

# Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

THE NEWS RESOURCE FOR THE BUS AND MOTORCOACH INDUSTRY

## Coach operators are asked to seek security training

WASHINGTON — Letters are on their way to thousands of motorcoach operators inviting them to participate in a security training program being financed by the Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Administration.

The letters are from the United

Motorcoach Association and the American Bus Association which have contracted with the TSA to deliver the security training to more than 2,000 motorcoach operators nationwide.

*Operation Secure Transport*, as the program is called, is available to operators regardless of whether

they are members of either association.

The program, which was announced in November and promoted in the Dec. 15 issue of *Bus & Motorcoach News*, will provide operators with valuable security training, plus critical information that will assist them in developing

a security ready environment at their companies.

The program is designed to help operators deal with either criminal or terrorist attacks aimed at passengers, employees, buses or facilities.

Coach companies across the U.S. are getting letters from the associations asking them to partic-

ipate in the program. Operators must return a signed form that accompanies the letter and commits the operator to the program. The first 2,200 operators that return the form will participate.

The training is aimed at drivers, dispatchers, ticket agents, management, and maintenance staff.

## MOTORCOACH EXPO 2004

MOVES INTO ATLANTA FEBRUARY 7-10.

SEE PAGE 13



## Transportation bill is atop legislative agenda of industry

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate went back to work late last month and, after a momentary stumble, passed a catchall spending bill that included funding for the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The Senate action meant the motorcoach industry's No. 1 legislative priority for the second session of the 108th Congress — funding for USDOT and its agencies — was met right away.

Next on the industry's agenda is Congressional passage of a six-year transportation and highway bill.

The United Motorcoach Association and the American Bus Association, along with the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, are eager to get a surface transportation reauthorization bill through Congress as soon as possible — provided a number of key provisions are either excluded or included.

For that to happen, however, Congress and the Bush administration must reconcile three separate pieces of legislation and meet a four-week deadline for writing a single new bill. Don't hold your breath.

Funding for federal highway and public

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 ▶

## National Park Service jumps into D.C. bus traffic fray

WASHINGTON — Here we go again.

Just as the motorcoach industry begins digesting a government report that outlines actions that could seriously hurt the tour-and-charter bus industry in Washington D.C., a federal agency has begun work on another study that likely will impact operators as

well.

The National Park Service is seeking public input for a new study it says is needed to respond to growing transportation and parking problems that tourists face when they visit the nation's capital and the Washington landmarks it manages.

"The needs are changing and

we want to address concerns and complaints that visitors have expressed to us," said Bill Line, a spokesman for the Park Service.

He said the Park Service study will offer wide ranging recommendations for improving the transporting of tourists, including a single or multiple transportation system that could be run by the gov-

ernment, a private contractor or a combination of both.

The Park Service currently contracts with a private company to provide sightseeing tours for visitors, while a number of private companies offer tours and shuttle services. Additionally, motorcoach companies from throughout the U.S. and Canada bring thousands

of visitors to the nation's capital every day.

The study is expected to be completed by year end and its recommendations implemented starting next year and continuing until late in 2007.

Word of the new study comes just weeks after the motorcoach

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 ▶

### The DOCKET

#### Crash Investigation

The National Transportation Safety Board plans to thoroughly probe the crash of a church-owned motorcoach last October in Louisiana. **Page 4**

#### Pennsylvania Tolls Soar

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission bumped up tolls on the heavily-traveled roadway by 42 percent effective Aug. 1. **Page 4**

#### Kentucky Tax Relief?

A leading legislator wants to exempt charter bus operators from

the state sales tax. **Page 4**

#### Transit Safety

Key players in the transit sector have agreed to develop a voluntary safety oversight program. The NTSB recommended transits shape up — five years ago. **Page 5**

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## Lakefront grows with milestone bus

BROOK PARK, Ohio — Lakefront Lines, one of the nation's largest tour and charter operators and the biggest coach company in Ohio, has stepped up its fleet renewal program by purchasing 19 MCI J4500 coaches.

"For a company of our size, we have one of the newest fleets," says Lakefront President Tom Goebel. "The majority of our coaches are less than three years old."

Lakefront operates a fleet of 104 coaches, including 47 J4500s and 37 MCI E4500s. All of the company J models are equipped with Detroit Diesel Series 60 engines and ZF ASTronic transmissions.

The newest J-coach to be added to the Lakefront fleet is a landmark bus — the 2,500th unit off Motor Coach Industries' E- and J-model production line. To mark the production milestone, MCI is conducting a special presentation at Motorcoach Expo 2004 to commemorate the delivery. The ceremony will be Monday, Feb. 9.

Family-operated Lakefront Lines is a long-time MCI customer. The company was founded 40 years and has been owned by the Goebel family since 1980. With headquarters in Brook Park, a suburb of Cleveland, and branches in Toledo, Cincinnati and Columbus, Lakefront has grown to more than

500 full and part-time employees.

The company serves 1.2 million passengers annually in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Indiana and Kentucky. It provides regular-route service to more than 15 major metropolitan areas, and offers more than 110 organized tours annually to casinos, theaters and other attractions.

On Feb. 1, Lakefront conducted its 17th annual Open House. The event features representatives from select destinations, as well as its own staff, to meet with old and potential new customers.

Attending the open house can be rewarding for Lakefront customers. Significant discounts are



offered for any tour that is booked and paid in full that day. The event also includes refreshments, prizes and entertainment.

Safety is a key aspect Lakefront

Lines' culture. Every June, the company gives a generous bonus to full-time drivers who achieve an accident-free year. Last year, the bonus was \$10,538.

## Delaware travel agency reacquires Rainbow Charter Service

Wilmington, Del. — A travel agency that specializes in motorcoach tours has repurchased Rainbow Charter Service, a Newark, Del.-based charter bus operator.

Bob Older, president of Creative Travel Inc. of Wilmington, said the deal was

completed last month. Creative Travel had purchased Rainbow Charter two years ago but a dispute undid the deal, resulting in Rainbow being sold back to the former owners.

"After 13 months, it's nice to have Rainbow Charter back with our travel family," said Older.

Rainbow Charter, which has been in business for 21 years, will retain its name and identify but operate under the corporate umbrella of Creative Travel.

The deal adds 20 employees to Creative Travel's staff, six motorcoaches and roughly \$1 million in annual revenue. Rainbow also leases three coaches.

Creative Travel is an award-winning agency that organizes more than 150 motorcoach tours annually to destinations that include New York City, Washington, D.C., Canada and other cities across North America.

With the repurchase of

Rainbow Charter, the company will now have its own fleet of coaches to transport both large and small groups, including church, corporate and school groups, said Older.

Creative Travel is a full-service agency, offering land, air, train and cruise packages.

Drop in  
Penntex 1/2

# The DOCKET

## NTSB to probe fatal crash of church coach

WASHINGTON — The National Transportation Safety Board has decided to conduct a full-blown investigation of the fatal crash of a church-owned and operated motorcoach that smashed into the rear of a tractor-trailer last October in Tallulah, La.

Eight of the 14 passengers in the 1992 Neoplan coach were killed and the other six sustained serious injuries. The 66-year-old driver was injured but survived. A relief driver on-board was killed.

Witnesses, driving behind the coach for more than 30 miles, reported the bus would speed up, slow down and drift from lane to lane. On two occasions before the crash the coach almost struck vehicles as it was drifting across lanes. The crash occurred at about 10:50 a.m. on a dry Interstate 20 on an overcast day.

The driver was questioned by an officer from the local sheriff's office about 20 minutes after crash. Still trapped in the wreckage, the driver told the officer

that he didn't know what had happened, that he must have either "nodded off" or fallen asleep.

Most of those on the bus were members of the First Baptist Church of El Dorado, Texas. Three women on the coach were not members of the church.

The bus was on a multi-state "Senior Ambassador Tour" called "Amish Country Plus" that originated in El Dorado. The bus had been on the road for less than two hours the morning of the incident.

The NTSB's preliminary investigation turned up a number of factors that easily could become focal points for the agency's formal probe of the crash. These include:

- The drivers operating the bus did not keep a log of their hours of service.
- The driver stated he did not sleep soundly at night, getting up several times a night, each night.
- A medicine kit carried by



the driver contained seven prescription drugs and upwards of 20 over-the-counter herbal supplements. The driver said he had taken a high-blood pressure medicine the morning of the crash.

- Many of those killed in the crash appeared to have been crushed by seats that ripped loose from the floor and slammed forward from the force of the impact.

It took hours to remove the seats to get to the victims.

- The church did not have a systematic preventative maintenance or inspection program.

One non-safety related aspect of the trip also may be scrutinized. Three passengers were not members of the church. They apparently paid the church to participate in the trip, but the driver said

their money was used to cover expenses and that the church did not make a profit.

The United Motorcoach Association has been granted "party status" to the investigation by the NTSB. That means the association will be allowed to participate in a future public hearing on the crash and to question those individuals providing testimony.

## Kentucky may exempt parts, repairs from state sales tax

FRANKFORT, Ky. — A bill has been introduced in the Kentucky General Assembly to exempt charter buses from having to pay state sales taxes on repairs and replacements parts.

The bill also would exempt charter coaches from the motor vehicle usage tax.

The bill was introduced by Sen. Richard L. Roeding, who is president pro tem of the state Senate. Roeding, a Republican, is from Lakeside Park in northern Kentucky. His district includes Boone, Gallatin and Kenton counties.

Charter bus operators having federal interstate operating authority or a charter bus certificate issued by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet would not have to pay the state 6 percent sales tax on repairs or replacement part purchases.

The law also would apply to commercial motor vehicles that are owned by nonresidents and used primarily in a state other than Kentucky but which are required to be registered in Kentucky by reason of operational requirements or fleet proration agreements.

Roeding's bill, Senate Bill 51, includes a list of repairs and parts that qualify for the exemption. The list includes tires, brakes, engines, transmissions, drive trains, chassis, body parts and their components.

Parts and repairs specifically excluded from the exemption include fuel, machine oils, hydraulic fluid, brake fluid, grease, supplies or accessories not essential to the operation of the motor vehicle itself, expect when sold as part of the assembled coach.

## Pa. Turnpike OKs big toll hike

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Tolls on the Pennsylvania Turnpike will jump 42 percent starting Aug. 1.

The increase totals 5.3 cents a mile for commercial vehicles and 1.8 cents a mile for passenger cars.

That means a 40,000-pound motorcoach (Class 5) traveling from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia will pay a toll of \$51.57, up from today's toll of \$36.35 for the 295-mile trip. The 351-mile trip from the Ohio border to Philadelphia will cost the operator of a 48,000-pound (Class 6) coach \$70.20, up from today's \$51.65.

One Pennsylvania newspaper reported that while the commission received more than 100 phone calls and e-mails regarding the proposed increase, only James Runk, president of the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association, showed up late last month to protest the hike in person at a meeting of the turnpike commission.

Runk was quoted as telling the

commission that the toll hike "could drive some small-business carriers out of business." He asked the commission to phase the increase in over a period of several years, similar to how the Ohio Turnpike managed its last toll increase to "soften the blow."

But Commission Chairman Mitchell Rubin told a wire service that his way of softening the blow was to show turnpike users "that they're getting something in return for their dollar."

The five-member Turnpike Commission reportedly delayed the increase until August to give businesses a chance to build the higher fees into their cost structure.

When the new tolls go into effect it will mark the first increase in 13 years. The turnpike commission pointed out that the hike matches the inflation rate since the last increase in 1991, when they were increased 30 percent.

The toll boost will generate more than \$100 million annually

to be used exclusively to rebuild or replace 600 of the turnpike's 815 bridges over the next 10 years, as well as to reconstruct many sections of the roadway. It costs between \$8 million and \$10 million to completely rebuild a mile of the 64-year-old, 530-mile turnpike. Currently, the turnpike commission generates roughly \$400 million annually from tolls and another \$10 million from concessions.

"Not one penny of the increase will go toward new administration costs or increased bureaucracy," said Turnpike CEO Joseph Brimmeier.

Although there are eight different toll categories for commercial vehicles, the average increase will be 5.3 cents per mile.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike has two routes, a north-south corridor, stretching from Philadelphia to Scranton (I-476), and an east-west leg from Philadelphia to the Ohio state line (I-76).

# Transit bus organizations agree to safety program

## Better late than never

**WASHINGTON** — Key players in the transit bus sector have agreed to promote development of voluntary safety oversight programs for public transit agencies and the states where they operate.

The plans are to cover critical safety-related issues, including driver and employee selection and training, vehicle maintenance, drug and alcohol abuse programs, safety data acquisition and analysis, and security.

The agreement comes more than five years after an investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board found that "substantial safety deficiencies" exist among public transit agencies.

The NTSB appeared stunned when it learned there was almost no federal or state safety oversight of public bus systems even though the FTA was pumping out \$6.34 billion in taxpayer revenue annually to subsidize the operation of public transit agencies. "The public expects that transit bus operations, whether publicly owned or subsidized, are safe," the NTSB said at the time.

The issue of transit bus safety is a sore spot with many in the motorcoach industry. From time to time, NTSB investigations have turned up significant safety deficiencies on transit buses. If those buses had been owned by a private bus company the operator would have been fined, the buses would have been taken out of service or operations would have been suspended.

There are no federal safety rules for transit buses like there are for over-the-road coaches, and few states exercise any safety oversight over transit agencies and their equipment.

Particularly galling to private operators is the fact that the unregulated transit agencies frequently turn themselves into competitors of the heavily regulated private bus companies.

About three years after the NTSB announced its findings, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the Federal Transit Administration, the American Public Transportation Associa-

tion and the Community Transportation Association of America began working together to develop a transit bus safety program.

The NTSB had recommended that the four organizations "develop a model and comprehensive

safety program(s), and provide it to all transit agencies." The goal was to encourage the development of transit bus safety practices that transit agencies of varying sizes could easily implement.

**Signing the Model Transit**

**Bus Safety and Security Program Memorandum of Understanding** were Federal Transit Administrator Jenna Dorn, AASHTO Executive Director John Horsley, APTA President Bill Millar, and CTAA Executive Director

Dale Marsico.

The memorandum commits the four organizations to promote voluntary development and implementation of bus safety and security plans at the state and transit system levels.



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# Military transportation unit gets new name

FT. EUSTIS, Va. — The Military Traffic Management Command, a name familiar to hundreds of coach operators that have contracted with the Department of Defense to transport military personnel during the past 30

years, has been redesignated.

The organization's new name is the (Military) Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.

The name change is designed to reflect the command's new emphasis in deploying military

forces, and its end-to-end distribution operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, said Maj. Gen. Ann Dunwoody, the command's commanding general.

"Over time, we have literally outgrown our name," said

Gen. Dunwoody.

"Our new name ... better represents our No. 1 priority and renewed focus — to support the warfighter through deployment, sustainment and redeployment," Dunwoody added.

## Congress

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

transportation programs expires Feb. 29, because last year Congress wasn't able to agree on a long-term bill. Spending levels and new priorities got in the way. Instead, lawmakers opted in September for a five-month extension of the existing law.

Here are a handful of provisions of the various transportation bills that CVSA and coach industry lobbyists are tracking and trying to influence.

- The House bill would change the federal-private "match" for wheelchair accessibility grants from the current 90/10 split to a 50/50 split. The industry doesn't like that idea.

- The House bill fails to deal adequately with the issue of unfair competition the industry faces from heavily subsidized public transit agencies for both charter bus service and intercity scheduled bus service. There are genuine pitfalls in the various bills related to dealing with transit competition.

- All of the bills provide for increased safety enforcement of one sort or another. Of particular interest is the so-called new-entrant program that calls for inspections of start-up motor carriers within months of beginning operations. Funding levels also vary among the bills.

- President Bush's reauthorization bill contains money for intermodal passenger facilities. The House bill doesn't have any money for such terminals.

- The House bill calls for a big increase in fuel taxes, while the Senate and Bush Administration oppose an increase. There were indications last month, however, the administration might relent, but that remains to be seen.

- The Senate and House bills both have provisions that would give states the flexibility to do commercial vehicle traffic enforcement that is not tied to an inspection. The bills approach the issue differently, however.

- Both the Senate and House bills have recommended first-year funding levels that exceed that recommended by CVSA, but less than CVSA wants by the sixth year.

It seems unlikely that a reauthorization bill will pass both the Senate and House — where committee markup has yet to occur — before the Feb. 29 deadline. Another extension beyond Feb. 29 is reportedly being considered.

## Drop In ZF Transmission ad

# Colorado eases up slightly on diesel emissions tests

DENVER — Colorado has relaxed — slightly — its diesel emissions testing requirements. The changes to the state opacity testing program resulted from legislation adopted last year.

Doug Decker, environmental protection specialist for the air pollution control division of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, said the changes became effective last month.

The most significant change for fleet operators and maintenance managers has to do with exemptions for diesel emissions testing.

Under the new law, heavy-duty diesel vehicles will be exempt for their first four years of service. That's an increase from the previous two-year exemption.

There is no similar change for light-duty diesel vehicles.

The new law redefines the weight break between light- and heavy-duty diesel vehicles from 7,500 pounds empty weight, to 14,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating.

This change, said Decker, more realistically reflects the difference between large diesel-powered pickup trucks and SUVs, and commercial vehicles in Colorado.

The new legislation, HB 03-1053, also provides for a biennial

## Two transits seek private charter firms

The following public transit providers have informed the United Motorcoach Association of their intent to provide charter bus service unless willing and able private operators step forward to offer their services, or to bid on contract opportunities.

UMA urges operators to take the time to respond to these notices:

Macon, Ga. Deadline: Feb. 9, 2004. Write to: Joseph McElroy Jr., Executive Director, Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority, 815 Riverside Dr., Macon, GA 31201 Phone: (912) 746-1318.

Grand Haven, Mich. Deadline: Feb. 22, 2004. Write to: Julie Bildner, Transportation Director, Harbor Transit, 440 North Ferry, Grand Haven, MI 49417. Phone: (616) 842-3200.

test cycle (i.e. every two years) for heavy-duty diesel vehicles in their first 10 years of service. The current annual test cycle is retained for light-duty vehicles.

Other changes in the new law:  
An opacity meter must be used

for all fleet self-certification tests on vehicles greater than 10 years. This means that operators can no longer use visual testing by trained observers for older vehicles in the self-certification fleets.

An automated opacity meter-

ing protocol is adopted providing flexibility for self-certification fleets.

These fleets can begin using an SAE J1667 snap-acceleration test or equivalent test. Previously, Colorado had no provision for a

snap-acceleration test procedure.

Additional information about the new law is available from Decker by calling (303) 692-3126, or contacting him by e-mail at doug.decker@state.co.us. He has a plain English summary of the law.

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## OPINION

# Watch the mail

Many people still don't believe it but innocence and trust no longer live in America.

September 11 destroyed it. The daily news and periodic movements of the government's terror alert level remind us regularly that times have changed.

Which is why Congress and the U.S. Transportation Security Administration think it's important that private bus operators receive security training.

TSA has given the American Bus Association and the United Motorcoach Association \$1.6 million to deliver security training to more than 2,000 motorcoach operators across the U.S.

Letters from the two associations are in the mail, asking operators to participate in a training program specifically designed for the motorcoach industry.

We urge operators receiving the letters to sign up. The first step is easy: simply sign and return the form that accompanies the letter coming from the associations.

The first 2,200 operators who return signed forms will receive training materials and participate.

Doubtless there are scores of operators who will scoff at the idea and consider the whole scheme a waste of taxpayer money.

They may be right.

But then again, given the mushy and changing definition of

terrorism, all it takes is one small incident by one small-time idiot to screw up everything.

Increasingly, attacks on bus drivers are being defined as acts of terrorism and federal charges are brought against perpetrators.

There's also a new concept of liability that is rapidly gaining recognition in the courts that could devastate your company if you are unprepared when a security-related incident strikes. The concept is known as negligent failure to plan.

September 11 gave new impetus to this insidious concept.

The federal judge handling the litigation over the 9/11 terrorist attacks ruled that the airlines, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and the owners of the World Trade Center had a responsibility to protect the people on the ground and in the skies.

Some whacko attacking one of your drivers could leave you wide open for a liability claim under the failure-to-plan concept. But if the driver has received security training it could help prevent a successful claim that any security omissions were deliberate and intentional.

Security training won't inoculate you in such circumstances but claims against you will be that much more difficult to sustain.

So, when that letter from the UMA and the ABA lands on your desk, do the prudent thing.

## Non-compete and confidentiality agreements



By Thomas D. DeMatteo  
Vice President and General Counsel  
ABC Companies

There's a significant difference between non-competition agreements and confidentiality agreements.

The former is a general prohibition against competition; i.e. an employee is prohibited from working for a competitor in any capacity. A confidentiality agreement, on the other hand, is focused on protecting proprietary or trade secret information.

Covenants not to compete are subject to a reasonableness standard. However, once an employer proves the existence of a trade secret, the protection of that sensitive information is not subject to a test of reasonableness.

Restraints against competition will only be enforced by courts if they are reasonable in time and distance, and are tailored to protect a legitimate protectable interest. Protectable interests include: customer relationships, especially long-term ones; customer identities, even prospective ones; trade secrets and confidential information; patents, trademarks and trade names; goodwill, and special, unique or extraordinary skills.

Several factors affect the

length of time that is deemed reasonable: the nature of the industry; the frequency of customer contact; the availability of public information about the customer, and the amount of time reasonable to recoup an employer's investment in territory development and training.

Courts seldom criticize time restraints within six months to a year. One- to three-year agreements are generally common for senior executives and, in certain cases, like mergers and acquisitions, five-year agreements have been upheld.

Restrictive covenants, which prohibit an employee from competing against an employer wherever it conducts business, are generally considered too broad unless the employee truly had a position that was national in scope. Courts usually focus on the territory of the employee.

Courts have developed what is called the "blue pencil" doctrine. Courts will uphold the agreement but narrow the time period or geographic limitation by penciling in their own standards of reasonableness.

Lastly, employers tend to forget one key item, which can completely render an otherwise reasonable agreement unenforceable. The employer must give the employee consideration (something of value) for obtaining the restrictive covenant. If the agreement is signed before employment begins, then the job itself is adequate consideration. If employment has already begun, then something more must be

given such as a promotion, bonus, raise, additional vacation time and the like.

Courts analyze confidentiality agreements differently.

Agreements not to disclose confidential or proprietary information or trade secrets are not limited by time or geography. The information is protected so long as it remains confidential and proprietary. Once an employer proves the existence of a trade secret the protection of the sensitive information is not subject to a test of reasonableness.

To qualify as a trade secret, the information must be an employer's particular secret rather than a general secret of the trade, and it must be of particular importance to the conduct of the employer's business.

Factors that determine whether or not something constitutes a trade secret include the:

- Extent to which the information is known outside the employer's business;
- Extent to which it is known by others involved in the employer's business;
- Measures taken by the employer to guard the secrecy of the information.

Understanding these key principles will help you work with your lawyer to draft enforceable agreements to protect your business' goodwill and competitive advantage.

*Dilworth Paxson, LLP, 12th Annual Employment Law Conference, November 2003.*

*Thomas D. DeMatteo also is an adjunct professor of law at Hamline University School of Law.*

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# The Capacity Trap

## Cutting prices may not be smart

By Norm Brodsky

Every business faces temptations, and there is none greater than the temptation to go for the easy sale.

Of course, the easiest way to sell anything is simply to cut your price, but most businesspeople are smart enough to realize they can't do much of that without getting into serious trouble.

There is one form of price cutting, however, that even experienced businesspeople fall victim to. I've seen it wreck industries and bring down established companies.

I'm talking about the practice of selling unused capacity at a discount to make sure it doesn't go to waste. I call it the capacity trap.

Why is it a trap? Because at first glance, it looks as though you're making a sound business decision.

In fact, you're putting yourself on the road to bankruptcy.

I'll give you the classic example of the guy who leases a truck, hires two workers, and goes into the freight-hauling business. He charges — say, \$45 an hour — and books three days a week of business. Then he hits a dry spell. He can't find anyone else who wants to buy his service at that price. Finally, a customer shows up and offers \$25 an hour for the other two days.

The guy thinks, "Why not? I have to pay for leasing the truck anyway. I might as well get some income out of it."

He accepts the offer, which brings in an extra \$400 a week. The guy is satisfied. He's getting full use of his truck. He's not letting capacity go to waste. What could be wrong? Plenty.

For openers, he's no doubt making less money on the sale than he imagines. That's because he's focusing on one factor: capacity — what it costs to lease the truck.

Meanwhile, he's ignoring all the variable costs he incurs only when he uses the capacity: gas, wear and tear, and, above all, labor. He might actually do better by letting the truck stand idle those two days, but he wouldn't know it because he's looking only at sales, not profit.

That's a common failing among people starting out in business. Unfortunately, it's often a fatal one.

But let's assume this guy has taken his operating costs into account and figured out he can make a small profit on the sale. It's

still a bad idea for him to do the deal at a lower price.

I'd argue that it's always a bad idea to cut prices simply to avoid having unused capacity.

First, there's the cost of capital. Whenever you make a sale, you are, in effect, lending money to a customer, at least until the bill gets paid. It's like making an investment in the form of credit. You need to make sure you're getting a good return — that you're using your capital to generate enough profit to keep you going.

It's a mistake for any business to waste capital on low-margin sales. It can be suicide for a new business, which usually has limited capital and will never get beyond the start-up phase if its capital runs out.

Second, there's the opportunity cost. When you fill capacity with low-margin sales, you leave no room for high-margin sales. What will the freight hauler do if he finds a customer who will pay the full price? Lease another truck? Will he even bother looking for another full-price customer?

Meanwhile, by cutting prices, he has just brought a new competitor into his market: himself.

This is the third reason not to go after low-margin sales, and it's based on a general rule of business, namely, that prices always seek their lowest level. When you charge two prices for exactly the same service, you are competing against yourself.

Customers are not stupid. Sooner or later, they'll figure out that you're willing to sell for less. When they do, you'll have a very hard time getting any of them to pay more.

By then, moreover, you will probably have lost your current full-price customers — which is the fourth, and most important, reason for not discounting to fill capacity. The practice alienates precisely those customers you must have to be successful, maybe even to survive.

They'll be furious when they find out you're charging other people less for the same service. They'll think you've been ripping them off all along. From then on, forget it. I don't care what price you offer them. Those customers are gone.

Understand, I'm not saying you should never offer customers a discount. But, there has to be a reason for it other than excess capacity. A

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customer's buying in volume, for example, is a reason that everyone understands. Or, you might offer a discount to a customer who agrees to certain terms. Better yet, maintain your price but offer something extra, a value-added service.

Then again, you may not be so

lucky. You may be sitting there with an empty, idle truck, and a customer will come along who is not interested in a value-added service or a volume discount or whatever. He just wants to pay \$25 instead of the usual \$45.

In that case, my friend, you go

back to the first lesson of business: you can't do business with everybody. There are people in this world who want more for their money than you can provide.

There's only one word you can use to deal with them — no.

Reprinted from Inc. Magazine

## INDUSTRY NEWS

## Park Service

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

industry began digging into a far-reaching study of parking and traffic management problems in Washington and finding potential landmines.

That study, which was undertaken on behalf of a public-private partnership, called the Tour Bus Management Initiative, was conducted by the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

One feature of that report is a plan to creating a Downtown Circulator, which might use shuttle buses to transport tourists from staging areas near the Capital Mall to the various attractions. Under such a scenario, motorcoach operators might be required to drop off their passengers at the staging areas.

Operators have complained that such a setup could be devastating to their industry because their groups might not be able to stay together. Senior and school groups would be particular vulnerable to such a system.

Line said the Park Service study also will look into methods of transporting individuals and groups to attractions along the two-mile Capital Mall and outside of the mall area, as well as to hotels and restaurants in other parts of the region.

Additionally, he said those involved in the Parks Service study will work closely with the Volpe team, other government agencies and private organizations that are doing related studies or are involved in transportation issues in Washington and the surrounding area. "We plan to work with everybody," he emphasized.

While the Park Service study is in its infancy, researchers already have done a substantial amount of work, including surveying Washington visitors on transportation issues, examining buses that could be used for a new transportation system, and looking at how other communities handle visitor transportation services.

Findings in the survey showed that 41 percent of those questioned spent two to four days visiting an average of five attractions each day. Just over half of them said they would like to see transportation service between the attractions, and other locations in the area such as hotels and restaurants.

Buses the Park Service considered include standard transit buses, articulated transit buses, small transit buses, trolley replicas, double-decker buses and tourist trams. Routes would be developed that would minimize travel time and deliver people as close as possible to as many attractions at possible.

The review of other communities — done by the Volpe Center for the Park

Service — included Boston, Philadelphia, Orlando, London and Savannah, Ga. Ideas gleamed from the study of Savannah included a free downtown shuttle service that takes tourists through the city's historic district and strict regulations that require tour bus operators to use only specifically designated routes and areas for unloading passengers and for parking.

Line said the Park Service plans to hold a series of meetings to gather input from everyone who is interested — motorcoach companies; transit agencies; tourist organizations; local, state and federal government officials, and other groups or individuals.

The first meetings are planned for Thursday, Feb. 5, in Room 9 of the Old Post Office Pavilion, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, and Friday, Feb. 6, at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington Memorial Cemetery. Both meetings will be from 2 to 4 p.m. and 5 to 8 p.m.

The dates for other meetings have not been scheduled.

Meanwhile, about a dozen people spoke at a public meeting in Washington last month to discuss the Volpe study for the Tour Bus Management Initiative.

Several speakers argued against the development of the Downtown Circulator.

"The circulator idea was not met with an enthusiastic response," noted a Washington D.C. official who attended the meeting.

Theodore Knappen, an attorney for the American Bus Association and one of those who spoke at the meeting, stressed that several companies now provide a circulator service and any of them could easily expand if more were needed.

"There is no need to consider spending tens of millions of dollars to create a new publicly operated circulator system, which would add dozens of new buses to the D.C. streets and potentially destroy the existing private-sector system," Knappen insisted.

He said he agreed with the study team's expression of doubts about the overall benefit of another circulator service, noting the need for more, not less, loading space and the potential for detrimental changes in the way tour buses serve their customers. "We share those doubts," he added.

Knappen said he supported a study idea that Union Station would make a good location for a bus parking facility, especially if new parking rates were established, which the study recommended.

"We strongly support the report's recommendation that tour bus parking pricing policies should allow tour bus operators to use multiple parking facilities with unlimited ins and outs," Knappen said.

The Tour Bus Management Initiative study group plans to begin working with a consultant to develop a financially feasible and sustainable implementation plan.



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# Tax bill could have disastrous consequences for bus industry

WASHINGTON — A bill designed to close a tax loophole being exploited by giant defense contractors could have the unintended consequence of harming hundreds of motorcoach operators, according to the United Motorcoach Association.

One provision of Senate Bill 1637, which was introduced late last year by Senate Finance

Committee Chairman Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, is supposed to fix certain loopholes in government lease/buy-back arrangements.

However, UMA and others who've studied the bill believe the IRS could interpret it as eliminating the ability of tax-paying private motor carriers to use "straight-line" depreciation for equipment used to provide contract bus serv-

ices to tax-exempt entities.

Many private operators contract with government entities, military camps and school districts to provide bus service. These contracts are usually for periods of one-year or longer.

"Section 476 of Senate Bill 1637 appears to disallow the use of straight-line depreciation for any contract service if it is provided to

a tax-exempt entity," says UMA Vice President for Government and Industry Relations Norm Littler.

"If this occurs, the result will be to increase both taxes and accounting fees for bus and motorcoach companies," says Littler. "It will also mean increasing the time required to replace aging equipment in fleet modernization pro-

grams by decreasing the number of vehicles that can be replaced in any given year."

UMA has begun working with the Senate Finance Committee to seek clarifying language that will provide protection for contracted transportation services.

The bill's intent is to amend the IRS Code to comply with World Trade Organization rulings.

## People

Holiday Tours of Randleman, N.C., has honored one of its drivers for achieving 1 million miles of accident-free driving. Driver Wayne Triplett was honored last month at the Holiday Tours' Annual Employee Appreciation Dinner. He was singled out for his 20-plus years of driving with no preventable incidents. Triplett reached the milestone last March. To honor his achievement, he and his wife, Kathy, were presented with a cruise to the Caribbean.



## Greyhound marketing guru retires

DALLAS — The over-the-road bus industry's top marketing executive, Ralph Borland of Greyhound Lines, has retired after 32 years at Greyhound.

Borland, whose title for the past 16 years has been vice president of marketing, helped direct an annual marketing and advertising budget of more than \$27 million.

Under his guidance, Greyhound marketing campaigns won a number of advertising awards, including the American Marketing Association's EFFIE and the Travel Industry Association of America's Mercury Award.

It was under his leadership that Greyhound's creative team introduced Friendly, the Greyhound "spokesdog." Friendly is familiar to many TV viewers, especially those who watch wrestling, Jerry Springer and other low-brow shows.

He moved Greyhound advertising away from "leave-the-driving-to-us" mantra, to the humor of a talking dog pushing cheap fares.

He also is responsible for the current livery on Greyhound coaches and the newest Greyhound logo.

Borland began his career with Greyhound as a PackageXpress clerk in Philadelphia. In 1976, he

became the youngest-ever Greyhound terminal manager when he took over operations at the company's Buffalo, N.Y., terminal. Three years later, Borland moved to regional marketing manager and worked his way up, becoming vice president of marketing in 1987.

"Ralph will be missed, and we wish him luck in his future endeavors," said Steve Gorman, president and chief executive of Greyhound. "Everyone on the Greyhound team is grateful for his many accomplishments, in addition to bringing his warmth and humor to the company for so many years."



Ralph Borland

Borland, who is 56, plans to spend his retirement in the Florida Keys scuba diving and fishing. A replacement is being sought.

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\* These figures are based on yearly estimates and may vary depending upon the number of hours your bus(es) operate and actual number of miles driven.

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COMMERCIAL COACH

# MOTORCOACH EXPO 2004

## Taking a bus to Atlanta? Watch idling

ATLANTA — Attention Motorcoach Manufacturers and Operators: If you're taking a coach or coaches to Atlanta for Motorcoach Expo, make sure you abide by the city's tough nine-month-old idling ordinance.

Failure to do so could make your trip to Atlanta very expensive.

On May 1, it became against the law to idle a bus or truck on any Atlanta street or public place for more than 15 minutes. However, the limitation doesn't apply to coaches under certain circumstances:

- When the bus is being used to supply heat or air conditioning necessary for passenger safety or comfort. In those situations, the idling is limited to a maximum of 25 minutes.

- When the ambient temperature is less than 32 degrees, idling is limited to a maximum of



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25 minutes.

- When the bus is motionless because of traffic conditions.

Violation of the ordinance is punishable by a minimum fine of \$500.



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## Sandberg will speak at Motorcoach Expo

ATLANTA — Annette Sandberg, the nation's top bus and truck safety official, will be a featured speaker at Motorcoach Expo here Feb. 8. She will speak at the Legislative & Regulatory Update session Sunday morning.

Sandberg, who became administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration last August, is expected to discuss key federal safety initiatives impacting the coach industry.

As only the second administrator of the FMCSA since the agency was established four years ago, Sandberg has embarked on an activist program of implementing programs mandated by Congress and eliminating proposed safety rules that hold little promise of having much impact.

It was Sandberg who announced last April that the motorcoach industry was being exempted from changes to the federal hours-of-service rules that went



Annette Sandberg

into effect for truckers at the start of the year.

In July, she announced the FMCSA was shelving a handful of proposed rules that would have affected the coach industry, including rules governing operation of television receivers, data display terminals, sleeper berths and out-of-service criteria.

She also announced the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 ▶

*After 9/11, it became obvious to the industry that we couldn't rely on charter and tour work alone. We needed to diversify our services and better utilize our fleets. We needed to get creative in selling our services and keep our customers returning to our door with their needs.*

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  - Improving Utilization Rates
  - Strengthening Your Balance Sheet
  - Operating & Managing a Luxury Motorcoach Service
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The Solution Seminars are Sunday, February 8, beginning at 11 a.m. and continue through 10:30 a.m. Monday, February 9.

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**EXPO 2004****Schedule of Events****Saturday, Feb. 7, 2004**

**1 - 5 p.m.** Expo Registration Open  
**6 - 9 p.m.** Welcoming Reception

**Sunday, Feb. 8, 2004**

**7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.** Expo Registration Open  
**8 - 9 a.m.** Welcoming Remarks & UMA Active Members Meeting  
**8 a.m. - 4 p.m.** Maintenance Interchange

**9 - 10 a.m.** Motorcoach Industry Outlook

Jot Bennett, Capitol Trailways of Pennsylvania  
 David Brown, Holiday Tours  
 Rick Hillard, Tri-State Tours  
 Jeff Polzien, Red Carpet Charters  
 Moderators: Victor Parra, United Motorcoach Assn.  
 Steve Klika, International Motor Coach Group

**10 - 10:45 a.m.** Legislative & Regulatory Update

Speaker: Annette Sandberg, FMCSA

**11 a.m. - Noon** Associate Member Meeting**11 - Noon** Concurrent Solution Seminars

Marketing: New Business Development  
 Operations: Improving Utilization Rates

**Noon - 2 p.m.** Operator Luncheon

Speaker: Building Your Image

**2 - 3 p.m.** Concurrent Solution Seminars

Marketing: Getting Customers Off Price  
 Operations: Securing Contract Work  
 Finance: Setting Goals & Budgets

**3:15 - 4:15 p.m.** Concurrent Solution Seminars

Marketing: Upselling Customers  
 Operations: Dealing with Customers' Fears

Finance: Utilizing Key Ratio

**4:30 - 7:30 p.m.** Exhibit Hall Open - Sneak Preview**Monday, Feb. 9, 2004**

**8 - 9 a.m.** Continental Breakfast  
**8 a.m. - 5 p.m.** Expo Registration Open  
**8:30 - 9:30 a.m.** Operating Luxury Motorcoach Services  
**9:30 - 10:30 a.m.** Concurrent Solution Seminars  
 Marketing: Business Survival  
 Operations: Pre-Trip Inspections  
 Finance: Dealing with Creditors  
 Insurance: Products Briefing  
**10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.** Exhibit Hall Open  
**11 a.m. - 2 p.m.** Lunch (In Exhibit Hall)  
**6:30 - 11 p.m.** Vision Award Gala Banquet & Reception

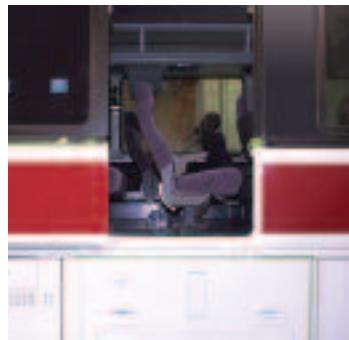
**Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2004**

**7 a.m. - 1 p.m.** Expo Registration Open  
**8 - 9 a.m.** Continental Breakfast  
**8 a.m. - 1 p.m.** Exhibit Hall Open  
**10 a.m. - 4 p.m.** Expo 2005 Space Sales  
**11 a.m. - 1 p.m.** Lunch (In Exhibit Hall)

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 Bus Washing; Systems/Parts/Supplies

Blue Beacon International .....1115  
 Travel Center; Bus Washing

BusTex Corp. .....1112  
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Chicago Association Retarded Citizens .....910  
 Accessories

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration .....613  
 Regulatory Compliance Audits

Fleet Management Solutions .....729  
 Communication Services; DOT Compliance Services; GPS

Flying J Inc. .....917  
 Fleet Services; Fuel Stops

Georgia Motorcoach Operators Association .....915  
 Industry Association

Graham Professional .....617  
 FlexAir Pillow

Gray Automotive Products Co. ....629  
 Wireless Portable Lift Systems

Iowa Export Import .....1007  
 Seat Manufacturers; Seat Parts

KIC Group .....525  
 Products: Brake drums

Krystal Koach .....1317  
 Manufacturer Buses/Coaches

Lucas Oil Products .....930  
 Lubricants

National Bus Trader Inc. .....926  
 Publications

NATSO Inc. .....715  
 National Association of Truck Stop Operators

Penntex Industries .....825  
 Alternators; Electrical Components

Ron Turley Associates .....716  
 Fleet Management, Maintenance Software

SPAL USA .....1007  
 A/C Systems; Theft/Alarm Systems; Fans/Blowers

Spectrum Industries Inc. .....1106  
 Paint; Paint Protection; Undercoating

TCF Express Leasing .....1014  
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Trip Data & Safety Mngt Inc .....720  
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Tripmaster Corporation .....814  
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Automotive Resources Inc.(Ari Hetra) .....	.117
Belanger Inc. ....	1116
Bergen Auto Upholstery .....	1208
Best Mobile Computing .....	.616
Big Rig Collision (Calgary).....	.929
Bitimec USA .....	.501
Blaupunkt .....	.529
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Pocatec Ltee .....	.824
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SecuriTrim (See Boxx Media) .....	.725
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SPAL USA .....	1007
Spectrum Industries Inc. ....	.1106
SPS Enterprises Inc. ....	.923
Stertil Koni/OMER .....	.713
Stewart & Stevenson .....	.1133
Sure Power Industries .....	.511
TCF Express Leasing .....	1014
TIB Insurance Brokers .....	.1010
Trailways Transportation System.....	.1016
Trans/Air Manufacturing Corporation .....	.1022
Transit Marketing Group .....	.1109
Transit Sales International .....	.906
Transpec Worldwide .....	.829
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## New activities at Expo 2004

One of the major new events at Expo 2004 is the Vision Award Gala Banquet. This special activity will celebrate 20 years of Expos.

The banquet and reception preceding it will be Monday, Feb. 9, in the Georgia World Congress Center.

Here's how it will work: The Expo Exhibit Hall closes at 5:30. Shuttles will transport Expo attendees to their hotels, picking them back up starting at 6 p.m. and returning them to the convention center for the banquet.

Attire for the evening is cocktail dresses for women and dark suits or black tie for men. Because it's February, appropriate coats should be brought to Atlanta.

A special seminar on luxury bus services will be conducted at 8:30 Monday, Feb. 9, in the Georgia World Congress Center. The hour-long panel discussion, moderated by UMA President & CEO Victor Parra, will feature motorcoach operators who have started and operated luxury bus services.

The discussion will focus on the ins and outs of starting and operating such services.

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## INDUSTRY NEWS

# Legislation proposed to fix Atlanta HOV lane problem

ATLANTA — A senator and a representative in the Georgia Legislature are going to bat for the motorcoach industry, seeking to get rid of a state law that bars buses from HOV lanes around Atlanta.

Sen. Jeff Millis, chairman of the Georgia Senate Industrial and Tourism Commission, has had a bill drafted that will change a state traffic law, permitting buses and motorcoaches to use HOV and left

lanes on multi-lane highways.

Currently, Georgia law bans any vehicle with six or more wheels from HOV lanes. The law was designed to keep over-the-road trucks out of HOV and left lanes.

The bill being pushed by Millis in the Senate specifically exempts buses and motorcoaches from the restriction. Rep. Don Wix has agreed to push the bill in the Georgia House.

Matthew Carswell of Capital City Trailways and president of the Georgia Motorcoach Operators Association, also reports that Janis Cannon of the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism has met with representatives from the Georgia Department of Transportation and received assurances they will support the legislation.

Coaches caught using HOV lanes around Atlanta has been an on-again, off-again issue for the better part of a year. (See May 15 and June 15 issues of Bus & Motorcoach News.) Coaches have been ticketed for using the lanes although the Georgia DOT has posted information on its Web site indicating the state law was not designed to apply to buses.

County mounted occasionally enforce the law, however, ticketing unsuspecting operators. Tickets are costly: \$250-\$275.

Millis' legislation is designed to get rid of the current ambiguity.

**Sandberg**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

FMCSA was abandoning a proposed rule that would have established an English-language requirement for drivers. That action has come under criticism from, among others, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance. The CVSA told Sandberg last summer her action may have been premature.

More recently, the FMCSA has revealed plans for getting uninsured bus operators off U.S. highways faster.

Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta appointed Sandberg as deputy administrator of the FMCSA in November 2002. She took over as acting administrator the following month when her predecessor bailed out of the job.

"Annette has shown leadership in dealing with key issues within the department and is an especially able champion of our goal to improve truck and bus safety," Mineta says of Sandberg.

Prior to joining the FMCSA, Sandberg was deputy administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Before coming to Washington, Sandberg held law enforcement, supervisory and administrative posts with the Washington State Patrol, where she became the first woman in the U.S. to lead a state police agency.

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# ABA touts success of '04 Marketplace, records fall

NEW YORK CITY — The American Bus Association reports its 2004 American Bus Marketplace set a number of records despite record cold during the week of the event. "Despite the cold, the 2004 Marketplace was a hot success," the association said.

Nearly 3,000 delegates attended this year, up from less than 2,500 attendees at last year's show in Indianapolis, ABA said. A record number of delegates also registered this year, including the most first-time delegates, and the most money was raised for the ABA Foundation — \$20,000.

The business aspect of Marketplace, that is the pairing of hundreds of bus and tour operators with thousands of sellers of travel — representatives from destinations, attractions, hotels and restaurants — produced more than 80,000 appointments, ABA reported.

These seven-minute business meetings are designed to generate future group travel business.

## New directors named by ABA

NEW YORK CITY — Nine members have been added to the board of directors of the American Bus Association, plus four members of the association's important executive committee.

Included among the new board members are the presidents of three largest coach operations in the U.S.: Steve Gorman, president & CEO of Greyhound Lines; Craig Lentzsch, president of CUSA, and Brian Souter, president & CEO of Stagecoach Group, parent company of Coach USA.

The other new board members are: Chris Anzuoni of Plymouth & Brockton Street Railway Co.; Don DeVivo of Dattco Inc.; Dave Eaton of Conway Tours/Grayline; Tom Goebel of Lakefront Lines; John Meier of Meier Coaches, and Ron Moore of Burlington Trailways.

Gorman and Lentzsch also were elected to ABA's executive committee, along with Gordon Mackay of Indian Trails and Francis Tedesco of Academy Bus.

Leaving the ABA board were: Frank Gallagher of Coach USA, Mike Haworth of Orange Belt Stages, Dave Lippincott of Frontier Tours/Golden State Coaches, Bruce Matthews of Upstate Tours, Brenda Sherlin of Travel Professionals, and Georges Bourelle of Prevost Car.

Marketplace, which ran from Jan. 16-21 at the Javits Center, also included nearly two-dozen events, ranging from a reception at the American Museum of Natural History, to an evening at

Rockefeller Center. There also were networking functions, FAM and sightseeing tours, and nearly 50 educational sessions.

While in New York, ABA President & CEO Peter Pantuso,

ABA Vice Chairman Ron Eyre of Eyre Bus Lines and others met with New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff and Transportation Commissioner Iris Weinshel.

The ABA delegation raised a number of industry issues related to New York City, including parking and idling problems.

Marketplace 2005 will be in Chicago.

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## INDUSTRY NEWS

## BusWest expands, acquires Sunset Bus

SANTA FE SPRINGS, Calif. — One of the West's best-known bus dealers, Sunset Bus, has changed hands, changed its name and expanded its product line.

The new owner is Los Angeles Truck Center, which is the parent company of Los Angeles Freightliner and Las Vegas Freightliner, as well as BusWest, a bus dealership in Whittier, Calif.

The BusWest name has replaced that of Sunset Bus, and Bill Webster, president of the

BusWest division of Los Angeles Truck Center, has assumed management of the former Sunset Bus operation.

Ed Cox, who founded Sunset Bus 13 years ago in Santa Ana, Calif., and eventually moved it to its current location in Santa Fe Springs, said he received an offer from Los Angeles Truck Center that he couldn't refuse.

The combination of BusWest and Sunset Bus means the company will be offering an extended

line-up of bus makes.

BusWest is a dealer for DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses of North America, which produces the CL 100 midsize cutaway bus and the SLF 200 low-floor transit-style bus.

Sunset Bus is a long-time dealer for Champion, Goshen, StarCraft and Ameritrans small and midsize buses; U.S. Bus Corp. and Collins Bus school buses, and Van Terra and Braun van conversions. Sunset also operates a used bus operation.

## MCI launches repair network expansion

SCHAUMBURG, Ill. — MCI Fleet Support is expanding its service network and has named a Caterpillar dealer in New Jersey as its first CAT-affiliated authorized service provider for MCI coaches.

The agreement with Foley Inc. of Piscataway, N.J., is a part of MCI's initiative to extend its repair network beyond its own fleet service locations in six states and one Canadian province.

Trained Foley's technicians will offer maintenance, troubleshooting and warranty service for MCI coaches. Foley's also will stock MCI OEM parts.

"Our plan is to form a larger service network," said Jerry Cignarella, executive director of MCI Service Centers. "We're choosing facilities that our operators will find convenient so they can more easily find the quality of

service and OEM parts availability they associate with MCI Fleet Support. We are enthusiastic about Foley becoming a member of our product support team."

Foley's is a full-service CAT dealer serving customers in central and northern New Jersey. Its service capabilities include chassis, drive train, engine, HVAC, electrical and emissions certification inspections.

## Calendar of Events

### FEBRUARY 2004

4-8 2004 Tennessee Motor Coach Association Convention, Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Info: (423) 348-1385 or go to [www.tnmca.net](http://www.tnmca.net).

5-7 International Motorcoach Group Maintenance & Safety Forum, Atlanta. Info: (913) 906-0111 or go to [www.imgcoach.com](http://www.imgcoach.com).

8-10 The 20th Anniversary Motorcoach Expo 2004, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta. Info: United Motorcoach Association, (800) 424-8262 or go to [www.uma.org](http://www.uma.org).

24-25 California Bus Association Spring Maintenance Seminar, Royal Coach Tours, San Jose, Calif. Info: (831) 633-1755 or go to [www.cbabus.com](http://www.cbabus.com).

25-27 The 4th Annual Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicle Conference, Rancho Las Palmas Resort, Palm Springs, Calif. Info: (626) 744-5686

or go to [www.weststart.org](http://www.weststart.org).

25-28 The 68th Annual Trailways Conference & Meeting, Hilton San Diego Resort, San Diego. Info: (703) 691-3052, or go to [www.trailways.com](http://www.trailways.com).

**MARCH 2004**  
8-11 Society of Automotive Engineers 2004 World Congress, Cobo Hall, Detroit. Info: (877) 606-7323, or go to: [www.sae.org](http://www.sae.org).

16-18 The 71st Family Motor Coach Association International Convention, State Fair Grounds, Albuquerque, N.M. Info: (800) 543-3622 or go to: [www.fmca.com](http://www.fmca.com).

23-25 Busworld Asia 2004, Shanghai New Int'l Expo Center, Pudong District, Shanghai, China. Info: Go to [www.busworld.org](http://www.busworld.org).

24-27 National Tour Association Tour Operator Spring Meet, Little Rock, Ark. Info: (859) 226-4444 or go to [www.ntaonline.com](http://www.ntaonline.com).

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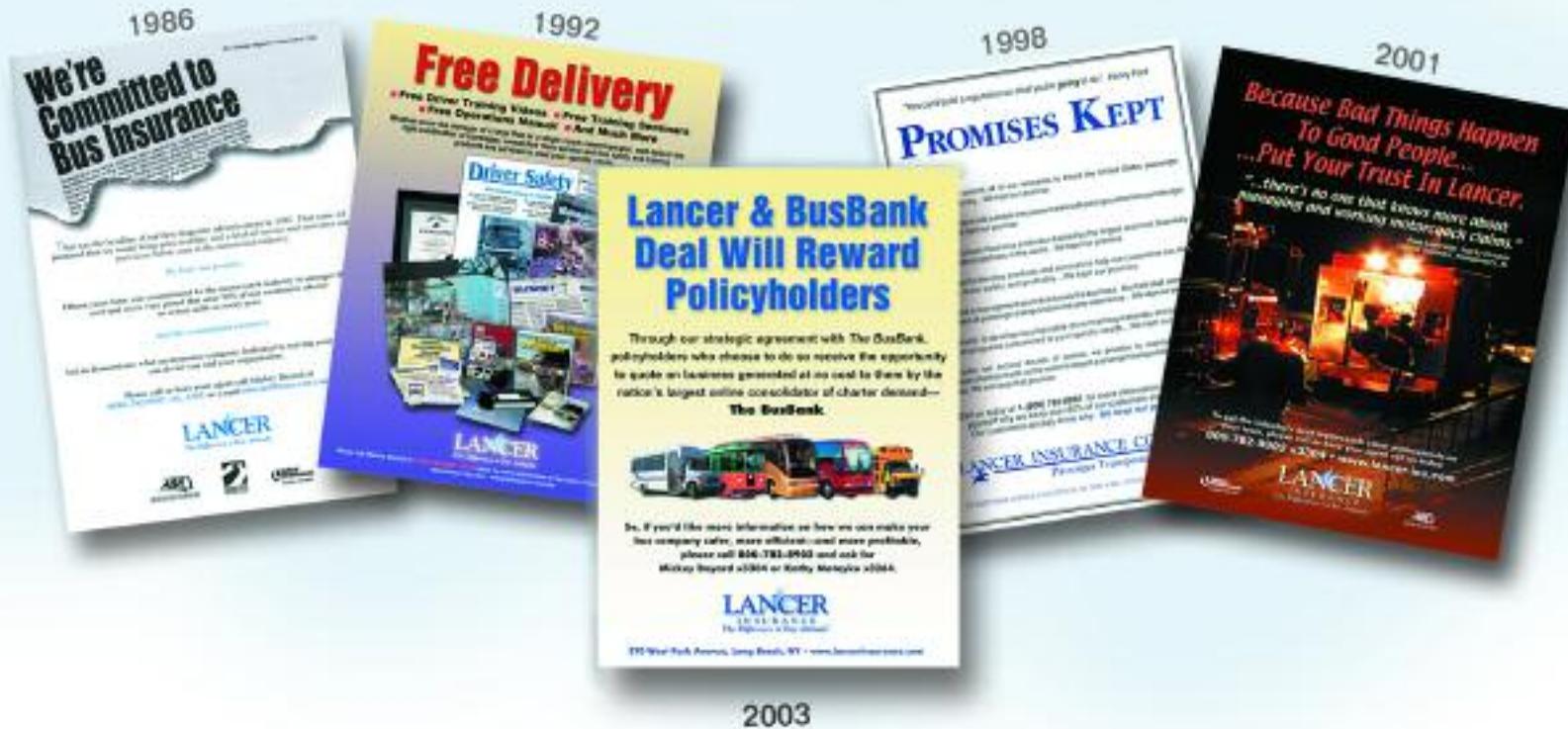
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# Operator group supported by Setra incentive payment

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Half of all Setra S417 motorcoaches sold last year were purchased by members of the International Motorcoach Group, resulting in a "significant" incentive payment to IMG.

Setra of North America is an IMG "alliance partner" and participates in a cooperative purchasing program based on the sales to IMG members.

Other IMG alliance partners include hotels, restaurants and manufacturers.

"It's been an exceptional year for the partnership between IMG and Setra," said Steve Klika, president of IMG, which is based in Overland Park, Kan.

"To date, this is the largest incentive check we've received from a manufacturer. Our members were very impressed with the

S417 coach and followed through with purchases," Klika added.

IMG members that purchased Setra S417 coaches in 2003 included Premier Coach, Cyr Bus Lines and Arrow Stages Lines.

More than 50 motorcoach operators in North America are IMG members.

"We plan to continue our commitment to the association and its members," said Robert Jones, vice president of sales at Setra of North America.

The size of the Setra incentive payment to IMG was not announced.



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1991 Neoplan Cityliner 8V-92, Video, Lav, 49-pax Asking . . . \$35,000  
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