of Director Rinehart.

Scheduled public hearing for proposed transbay fare increase, on motion of Director Rinehart.

Authorized General Manager to develop Request for Proposal for consultant services related to transit funding alternatives, on motion of Director Rinehart.