

## Transit agencies lambaste charter rules proposal

WASHINGTON — Disgruntled public transit operators from across the country have inundated the Federal Transit Administration with complaints about the agency's proposed charter bus regulations.

Of the nearly 300 letters and messages sent to the federal agency in response to its call for comments on the proposed rules changes, about two thirds are from public transit agencies; schools and universities; cities, counties and state governments, and others who have an interest in public bus systems.

Most of the rest are from private motorcoach operators who also have an important stake in the rules that regulate the type of charters public transit systems can provide.

"We've got our work cut out for us," noted an FTA attorney who will help review the materials received during the two-month public comment period that ended April 16.

The call for comments is part of the FTA's formal process of redoing the 20-year-old charter bus rules

for public transit agencies, which have been the subject of much controversy and disputes between private and public carriers.

Many of the measures in the proposal came from a joint committee of representatives of public transit operators and private motorcoach carriers who took part in a series of negotiated-rule-making meetings last year. Issues the two sides were unable to resolve when the meetings ended in December became the province of the FTA.

While the formal comments filed by the transit agencies with the FTA zeroed in on a number of issues, their harshest words were directed at the definition of charter service, which they said would severely limit their ability to provide shuttle service for many of the community events that take place in their communities each year.

Such shuttle service, they maintained, is a public service and transit agencies should be allowed to operate them.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 ►

### Charter comments available on Web

WASHINGTON — Upwards of 300 letters, many of them 6-to-10 pages long, have been sent to the Federal Transit Administration, commenting on its proposed rules for regulating charter bus service by public transit agencies.

To find the material, go to: <http://dms.dot.gov/search/searchFormSimple.cfm>. In the middle of the page, under Docket Search, type in 22657.

## New coach sales continue to rise in '07 first quarter

Sales of new motorcoaches during the first three months of 2007 posted their 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year-over-year quarterly increase, *National Bus Trader* magazine reports.

Coach manufacturers said they sold a total of 522 new coaches during the quarter ended March 31, up 6.5 percent from the 490 units sold during the same period a year ago. In the first quarter of 2005, 464 units were sold, while 326 coaches were delivered during the first quarter of 2004.

The 2007 number is the best first-quarter sales figure since 2002 when a total of 596 new coaches were sold.

*National Bus Trader* Editor Larry Plachno, who has been analyzing new coach sales for more than 20 years, said a number of factors figured into the first-quarter '07 gain. Sales of imported coaches — Van Hool and Setra — were up, purchases by Canadian operators were higher, and orders for conversion shells rebounded. At the same time, public sector sales slipped during the quarter.

Sales of Setras and Van Hools

in the first quarter totaled 122 coaches, or 23.4 percent of the market, versus sales of 83 coaches, or 16.9 percent of the market, during the first quarter of last year.

Sales of conversion shells climbed to 75 coaches in the first quarter, compared to 64 units in the first quarter of last year. That compares to 83 sold in the first quarter of 2005, and 70 in 2004.

There were two other noteworthy items from the latest *National Bus Trader* sales report:

- The ZF-AS Tronic transmission continues to grow in popularity among private passenger coach operators, capturing more than 56 percent of that market during the first quarter.

- A new coach, the Temsa, is being added to the sales report. Built in Turkey, the 35-foot Temsa meets *National Bus Trader's* criteria for being an "integral" bus. That is, it's designed and built as a monocoque or unibody coach.

Operators continued to diversify their coach purchases during the first quarter of this year, with the top three models capturing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 ►

## Average price for diesel fuel will set record

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Energy predicts retail diesel fuel prices will average \$2.82 a gallon this summer, down 6 cents from last summer, but the price average for the full year will be the highest ever.

A DOE spokesman said diesel prices for all of 2007 will average \$2.75 a gallon, a new record. The previous annual high was \$2.71 in 2006.

At the same time, regular-grade gasoline also will reach a historical average high this year at \$2.62 a gallon.

Gasoline is forecast to average \$2.81 this summer, down slightly from \$2.84 last summer.

During the next four months, the average gasoline pump price is projected to peak in May at \$2.87 a gallon, compared to last year's peak of \$2.98 a gallon in July.

DOE also projects crude oil supplies will remain tight worldwide. Oil will average about \$64 per barrel this year and in 2008 as a result of tight supplies, the report said.

## Pre-trip inspections: Investigation focuses attention on mandate

WASHINGTON — When the National Transportation Safety Board completed its 17-month investigation of the tragic 2005 Hurricane Rita evacuation bus fire, one of the shortcomings it uncovered was that federal regulations do not require inspection or adequate lubrication of wheel bearings to prevent failures that can turn into wheel-well fires.

That conclusion and the investigation focused high-level attention on one of the more mundane requirements of operating a motorcoach and motorcoach company — the pre-trip inspection.

Failure by the company that operated the burned bus to routinely inspect the hub oil level, and its illegal immigrant driver to routinely conduct pre-trip inspections, was cited as a prime reason for the conflagration near Wilmer, Texas, that took the lives of 23 care-home residents.

The bus owner, James Maples, told investigators he didn't pay his drivers to conduct pre-trip inspections, an admission that outraged NTSB board members.

Bus industry safety experts say

the failure to perform pre-trip inspections often rests with both operators and drivers. Even though Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations require pre- and post-trip inspections, Maples and his driver aren't alone in giving short shrift to the rules, say experts.

Additionally, there is criticism by some operators of the driver vehicle-inspection forms available from industry suppliers, and other criticism aimed at the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for failing to keep its inspection requirements contemporaneous with changes occurring in the newest motorcoaches and trucks.

"Most of these forms and the regulations that go with them are far out of date," says William D. McCreary, president of American Charter Coach in Aurora, Ill. "There is no reason why we have to wait for the regulations to catch up when the industry itself could take some leadership on these forms. The bus industry needs its own forms."

McCreary observes that coach manufacturers usually give good

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 ►

**The MCI J4500: #1 and in-stock now!**  
Ask about **MCI PRO SUPPORT**. Parts, training, service and more, to keep you going further!



See Our Ad on Page 7

**MOTOR COACH INDUSTRIES**  
Going further!

1-866-MCICOACH [www.mcicoach.com](http://www.mcicoach.com)



# FORWARD THINKING FROM FRONT TO BACK.

## INTRODUCING THE ALL NEW VAN HOOL C2045E & ABC'S M1235 MID-SIZE TRANSPORT

We've totally revamped two of our best selling models for 2007 with one main idea in mind. Design future thinking transportation solutions that keep operators growing today and well down the road. The all new Van Hool C2045E and ABC M1235 are perfect examples of forward thinking in motion. With over 36 new features to help attract customers to your business, both models integrate sophisticated body styling, quality engineering and state-of-the-art systems – built for maximum appeal and ease of maintenance. And, of course, you're covered with a customized service and support network – focused on protecting your equipment investment from front to back and anywhere in between. Inspect and test drive our latest 2007 models – loaded with features, built with value in mind.



Exclusive U.S.  Distributor

[www.abc-companies.com](http://www.abc-companies.com)



Full-Size Coach Equipment



Mid-size Transport



Advanced Design Transit

**MIDWEST**  
800-222-2875

**NORTHEAST**  
800-222-2873

**SOUTHEAST**  
800-222-2871

**SOUTHWEST**  
800-222-2877

**WESTERN**  
800-322-2877

## Museum ponders turning Fling into 'industry event'

HERSHEY, Pa. — The Museum of Bus Transportation is entertaining the idea of turning its annual Spring Fling into a significant industry event.

Currently, the Spring Fling is a combination bus show, flea market and social event. The 2007 Fling will be Saturday, June 2.

"The word in the motorcoach industry is that our Hershey museum has actually become a major part of our industry, and is considered by many an institution worthy of praise and notice," says museum board member Robert Beard.

"Surprisingly, it was not I who suggested that we make our little event, the Spring Fling, into an industry event, but (it was industry leaders) to whom I talked," said Beard. "Each of them has promised to either attend the event themselves or send representatives.

"Their hope is to learn what the Fling is all about, along with the museum and (its) memorial annex, and discuss what needs to be done to offer a new, annual industry event to their customers and members.

"After all the Expos, Marketplaces, BusCons, etc., we'll now

have the Spring Fling. It is my suggestion that after this year's Fling ends officially at 4 p.m., we all meet in the museum conference room and have a round-table discussion about the future."

The Museum of Bus Transportation is North America's only complete museum dedicated to displaying and preserving antique transit, intercity and school buses. It displays at least 12 restored buses at all times and has 23 more in its nearby annex.

This year's Fling will focus attention on the new annex where those buses not at the museum will be on display outside the facility and available for photographing. Inside will be a bus memorabilia flea market where food will be sold to benefit the museum.

A free shuttle will travel between the annex and the museum.

The Spring Fling is open to museum members and nonmembers alike.

The museum is at 161 Museum Drive (off Hershey Road, Rte 39) in Hershey.

For more information, go to [www.buseum.org](http://www.buseum.org), or call (717) 566-7100, ext 119.

## Shareholders OK Laidlaw takeover

NAPERVILLE, Ill. — The \$2.8-billion takeover of Laidlaw International by FirstGroup plc of Britain took two major steps forward late last month when shareholders of both companies approved the proposed transaction.

FirstGroup and Laidlaw stockholders approved the deal at separate meetings. Laidlaw is the largest school bus operator in North America and owner of Greyhound Lines, and FirstGroup is the biggest bus passenger carrier in the

United Kingdom.

The next hurdle for the deal is to gain regulatory approval in the U.S. and Canada. Some analysts expect antitrust issues to arise because the combined companies will control more than 50 percent of the outsourced North American school bus market.

The other unknown is what will happen to Greyhound once the deal is completed. The chief executive of FirstGroup has indicated he is intrigued by Greyhound but, at the

same time, he notes Greyhound is largely a retail business, not a contract operation like all other FirstGroup business in the U.S.

Consequently, FirstGroup has said it intends to conduct a "comprehensive review" of Greyhound. Some financial analysts have interpreted that as a first step toward possible divestiture.

The takeover, which was announced in February, calls for FirstGroup to pay \$35.25 a share for Laidlaw.

## Greyhound earnings dip; cuts fares

NAPERVILLE, Ill. — Greyhound Lines has posted its second consecutive quarter of reduced earnings as passenger counts declined — in large measure — because of higher ticket prices.

Greyhound's parent company, Laidlaw International, said the nation's largest line-run company had revenue of \$271.3 million during the three months ended Feb. 28, down 7.7 percent from year-earlier revenue of \$293.8 million.

For the first half of fiscal 2007, Greyhound revenue totaled \$550.8 million, down 8 percent from rev-

enue of \$598.4 million for the six months ended Feb. 28, 2006.

Greyhound's gross earnings, or what Laidlaw calls EBITDA (operating income before depreciation and amortization), were \$17.2 million for the three months ended Feb. 28, 2007, down 34.6 percent from a year-earlier EBITDA figure of \$26.3 million.

For the first half of fiscal 2007, Greyhound EBITDA was \$42.8 million, down 30 percent from first-half fiscal 2006 EBITDA of \$61.2 million.

Top executives of Laidlaw

attributed Greyhound's performance to several factors, but primarily to reduced passenger volumes that more than offset an increase in ticket prices adopted last year.

During 2006, Greyhound boosted ticket prices by nearly 11 percent. However, negative customer reaction to the price hike set in during the last several months. That factor, combined with bad weather and the loss of hurricane-related traffic from a year ago, reduced passenger volumes.

In early March, Greyhound

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 ►

**Now Available —**

## PRE-OWNED PARTS

FROM THE NATION'S #1 LEADER IN PRE-OWNED EQUIPMENT SALES!

ABC Companies proudly introduces **our newest line of pre-owned parts and components** for **full- and mid-size coach equipment**. We're expanding our parts and service network to support your fleet with unique values that make sense for your bottom line.



- Hundreds of good used/serviceable and core parts for Van Hool, MCI, Prevost and more
- Savings up to 50% and deep discounts available

Now you can expect **speedy turnaround**, **great discounts** and **our signature ABC customer service** for all your pre-owned parts needs.

### BAGGAGE COMPARTMENT DOORS



PREVOST

VAN HOOL



MCI



Exclusive U.S.  Distributor

[www.abc-companies.com](http://www.abc-companies.com)

**Call Dean Gregor, toll free at 1-800-222-2875, ext. 129** for information and parts orders today.

# THE DOCKET

## Registration rulemaking begins

WASHINGTON — The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has begun the rulemaking necessary to implement the new Unified Carrier Registration Agreement and set its fees for 2007.

The 2005 federal highway and public transportation re-authorization bill repealed the Single State Registration System, and provided

for the replacement of the revenue states got from the SSRS through the new UCRA.

Developing the new program has largely been the responsibility of the UCRA Board of Directors, a body composed of state and industry representatives and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

Among other things, the board

recommended a fee structure to the FMCSA, which has the responsibility of actually adopting the fees.

The timing of the FMCSA rulemaking is important because a number of states have been lobbying Congress to revive the SSRS for this year. (Previous coverage in the Dec. 1, Dec. 15, and Jan. 1 issues of *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

## EPA urged to delay rule for emissions monitoring

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has extended the comment period for a proposed regulation requiring onboard diagnostics that measure heavy-duty bus and truck exhaust emissions.

The extension comes amid a chorus of requests that the EPA give engine manufacturers more time to develop the onboard emissions sensors or loosen the proposed standards for the monitoring devices.

Late last year, the EPA proposed regulations that would require engine manufacturers to phase in onboard electronic measuring devices starting in 2010. Then, in 2013, all bus and truck engines would have to meet the requirement.

The proposed devices are supposed to monitor the more complex control systems that will be needed to meet the stringent 2010 EPA emissions standards. The diagnostic sensors must scan particulate filters, catalytic converters and other emissions-treatment

systems for possible malfunctions.

They would store their measurements in the engine's computer to assist in diagnosis and repairs.

In January, the EPA published the formal notice of proposed rulemaking, with the comment period open until March 24. Following a request from the Engine Manufacturers Association, the agency has extended the comment period to May 4.

The engine builders say they can meet the requirements of the proposed regulation by 2010, but they want the EPA to change the thresholds at which the new emissions sensors are triggered. They consider the specific limits suggested by the EPA to be too stringent.

However, many in the trucking industry are worried the engine makers won't have enough time to adequately test the effectiveness or accuracy of the sensors, making early 2010 engine buyers guinea pigs for the new gear. The trucking groups are asking that the rule be delayed.

## State, local tax burden climbs to highest ever

WASHINGTON — State and local taxes will consume a larger share of national income this year than ever before, says the Tax Foundation, a nonpartisan organization devoted to educating Americans about taxes and tax policy.

The foundation says this year's state and local tax burden will total 11 percent of national income. The previous record was 10.9 percent in 2005.

Vermont's taxes are the highest of any state, at just over 14 percent of state income, with Maine and New York close behind. At the bottom are Alaska, New Hampshire and Tennessee.

There have been major changes

in some states' rankings since 2000, according to the foundation.

New Mexico has dropped 29 places among all states, Idaho 23 places, and Utah 19 places. Those states now rank 40th, 35th and 27th, respectively.

Tax happy New Jersey, as most anyone in the motorcoach industry knows, climbed 14 places, to 10th.

Overall, the total state and local tax burden has hovered at around 10 percent of national income for many years. This year marks the first time it has hit 11 percent.

The complete report on the state and local tax burden is available at [www.taxfoundation.org](http://www.taxfoundation.org).

## Transits seek 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. UMA urges appropriate operators to take the time to respond to these notices.

**Clinton County, Mich.** Deadline: May 14, 2007. Write to: Rose

May Mason, General Manager, Clinton Area Transit System, 304 Brush St., St. Johns, MI 48879. Phone: (989) 224-8127.

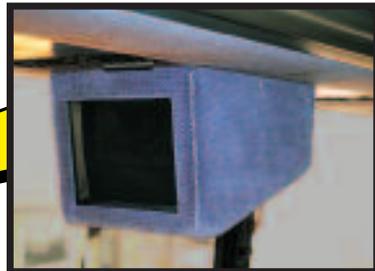
**Greater Huntington/Cabell County, W.Va.** Deadline: 4 p.m. May 28, 2007. Write to: Paul E. Davis, General Manager, The Tri-State Transit Authority, P.O. Box 7965, Huntington, WV 25779. Phone: (304) 529-6094.

# UPGRADE!

1



## FROM CRT Monitors



2



## TO NEW 10.4" LCDs



3



4



...in less than **30 minutes!**

5



**Slim, Lightweight & 25% LARGER Picture!**



[www.radioeng.com](http://www.radioeng.com)

1.800.228.9275

# More states ponder leases, tolls to raise road money

Three more states are considering toll roads, highway leasing or both to generate additional revenue for future roadway construction.

The Florida Senate is considering a House-approved bill that would let private companies lease the state's toll roads and bridges, but not the state turnpike.

The Mississippi Legislature has approved a bill that would create tolls along some roads and bridges, giving the state another tool to raise revenue.

And Nevada lawmakers have been told that public-private partnerships could help the state cope with funding shortfalls to get needed road work done.

In Florida, a Republican-backed bill, HB7033, would allow roadway leases to private investment groups, and require the companies to pay the state an up-front fee. The bill passed along party lines in the House by a 74-40 vote.

"It is the intent of the legislature to strengthen the state's transportation system by providing the department with innovative financing techniques, including, but not limited to, public-private partnerships, toll facility leases and user fees," the legislation reads.

Florida is facing a significant highway funding shortfall between now and 2025.

After a decade of unsuccessful attempts, the Mississippi Legislature adopted SB2375 that would authorize the state department of transportation, county boards of supervisors and city officials to contract with private industry to construct roads and bridges and collect tolls to pay for the work. Local governments also would be allowed to use bonds to finance toll projects.

House Transportation Committee Chairman Bill Miles told a Mississippi newspaper that allowing toll roads is one of many "innovative methods" the state must use for modern road construction be-

cause fuel tax revenues are stagnant.

In Nevada, former U.S. House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt told a legislative hearing the state might benefit from tolling trucks along Interstate 80 in northern Nevada and cars on freeways in Las Vegas. Privately-funded lanes on Interstate 15, linking Los Angeles and Las Vegas, also might reduce congestion.

The now-retired congressman from Missouri is a lobbyist for the investment banking firm of Goldman Sachs — the same outfit that brokered the \$3.85 billion deal to lease the Indiana Toll Road to a foreign group.

Nevada is trying to figure out how to make up for a nearly \$4 billion shortfall in highway funding during the next eight years.

But Gephardt cautioned that pay-to-play roads should not be seen as a "panacea" for transportation funding problems.

An alternative to tolls has been offered by state Sen. Mike McGinness. His bill would increase the per-gallon tax on diesel fuel and gasoline by 3 cents during the next two years.

Nev. Gov. Jim Gibbons has made it clear he's against traditional funding methods that include tax or fee increases. Instead, he has indicated he is open to the possibility of entering into public-private partnerships.

But Gibbons also wants alternative routes available so drivers can avoid paying tolls.

Meanwhile, a bill has been introduced in the state General Assembly (AB595) that would reestablish a weight-distance tax in Nevada, at a uniform rate of 15 cents per mile for vehicles over 55,000 pounds gross weight.

Nevada had a weight-distance tax until 1989, when it was found to discriminate against interstate commerce and was repealed. Proposals to reinstitute a weight-

distance tax have been made in Nevada several times since, most seriously in the early 1990s.

Enactment of the bill would make Nevada far and away the highest state in the nation for truck

taxes. Consequently, truckers are up in arms over the proposal and have begun to fight it.

## Border ID OK'd in Washington

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Washington state has a new law aimed at easing border crossings into British Columbia.

The law, signed by Gov. Chris Gregoire, authorizes creation of an "enhanced" driver's license for bus, truck and other drivers to use in place of a passport.

Starting in January, residents can apply for the enhanced licenses that will contain radio-frequency identification devices, or RFIDs. The devices will allow border guards to check proof of citizenship and search federal databanks, including criminal records.

The enhanced driver's license

reportedly has been approved by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for testing as a secure border-crossing document.

The cost to obtain one of the alternative licenses will be \$40 — much less than the \$97 passports that are expected to be required for land and sea travel between the U.S. and Canada, starting in June 2009.

Regular commercial and personal driver licenses are being accepted at the border until June 2009.

Gregoire said the alternative licenses are needed to boost security while preserving the cross-border flow of tourism and trade.

# from A to Z

we are your best option




**NORTH AMERICAN DISTRIBUTORS**

Darrell Niswander  
Tel: 419 • 892 2377  
Fax: 419 • 892 2655  
Email: darnis1@aol.com

George Farrell  
Tel: 214 • 495 9975  
Fax: 214 • 495 9978  
Email: gfarr007@aol.com

**ISO 9001 ISO 9002 CERTIFIED**  
www.amaya-astron.com.mx



**Torino standard**



**Brasil standard**



**Patriot**



**Torino VIP**



**2+1 VIP**

## Missouri legislators focus on road safety

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Commercial vehicle safety is high on the agenda of Missouri legislators this year.

Among bills of interest to motorcoach operators are measures that would set up a program to certify local law enforcement officers to enforce commercial vehicle laws, and to require applicants for commercial driver licenses to be able to speak and read English. The bill passed the Missouri House and was forwarded to the Senate.

Sponsored by Rep. Neal St. Onge, the bill — HB245 — would require the written CDL test to be offered only in English. Applicants' ability to understand traffic signs and signals written in English also would be required.

Applicants would be prohibited from using interpreters or translators while taking the test.

St. Onge said it's a matter of safety.

"We're allowing interpreters for people taking their CDL exams. I think you should have a command of the English language to be able to drive a (commercial vehicle) on our roads," St. Onge told a radio interviewer. "It also follows federal regulations that you

should be able to read, write and understand English to get a CDL."

Opponents say there are no studies that suggest English proficiency makes better drivers.

Another bill would prohibit the expunging of records for commercial driver license holders who are convicted of or plead guilty to an offense with a blood-alcohol content of 0.04 percent or above. The bill — SB50 — also includes a provision about driving while out of service.

First offenders would be prohibited from driving a commercial motor vehicle for six months. Existing Missouri law calls for a three-month ban. Anyone found in violation a second time within a period of 10 years would face a two-year ban from driving a commercial vehicle. Existing rules call for a one-year suspension.

Meanwhile, the Missouri State Highway Patrol has announced a beefed up commercial vehicle enforcement program that was authorized by legislative action last year.

The patrol transferred 20 full-time positions from vacancies within its commercial vehicle enforcement division and reas-

## No speed traps for small Alabama towns

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — There apparently will be fewer speed traps in Alabama than there might have been — thanks to state legislators.

A panel of the Alabama House rejected a bill that would have given small towns in the state the authority to ticket speeders on

interstate highways.

The House Public Safety Committee rejected the bill — HB116 — that would have repealed a state law that prohibits towns with fewer than 19,000 residents from enforcing speed limits on interstates within their city limits.

Supporters of the bill said there

are not enough state troopers for speed enforcement. They also said putting local officers on the interstates would result in safer travel.

Opponents of the bill said the ban is necessary to prevent small towns from creating speed traps and using ticket revenue to fill city coffers.

signed them as sworn troopers.

This allowed the patrol to create the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Troopers Pilot Program, consisting of two teams. The CVET program, as the initiative is called, improves the patrol's commercial vehicle enforcement capabilities, as well as upgrades its homeland security activities and expands its presence on Missouri roadways.

Another 12 troopers are expected to be assigned to the program this fall.

Troopers assigned as CVETs will be distinguished from other state troopers by their uniforms — they will wear blue instead of brown, and they will patrol in Chevrolet Tahoe SUVs.

Their responsibilities will include investigating traffic crashes involving motorcoaches, school buses and other commercial vehicles.

## N.Y. to forecast travel time

NEW YORK — New York City plans to install signs on major highways that forecast real-time information for point-to-point travel within the city, computed by E-ZPass technology and displayed on thoroughfare message boards.

The duration of time between various points in the city will be based on the average time it took other drivers with E-ZPass tags to make the trip.

## Kentucky eyes higher speeds

FRANKFORT, Ky. — A bill being considered by the state legislature would allow the Kentucky Department of Transportation to increase speed limits on interstates to 70 miles per hour from 65 mph.

The Senate bill originally allowed K-DOT to raise speed lim-

The program will be tested this year on the Staten Island Expressway. Later, the Belt Parkway and the FDR Drive will be added before the program is made available throughout the city's five boroughs in about three years, the city's Transportation Department said.

Currently, the technology is being used on the New Jersey approach to the George Washington Bridge and two Metropolitan Transportation Authority bridges.

its on any interstate but was amended by the state House of Representatives to restrict such increases to four-lane roadways.

The bill also fixes speed limits at 65 mph on interstates with fewer than four lanes and 55 mph on all other state highways.

### TAKING CARE OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FLEETS SINCE 1985



Before

After

**COACH CRAFTERS INC.**

Refurbishing Buses for More Than 20 Years!

800-334-2871

Minnesota  
450 Armstrong Road  
Northfield, MN 55057



buses@coachcrafters.com

Florida  
27530 Cty Rd 561  
Tavares, FL 32778

[www.coachcrafters.com](http://www.coachcrafters.com)

Serving the nation from facilities in Florida and Minnesota.



**SEFAC**

Mobile Column Lifts

800.826.3486

[www.sefac.com](http://www.sefac.com)

# The MCI Grand Tour II

**MORE  
EDUCATIONAL  
SEMINARS!**

- Test drive the latest coaches.
- Participate in a 2007 EPA-compliant engine workshop.
- Tackle the road's extremes aboard MCI's new coach driving simulator.
- Find out how MCI PRO Support™ can maximize your business through maintenance and repair, parts support, MCI Financial Services, website and marketing tips.
- Enjoy lunch and network with others in the industry.
- Score a deal: At each MCI sales location, find specials on coaches and parts.
- Win prizes at each location, plus the chance to win one of seven grand prizes!\*



**FINAL MONTH!**

**Join MCI for fun, prizes, test drives and workshops on the industry's hot topics!**

11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. local time at the following locations.

Orlando, FL – Tuesday, May 1  
Montreal, QC – Tuesday, May 1  
Boston, MA – Tuesday, May 8  
Blackwood, NJ – Thursday, May 10

Washington, DC – Tuesday, May 15  
Richmond, VA – Thursday, May 17  
Pittsburgh, PA – Tuesday, May 22  
Atlanta, GA – Thursday, May 24

## GRAND PRIZES\*

- 2 – American Airlines® 100,000 mile vouchers
- Blaupunkt® Portable Navigation System
- Holland America® Cruise
- ION Studios® Graphics Package
- Set of Michelin® Tires
- SmarTire® active tire pressure and temperature monitoring system including installation

Co-sponsored by

**CATERPILLAR**



**BLAUPUNKT**

Arvin Meritor™  
MICHELIN®  
Amaya-Astron  
Industrial Rubber/TARABUS  
CoachCam by Integrian  
Celeste  
MCI Financial Services  
United Motorcoach Association  
American Bus Association  
SmarTire®  
Willingham Seating  
Vansco Electronics

For locations, directions to locations, prize rules and regulations, please visit  
[www.mcicoach.com](http://www.mcicoach.com)  
**1-866-MCI-COACH**  
**(1-866-624-2622)**



MOTOR COACH  
INDUSTRIES

*Going further!*

## Air survey may provide tips for coach operators

NEEDHAM, Mass. — In a survey of more than 1,400 air travelers, comfortable seats and legroom were the primary hot button for respondents. In fact, nearly three-quarters of those surveyed would pay at least a 10 percent premium to get a more comfortable and roomy airline seat.

Aside from seats, a roomy and clean bathroom was the next most-important in-flight comfort feature for travelers, according to 30 percent of respondents. Twenty-five percent indicated they consider a clean pillow/blanket their No. 1 comfort priority on a flight.

Other comfort features mentioned were noise-canceling headphones, sanitizing wipes to clean tray tables/arm rests, and anti-germ products.

Forty-two percent of travelers said a video screen at their seat is the most important in-flight entertainment feature, followed by on-demand movies (18 percent). Video screens at seats are more important to women (46 percent) than to men (36 percent). Only 13 percent chose internet access as their choice of entertainment.

Fruits and vegetables were the complimentary snack of choice among travelers (36 percent), followed by cheese and crackers (33 percent). If it would mean a cheaper fare, 36 percent of travelers would do without complimentary snacks.

"Travelers continue to request some pretty basic amenities of (air) carriers," said Michele Perry, director of communications for TripAdvisor, which conducted the survey. "By offering more room and cleaner facilities, travelers will be much happier with their airline experience."

TripAdvisor calls itself the world's largest travel community with more than 5 million reviews and opinions, covering 250,000+ hotels and attractions. More information at [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com).

## Concerns mounting about driver 'texting'

Motorcoach companies that have established rules for drivers' use of cell phones may want to think about refining those rules to cover text messaging.

Legislators in at least three states are targeting text messaging to keep drivers' thumbs on the steering wheel and off the tiny keypads of their cell phones or wireless communication devices in the latest crackdown on distracted driving.

Text-messaging bills in Arizona, Connecticut and Washington state are the latest attempts by state legislatures to block the increasing distractions of electronic technology in vehicles, from the ubiquitous cell phone, to DVD players, BlackBerries and GPS systems.

Four states, plus the District of Columbia, currently outlaw hand-held cell phone use by drivers — a de facto ban on text messaging.

Young or inexperienced drivers are forbidden to use cell phones — even those with hands-free speakers or earphones — in 13 states. And 37 states prohibit TV screens from being visible to the driver.

Distracted driving was to blame in 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes last year, according to a study released by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.

The most common driving distraction is cell phones, with most cell phone users admitting to researchers they talk while they steer.

At the same time, text messages typed on cell phones or

other wireless gadgets also are rapidly growing in popularity. The latest studies show that text messaging is considerably more popular among teens and young adults than other age groups.

For example, Nationwide Mutual Insurance reported in January that 37 percent of "Generation Y"

*'Text messaging is considerably more popular among teens and young adults than other age groups.'*

drivers — teenagers and adults in their 20s — text or instant message while driving, compared to 17 percent of drivers in their 30s and early 40s (Generation X-ers), and 2 percent of Baby Boomers in their 50s and 60s.

That would suggest the issue of text messaging by drivers of commercial vehicles probably isn't a significant problem — yet.

However, because of the pronounced tendency of young people to become older, the issue certainly will begin finding its way into the driver seats of buses and coaches.

Arizona Rep. Steve Farley, sponsor of a text-ban bill, said he considers text messaging even more of a safety problem than talking on a cell phone because it requires not just ears but eyes. "There is no way you can keep your eyes and attention on the road AND the text you are writing or reading," Farley said in an e-mail exchange.

His bill would fine drivers \$50 for texting, bumped up to \$200 if the activity were found to contribute to an accident. Arizona currently bans school bus drivers from using a cell phone, except in

emergencies, but not other drivers.

Connecticut Rep. Lawrence Miller plans to propose a text-messaging ban because it takes a driver's hand off the wheel. "You have to hold it (the device) in place with one hand and try to spell out your message with the keyboard. I don't know how they

do it," he says. His bill would slap drivers with a \$500 fine for text messaging.

In Washington state, Rep. Joyce McDonald said she proposed her bill after a BlackBerry user caused a five-car pileup on a state highway and State Patrol officers cited cell phones in cars as an increasing problem. Her bill would make text messaging a traffic offense, which normally carries a \$111 fine.

Washington state also is one of 12 states weighing a plan to join California, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and Washington, D.C., in outlawing drivers from chatting on hand-held cell phones. The Washington Senate has approved the ban, but a similar measure has consistently failed in the House.

Instead of prohibiting bad driving habits one by one, some states are fashioning broader prohibitions on distracted driving. Bills pending in Maryland, Texas and Vermont would ban such practices as driving and talking on hand-held cell phones, reading, putting on makeup or playing a musical instrument. A new law in Utah creates a "careless driving"

offense for cases in which a driver commits a traffic violation while distracted, including while holding a cell phone.

Colorado has joined 27 other states in tracking accidents that were due to cell phones, according to the Governors Highway Safety Association. The measure came after a Denver teen struck and killed a 63-year old cyclist while distracted by a text message.

A study by the Indiana State Police found that since 2003 cell phones were cited as the primary cause of more than 2,000 accidents. And that's just from drivers who admitted it.

Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois and Oregon are considering increased penalties for drivers who cause accidents because of cell phones. One New York senator even aims to ban pedestrians and bicycle riders from using electronic devices while crossing streets.

Four states this year have bills pending that would make cell phones off-limits to all drivers, not just teenagers. "Every year we see a couple states that have these total prohibition type of bills," said Matt Sundeen, transportation analyst for the National Conference of State Legislatures. "Generally they don't make it very far."

Cell phone use — hands-free or not — repeatedly has been shown to impair a driver's abilities. A 2006 University of Utah study determined that drivers using cell phones were 18 percent slower in hitting the brakes. The study also found that accessories to let drivers talk without holding a cell phone had no effect on reducing impairment.

### How to contact us:

To submit or report news, Letters to the Editor, articles, news releases:

E-mail: [bsankey@busandmotorcoachnews.com](mailto:bsankey@busandmotorcoachnews.com)

Fax: (866) 930-8426

Mail: 4930 W. Glendale Ave., Suite 6  
Glendale, AZ 85301

Call: (623) 930-8423

To subscribe or inquire about your subscription:

Call: (623) 930-8421

E-mail: [ebalm@busandmotorcoachnews.com](mailto:ebalm@busandmotorcoachnews.com)

Fax: (866) 930-8426

Mail: 4930 W. Glendale Ave., Suite 6  
Glendale, AZ 85301

To report corrections:

Call: (623) 930-8421

E-mail: [bsankey@busandmotorcoachnews.com](mailto:bsankey@busandmotorcoachnews.com)

To advertise or to mail advertising-related materials:

Call: Johnny Steger

(623) 930-8422 or (602) 980-0840

E-mail: [jsteger@busandmotorcoachnews.com](mailto:jsteger@busandmotorcoachnews.com)

Mail: 4930 W. Glendale Ave., Suite 6  
Glendale, AZ 85301

To contact the  
United Motorcoach Association:

Call: (800) 424-8262

Online: [www.uma.org](http://www.uma.org)

To send advertisements or photographs  
via the Internet:

E-mail: [BMNews@jezac.com](mailto:BMNews@jezac.com)

©2007 by the United Motorcoach Association.  
Reproduction in whole or in part without  
written permission is prohibited.

ISSUE NO. 99

## Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED MOTORCOACH ASSOCIATION

### Staff

Editor & Publisher  
Victor Parra

Sales Director  
Johnny Steger

Industry Editor  
Ken Presley

Editorial Assistant  
Amy Stalknecht

Accountant  
Ted Williford

Senior Editor  
Bruce Sankey

Associate Editor  
Ellen Balm

Editorial Assistant  
Eric Morales

Art Director  
Mary E. McCarty

### Advisory Board

William Allen  
Sierra Trailways  
Sacramento, Calif.

Larry Benjamin  
Northfield Lines  
Northfield, Minn.

Dave Bolen  
New World Tours  
Bristow, Va.

David Brown  
Holiday Tours  
Randlemann, N.C.

Steve Brown  
Brown Coach  
Amsterdam, N.Y.

Bob Foley  
ABC Companies  
Faribault, Minn.

Gladys Gillis  
Starline Transportation  
Seattle

Rick Hillard  
Cedar Valley World Travel  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Robert Hume  
Travel Mates Trailways  
Harrisonburg, Va.

Daryl G. Johnson  
J & J Charters  
Crosby, Texas

Dale Krapf  
Krapf Coaches  
West Chester, Pa.

Godfrey LeBron  
Paradise Trailways  
Hicksville, N.Y.

Joan Libby  
Cavalier Coach  
Boston, Mass.

Marcia Milton  
First Priority Trailways  
District Heights, Md.

Michael Neustadt  
Coach Tours  
Brookfield, Conn.

Jeff Polzien  
Red Carpet Tours  
Oklahoma City

Tom Ready  
Ready Bus Lines  
LaCrescent, Minn.

Brian Scott  
Escot Bus Lines  
Largo, Fla.

Michelle Silvestro  
National Interstate Insurance Co.  
Richfield, Ohio

T. Ralph Young  
Young Transportation  
Ashville, N.C.

Setra – a Brand of DaimlerChrysler

The benchmark  
in luxury coaches



- Exciting, distinctive European design
- Unrivalled passenger comfort
- Outstanding driveability and maneuverability
- Finely tuned functionality
- Easy-to-service components of the highest quality
- A state-of-the-art safety package
- Backed by DaimlerChrysler

Setra of North America, Inc.  
6012-B High Point Road  
Greensboro, NC 27407  
Toll free: 1.800.882.8054  
email: sales@DCBUSNA.com  
[www.setra-coaches.com](http://www.setra-coaches.com)

**SETRA**  
LUXURY COACHES

## Charter rules

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"The communities that support public transit operators through local property taxes, sales taxes, developer fees and the like, reasonably expect us to manage and provide public transportation for public events," said Karen Graber, general manager of the Endless Mountains Transportation Authority in Mansfield, Pa.

### More clarity needed

Henry Loymeyer, assistant general manager of the South Bend (Ind.) Public Transportation Corp., agreed, stressing that he is concerned that the lack of clarity of the definition of charter service threatens his ability to provide special event service, including shuttling people to Notre Dame football games.

Kevin Desmond, general manager of Metro Transit in Seattle, Wash., told the FTA that allowing public transit to operate shuttles for community events not only helps control traffic and parking problems, but introduces many non-transit riders to the system and turns some of them into regular bus riders.

"We urge the FTA to define charter service as service provided to an 'exclusive group of riders' rather than just a 'group of rides' in

order that the rule does not negatively affect the provision of public transportation," added Chuck Kemp, general manager of the transit system in Madison, Wis.

They and others who shared similar opinions urged the FTA to broaden the definition so transporting people to regular major events in their communities would be considered public transportation.

Susan McGillicuddy, a supervisor of Meridian Township in Michigan, emphasized that residents who support public transportation through their taxes expect the transit agency to provide transportation for community events. "Please reconsider several parts of this proposed rule and make it clear that public transportation remains public transportation and that charter remain charter."

### The public expectation

Tulsa (Okla.) Transit called on the FTA to change the rule, too, saying in its filing that the agency should look at special event transportation service from the view point of the user.

"As a publicly funded agency, our residents expect us to be able to provide such services when called upon to do so," the agency wrote in its filing. "They do not understand when we tell them that

their public transit agency is prohibited from providing public transit services to their public event."

A rule that would limit to 80 hours the amount of time transit agencies could spend transporting government officials in a 12-month period also came under fire from the public side.

"This limit is arbitrary and does not support or respect local cooperation," asserted Capital Area Transportation Authority Chair Patricia Munshaw in a letter signed by eight board members. "The transportation of public officials should not be considered a charter."

The public side also objected to a rule that would allow the FTA to withhold federal money from transit agencies that repeatedly violate the rules.

"This is wrong," charged Robert Hoffmann, managing director of River Valley Metro in Kankakee, Ill. "It is inconsistent with the statutory purpose of federal transit programs and penalizes no one but the people in the communities who are supposed to benefit from these transit programs."

### Pattern of violations

Some transit operators also voiced concern about rules that would allow the FTA to go back six years to establish a "pattern of violations," which would increase

the severity of the financial penalties that federal regulators could hand out to transit agencies that violate the rules.

Chuck Kamp, general manager of Metro Transit in Madison, Wis., recommended that the look-back period be changed to two years. "Six years between incidents is too long to consider those actions a pattern," he said.

Several state agencies also protested a rule change that would involve state transportation departments in the charter complaint process, saying it would tax the state agencies and create confusion.

"We believe that this would place a severe administrative burden on the WVDPT, as well as other state department of transportation and could lead to inconsistent interpretation of the charter service rules," warned Susan L. O'Connell, director of the West Virginia Division of Public Transit.

A number of rural transit agencies also complained about a proposal that would require recipients of Section 5311 Program funds to file special paperwork for most of their trips to be exempt from some of the charter rules.

Gary Kitchin, general manager of Paducah Area Transit System in Paducah, Ky., warned that the rules could require rural transit systems to document every trip provided

for human service agencies, local governments and others.

"This is a lot of work to document what already are, and would continue to be, allowed forms of public transportation," he said. "The cost of this administrative burden, both to the FTA and to its grantees, is certain to outweigh any benefits that would accrue to communities like mine under this rule."

### Rural agencies complain

The Alabama Association of Regional Councils, a 12-agency association representing all of the counties in Alabama, also complained about how the rules treat rural transit operations, including a requirement that social-service organizations register with the FTA in order for a transit agency to be exempt from the charter rules when they serve those groups.

"All human and social service organizations should be assumed to be qualified and therefore automatically registered," wrote Suzanne Burnette, president. "The burden of proof should be on proving a disqualification not on an agency petitioning to be considered qualified."

The FTA now will review the comments and could make changes to its proposal before moving the process forward, which could include a second comment period on any changes that might be made.

# 2-DOOR SHUTTLE ADA TRANSITS

One-owner transit units now available for sale or lease

16 2004 GCA 2038RE two-door equipped transit service buses  
IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE featuring:

- Cummins 245 HP
- Allison B300
- DVD player AM/FM CD player with 4 speakers
- 6 monitors
- LED exterior lights
- Ricon instep lift package with 2 tie downs and ABA lighting
- Electromagnetic front LED destination sign
- Underfloor luggage compartment
- Carrier rooftop 310 system air conditioning



43 transit seats with padded inserts.  
Standees available.

Phone John Oakman at ABC Companies, 1-800-222-2871, ext. 7104  
or by email, [joakman@abc-companies.com](mailto:joakman@abc-companies.com)

Used vehicle sold "as-is." No warranties expressed or implied.



Exclusive U.S. Distributor

[www.abc-companies.com](http://www.abc-companies.com)

# UMA comments on proposed charter bus regulations

WASHINGTON—The following are edited excerpts from the comments the United Motorcoach Association filed in response to the Federal Transit Administration proposal for revising the charter bus regulations that apply to public transit agencies.

The complete UMA document, which runs to 24 pages, can be found on the USDOT comment Website. (See box on Page 1.)

The United Motorcoach Association has long concluded that interpretations and enforcement of the current regulations has largely favored (public transit agencies that receive federal) financial assistance.

While many businesses must contend with government regulations, few industries in a free-market society must fight every day with its own government for its very right to own and operate their lawful businesses — in their own communities. The Federal Transit Administration's proposed rules — on the whole — create the "bright line" so desired by both public and private caucus.

First, every charter captured from the private passenger transportation industry represents immediate economic losses. How many industries in our nation could survive in an environment that never knows where or when the government will take away a segment of their market?

Certainly, every charter dollar diverted from the marketplace to (public transit agencies), harms private operators. However, more importantly, the greater harm transpires when providers of private passenger transportation are precluded the opportunity to

compete for public goodwill by serving their community.

The value of goodwill was stressed by (public transit agencies)...during the Charter Bus Negotiated Rulemaking Committee meetings. This was often mentioned as the single-largest motivation for infringing on private charter operators and subsequently violating the charter service rules.

Operator members of the United Motorcoach Association trust the revised regulations and subsequent enforcement will finally avail private charter operators of the opportunity to take their rightful place in their respective communities and meet the demands of the public with a wide array of competitive products and services. Our nation's transportation requirements and taxpayers demand no less.

## Transporting bureaucrats

The proposed rule would allow recipients to provide 80 charter service hours annually for government officials charters. The United Motorcoach Association maintains the allowance of 80 hours adequately reflects reasonable needs...It is noteworthy that the purpose of an hour limitation concession was to compel (public transit agencies) to budget their allowance. A provision, allowing petition of the (FTA) administrator, absent private charter operators, is counter intuitive to this concept and will lead to eventual abuse.

## Helping human-service groups

The proposed rule allows recipients to

provide charter service to qualified human services organizations...The United Motorcoach Association strongly urges the Federal Transit Administration to place the burden of qualifying (human service organizations on public transit agencies) and make clear that a failure to qualify an organization will result in a finding of violation and enforcement action.

## Leasing

The "leasing" of equipment (by public transit agencies) to avoid compliance with the existing charter service rules has been in the past and continues to be a source of economic harm to the private charter industry. The United Motorcoach Association suspects these illegitimate actions may transcend a simple violation and violate other federal laws. The proposed rule is a significant improvement over existing language only if the Federal Transit Administration assumes a strict posture.

## Hardship

The "hardship" proposal would allow (public transit agencies) in nonurbanized areas to provide charter service to an organization if the service provided by a private operator would create a hardship on the organization.

The United Motorcoach Association is opposed to the proposed rule as written as it assumes the private market may not desire to serve certain needs, even if fulfilling the service may be at an economic loss.

The private charter bus industry is economically deregulated and businesses routinely discount services, have sales, offer loss leaders and utilize yield-pricing strategies. In theory, a (public transit agency) creates a "hardship dependency" when failing to allow the marketplace to respond.

The United Motorcoach Association asserts that "hardship" is largely a myth and any rule addressing "hardship" is likely obsolete and more likely to be used to harm private operators than relieve "hardship."

The United Motorcoach Association prefers no rule pertaining to "hardship" due to inevitable abuses.

## Unique events

The FTA proposes to add a new exception to address "unique and time sensitive event, usually funerals of local, regional, or national significance;" which may not be practical or feasible to provide notice to registered charter providers.

The United Motorcoach Association is adamantly opposed to this proposed rule as written. The examples cited were the recent funerals of President's Regan and Ford. It is common knowledge these events generally receive advanced planning, sometimes years in advance, and have involved private sector participation in the past.

It is the position of the United Motorcoach Association that the private sector consistently has assets to meet the passenger transportation needs of such events.

# NABI ADA TRANSIT BUSES FOR SALE

One-owner transit units now available for sale or lease\*

70 1997 NABI Model 416-09, 40' – 102" wide two-door equipped transit service buses **IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE** featuring:

- Detroit Diesel low-emission Series 50
- Allison B400 5-speed
- Amerex Fire Suppression System
- 43 passenger with standees – mar-resistant seats
- Lift-U-Wheelchair Lift (Front Door)
- Front bumper mounted Sportworks 2-position bicycle rack
- Luminator flip dot destination signs
- New AC systems T1 Thermo King – 2-year warranty
- 90 day limited engine and transmission warranty
- Like new condition – operated on the West Coast



\* Used vehicle sold "as-is." See limited warranty details. To qualified customers, see Account Representative for terms and conditions.



Exclusive U.S.  Distributor

www.abc-companies.com

Phone John Oakman at ABC Companies, 1-800-222-2871, ext. 7104  
or by email, [joakman@abc-companies.com](mailto:joakman@abc-companies.com)

## DaimlerChrysler facility in N.J. opens to coaches

SECAUCUS, N.J. — Motorcoaches — all brands and types — are now welcome at the DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses North America service center in Secaucus.

The facility, a short drive from the heart of New York City, opened in November, providing service exclusively for transit buses. Now, it's open to service all makes and models of motorcoaches and buses.

“Our service center is conveniently located and is exceptionally positioned to provide service to all bus and motorcoach customers, especially those located in the

Northeast,” said Patrick Scully, chief commercial officer for DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses North America.

“Metro New York City hosts thousands of motorcoaches each year, and our highly trained professional technicians are ready to provide service to these and local operators.”

The center offers major and minor coach, transit and shuttle bus repairs; oil, lube and filter services; custom preventative maintenance programs, and exterior-interior coach cleaning and detailing services.



The new DaimlerChrysler service center in northern New Jersey is the company's third.

The facility is open from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and is at 57 County Ave., Secaucus. For information,

call (201) 902-7120 or go to [www.debusna.com](http://www.debusna.com).

The new center is the third company-operated service facility,

with the others in Orlando and Greensboro, N.C. A fourth center, in Riverside, Calif., is operated by Complete Coach Works.

## Revamped Orion VII is unveiled

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses North America unveils its newly redesigned Orion VII Next Generation low-floor transit bus here later this week.

The Orion VII Next Generation has been given a more streamlined and stylish exterior by a collaborative design team from DaimlerChrysler's worldwide bus group, with input from customers.

“The Orion VII Next Gen-

eration will turn heads as its curb appeal answers transit agencies' desire for a reliable bus that compliments the city's streets,” said Patrick Scully, chief commercial officer of DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses North America.

Mississauga, Ont.-based Orion will unveil the updated Orion VII at the American Public Transportation Association Bus and Paratransit Conference here May 4-9.

## Chrysler sale impact would be limited

DETROIT — The list of possible buyers for DaimlerChrysler's Chrysler Group keeps growing and now includes the United Auto Workers union. The UAW reportedly is considering a proposal to seek a majority stake in Chrysler in exchange for cost concessions.

*The Wall Street Journal* reported the union proposal would entail swapping cost concessions for equity in the company.

Several news organizations have

reported the bidders include Cerberus Capital Management, Blackstone Group and Canadian auto parts maker Magna International Inc. Billionaire Kirk Kerkorian also has made a \$4.5 billion bid.

Patrick Scully, chief commercial officer of DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses North America says the impact of the potential sale on the commercial vehicle divisions of DaimlerChrysler is likely to be minimal or none at all.

Scully said the deal isn't likely to touch DaimlerChrysler Commercial Buses NA, which sells Setra and Orion buses and Sprinter passenger vans, or Freightliner, the corporate parent of Detroit Diesel and Thomas Built Buses.

“While these divisions are associated with the Chrysler Group through common ownership, the practical operating characteristic is that they are independent from Chrysler,” said Scully.



# Complete Coach Works

## 1-800-300-3751



Celebrating 20 Years of Service to the Transportation Industry

# Repair ♦ Retrofit ♦ Rehab

- ☛ Complete Rehabs
- ☛ Hybrid Retrofits
- ☛ Wheelchair Lifts
- ☛ Accident & Burn Repairs
- ☛ Rail Repair & Refurbishment

Complete Coach Works is one of the largest bus remanufacturing, retrofit, and upgrade companies in the country. CCW is transit system qualified on both Bus and rail applications.



Rail



Collision & Fire Restoration



ADA Compliance



Hybrid Drives



New Interiors



Alternative Fuels

**Complete Coach Works**  
**1863 Service Ct.**  
**Riverside, Ca. 92507**  
e-mail: [sales@completecoach.com](mailto:sales@completecoach.com)

## Coach industry co-hosts Transportation Summit

IRVING, Texas — The 10th anniversary Transportation Summit, which annually brings together leading transportation industry professionals, will be conducted here Aug. 7-10.

The United Motorcoach and American Bus associations are among a group of 30 co-host organizations for the event.

"This summit will feature the most prestigious group of local, state, national and international dignitaries ever assembled for a transportation policy conference," said Victor Parra, president and CEO of the United Motorcoach Association.

The 10th anniversary summit "will continue working to promote the development of a national multimodal transportation policy to guide the future of transportation for the nation," Parra added.

Upwards of 1,200 transportation officials and industry professionals are expected to attend. They and expert speakers will review, discuss and outline the factors driving growth and change in transportation.

For more information, go to [www.transportationsummit.com](http://www.transportationsummit.com), or call Trudy Hester or Amy Kemble at (214) 750-0123, or email [thester@dean.net](mailto:thester@dean.net).

## Biodiesel bandwagon keeps spreading

Four more states are jumping on the biodiesel bandwagon, with legislators adopting bills to require biodiesel blends.

A measure that requires all diesel fuel sold in New Mexico to have at least a 5-percent blend of biodiesel has been signed by Gov. Bill Richardson. The new law (formerly SB489) requires that all diesel fuel sold in the state needs to be the biodiesel blend by July 2012.

The New Mexico secretary of agriculture would have the authority to suspend the requirement if it is determined there is not an adequate supply or if the requirement results in a substantial price in-

crease in fuel prices.

Among the states where lawmakers are pursuing similar standards is Montana. The state Senate overwhelmingly approved a bill that would require the same 5-percent blend as in New Mexico.

The Montana version — SB432 — would allow for the biodiesel requirement to be suspended if the mixed fuel costs 15 percent more than all-petroleum diesel.

Exceptions also would be made if the mixed fuel was causing engine problems or if there wasn't enough biodiesel being produced in the state.

The Oregon House approved a

bill that includes a requirement that at least a 2-percent biodiesel blend be offered as soon as state production of biodiesel reaches 5 million gallons per year.

A 5-percent biodiesel blend would be required when Oregon production reaches 15 million gallons per year.

And, in Missouri, a biodiesel bill is making its way through the legislature that would require all diesel fuel sold at retail in the state to be a 5 percent biodiesel blend by April 2009.

Retailers would not be forced to carry the blended product if the price is not competitive with the price of petroleum diesel.

## Calendar

### MAY 2007

**6-9 APTA Bus & Paratransit Conference**, Renaissance Nashville (Tenn.) Info: [www.apta.com](http://www.apta.com).

**17-19 Tourism Cares for America**, Virginia City, Nev. Info: Go to [www.tourismcares.org](http://www.tourismcares.org) or call (781) 821-5990.

**26-28 2007 National Tour Association Tour Operator Spring Meet**, Kelowna, British Columbia. Info: [www.NTA.travel](http://www.NTA.travel).

### JUNE 2007

**2-5 Georgia Motorcoach Operators Association Annual Meeting & Marketplace**, Savannah, Ga. Info: Go to [www.gamotorcoachoperators.org](http://www.gamotorcoachoperators.org), or call (866) 376-7770.

## People

**Trailways Transportation System** has elected two new board members and re-elected two others.

New to the board are *Fred Abbott*, president of **Abbott Trailways** in Roanoke, Va., and *Michael Watson*, managing director of **El Camino Trailways** in South San Francisco. Abbott represents the Southeast region, while Watson

represents the West.

Re-elected were *Ronald Moore*, president of **Burlington Trailways** of Burlington, Iowa, representing the Midwest, and *Frank Montgomery*, president of **Capital/Colonial Trailways** of Alabama and Mississippi, an at-large board member.

All were elected to three-year terms.

Leaving the board was *James Gaspard* of DesignLine International Holdings of Charlotte, N.C.

*Aerial Fullington-Weisman*,

president and CEO of **Fullington Trailways Auto Bus Co.** in Clearfield, Pa., has been named one of Pennsylvania's Best 50 Women in Business. The selection of Ms. Fullington-Weisman was announced by *Gov. Edward G. Rendell*.

Each year, 50 women from across Pennsylvania are honored for their dedication to the state's business growth, professional and personal accomplishments, community involvement and ongoing advocacy for women in business.



### 2007 BCI Falcon 45

PH. (866) 714-4235 Fax (316) 462-0876 307 S. Pennsylvania Ave. Jennings KS 67643

[www.bcibus.com](http://www.bcibus.com) Sales@bcibus.com



## Inspections

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

recommendations for maintenance “which may or may not be carried out by the operators in their forms.”

In its findings related to the Wilmer bus fire, the NTSB urged Motor Coach Industries to revise its product maintenance manuals to emphasize the importance of wheel bearing lubrication, specifically warning that daily inspection of hub oil levels and wheel seals is vital to prevent wheel bearing failure and bypassing the requirement is a dangerous practice that can lead to a wheel-well fire or other

serious consequences.

### The value of inspections

Graham Dunnege of Lancer Insurance, former maintenance director of New York Trailways and former chairman of the Bus Industry Safety Council, says the value of pre-trip inspections “is priceless.”

However, he notes that some bus drivers take driver vehicle inspections “with a grain of salt. They figure they should be able to assume it’s a good, reliable bus,” says Dunnege.

But federal safety rules are clear, requiring drivers to check,

prior to each day’s trip, such things as service brakes, parking brakes, steering, headlights, flashers, tire pressure, wheels, rims, the horn, windshield wipers, rear-vision mirrors and emergency equipment.

Are drivers or operators to blame for laxity in performing pre-trip inspections?

Replies Dunnege: “It’s a little of both. Some drivers say, ‘They don’t pay me to take 30 minutes to do these inspections.’ Drivers can do good pre-trip inspections in 15 minutes. They’re not laying on the ground under the bus. They’re in uniform.

“But, the way I read the regula-

tions, it’s required once every 24 hours.”

### Who’s responsible?

The federal rules say it is the responsibility of the operator to require its drivers to perform an inspection and record the results. But beyond that, it will be the driver who ends up along side the road when a coach becomes disabled and upwards of 50 angry passengers are looking to him or her for answers.

“Tires don’t blow out,” says Dunnege. Heat build-up destroys them, and the heat develops when a tire is under-inflated by 15-to-20 percent.

“If it’s an inside tire, the driver doesn’t know anything is wrong until there is a big noise,” he says. “In theory, the tire has been flat or low for some time.”

Just as checking the air pressure of tires is fairly simple, checking the oil level of wheel bearings that require lubrication and inspection also is easy. A clear window cap on the end of the axles needs to be eyeballed.

But, as the NTSB investigation pointed out, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations do not require that wheel ends be inspected. And, the driver vehicle inspection reports published by such companies as J.J. Keller & Associates of Neenah, Wis., do not list wheel bearings, seals and ends as an inspection item.

Chuck Richards, a senior product development manager for J.J. Keller, said Keller reviews its standard driver vehicle inspection report forms “quite frequently,” but he acknowledged they rely heavily on Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations for determining what should be included on the forms.

“That’s the template we work from,” he said.

However, Richards expressed interest in the NTSB recommendations regarding wheel bearing inspections, indicating Keller would look into the issue.

McCreary of American Charter is firmly convinced vehicle inspection forms should include wheel bearing inspections, and he also thinks drivers should be checking for wheel-end overheating during walk-around inspections at stopovers during charters. Additionally, he thinks drivers should be responsible for conducting push-out window inspections, which federal rules require at least every 90 days, as well as the roof-hatch inspection.

McCreary is concerned, too, about new coaches having “so much more to inspect and that should be included.”

### Proper procedures

Chip Springer, head of mainte-

nance at Mears Transportation in Orlando, says an important aspect of pre-trip inspections is for the driver to review the report of the previous driver.

“Look at what the guy wrote the day before,” says Springer. “If he or she is not satisfied, the bus can’t go out until the mechanic makes the necessary repairs and signs the report. If it’s a torn seat and they don’t have the material, that’s OK. But if it’s a torn tire, then the bus can’t go out.”

Springer says some drivers are more thorough about inspection checks than others. Mears monitors driver inspection performance by conducting periodic spot checks at the bus yard exit gates.

“We’ll stop a driver and ask for their DVIR (driver vehicle inspection report),” Springer says. “(Then) we’ll do our own pre-trip inspection. We might find a bad tire that the driver didn’t notice. It keeps them honest. It’s the last line of defense.”

Springer also raised another key issue about pre-trip inspections: They’re boring. “There is a certain amount of tedium involved,” he says. “How many times are you going to look at the tires and the belts. If you do it every day, you could turn a blind eye and just go through the motions. The driver might think he did a good pre-trip yesterday, so it’s probably OK today.”

### The Coach America way

Steve Kuenzi, safety manager at Coach America in Phoenix, says his company requires its driver to conduct a pre-trip inspection every day, even on tours lasting several days. “We usually allow a minimum of 30 minutes for a good pre-trip inspection,” he says.

Failure of drivers to conduct inspections, or operators to insist on them, is not as widespread as it once was, says Kuenzi, partly because of government oversight and better-running equipment.

“Besides, the investment (in a coach) is so great, it pays to keep them running,” he says. “But certainly, for some companies their preventative maintenance is sub par. Then it becomes pointless for drivers to point out problems when they know they aren’t being fixed.”

Operators become lax, says Kuenzi, as a cost-cutting measure. “Repairs cost money, and when cash flow is not there, companies do foolish things.”

A veteran safety expert, Kuenzi offers this advice to drivers: “We tell our drivers, ‘You’re the eyes and ears of the maintenance department. What you see, feel or hear needs to be relayed to the maintenance department to prevent serious issues.’ Good pre-trip and post-trip inspections pay off in the long run.”



**BIG RIG**  
COLLISION

**YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR :**

Collision Repair	Frame Straightening	Fire Restoration
Mechanical Services	Graphics & Signage	Re-Finishing

.....

**customer satisfaction is our top priority**

**NO HASSLE**  
North America-Wide  
**Lifetime**  
**Warranty**

**NO CHARGE**  
**ESTIMATES!**

**24/7**  
availability for all  
of your repair needs

Family owned and operated for more than

 **25 years** 

**www.bigrigcollision.com**

*contact us at:*  
**1-888-848-8686**  
**403-243-7400**

# Bus refurbishing: Does it make sense for you?

By Dave Millhouser  
ABC Companies

“May you live in interesting times” is a Chinese curse that seems on target for the motorcoach industry today.

The price of new coaches, compounded by uncertainty about the cost and reliability of new federally-mandated engine technologies, makes deciding between new and used buses “interesting.”

Many companies, ranging in size from Greyhound down to eight-coach fleets, have chosen to refurbish existing vehicles. They expect to stretch the economic life of their coaches without spending too much money, **and** to provide their customers with an attractive bus.

In deciding what makes sense for your company, there are lots of things to consider: What skills and equipment does your company possess? If your company lacks the resources, what will it cost to have a vendor do it? How long will you run the coach after it is refurbished?

Less obvious, but perhaps more significant, what does “refurbishing” mean in your specific case? What combination of mechanical and cosmetic work will not only add life to your coach, but enhance its resale value?

Manufacturers, over the years, have responded to market demands with a huge number of options. Many have become virtual industry “standards.” Automatic transmissions, cruise control, power steering and video systems all began as options that many weren’t sure would last.

Many other options didn’t hang on for long.

Your definition of refurbishing should include updating, repairing or adding all the things that modern travelers now expect. Skimping on things like A/V equipment, sound system and seat covers will make a bus feel and look “old.” Replacing (or cleaning) interior fabrics make a coach easier to charter now, and sell later.

If the existing video system is working, consider adding a DVD. It’s a relatively small investment ... and brings you right up to date. If the old system is failing, a new one with LCD monitors goes for around \$4,000.

Conversely, there’s the temptation to add things that will not help the resale value of your coach. For example, “2-plus-1” seating and galleys reduce the value of a coach.

It’s OK to install them if your

customers want them, but the clientele must be willing to pay, over the time you will continue to operate the bus, enough to cover the equipment and its negative impact on resale.

If you’re someone who loves “2-plus-1” seats, with a galley — don’t hate me. The point isn’t that they are bad, only that they don’t help resale value. Neither does a backup camera or many other options that aren’t common. Buyers of middle-aged buses are looking for lots of seats, and fewer things to maintain.

The suspension, steering and brakes are a no-brainer... just do it.

Even if you’re only going to run the coach a couple of years, it pays dividends in both reliability and safety. Do it all, you’re under there anyway.

If the model of coach you’re refurbishing has known structural problems... look for them and repair them if necessary. When you sell the bus, you can expect the buyer to look, so fix it now while the coach is down.

External appearance is crucial. The objective is to make a refurbished coach look on a par with your new(er) one(s). If it works for your fleet, a white base coat is ideal — **after** you’ve repaired all the minor body damage. Customers like the unblemished look, and drivers may try harder to avoid hard objects.

Decals and wraps are the way to go. A good design can alter perception and make your coach look like a newer model. Even if the eventual buyer strips off the graphics, they give an idea of the potential.

If possible, keep graphics simple and above the baggage doors. That saves money and makes it easier to keep up with minor body damage.

Drive trains are more “interesting.” A lot depends on the age of the bus and how long you intend to run it. Clearly, there’s no value in pumping a rebuilt \$20,000 engine into a \$30,000 bus.

The flip side is that no educated buyer is going to give credit for an “in frame” (because most of us aren’t sure what it really is).

If the coach is worth a rebuilt engine (or transmission), buy one from a reputable dealer with a transferable warranty. Not only will it improve the value, but you’ll sleep better.

Boiled down, you are balancing two objectives here: You’re restoring a coach to a near new state — in terms of reliability and aesthetics, and you’re trying to

meet the needs of the next owner.

Good choices not only add to the value of your motorcoach but make it sell faster.

Dave Millhouser’s bus industry career began more than 40 years ago as a cleaner-mechanic-driver

for a non-profit group that moved high school kids cross country. In the 1970s and 80s, he spent a dozen years selling Eagle coaches. The high spot came in 1986, when he taught his new wife, Susan, to drive an Eagle demonstrator on their

honeymoon — a trip to Motorcoach Expo in New Orleans.



Dave Millhouser

## AMETEK brushless DC motors are bred to perform for 60,000 hours.



**That’s dependability that beats the others cold.**

Help your vehicles keep their passengers cool longer. Specify AMETEK’s brushless DC integrated design for maximum service life. Maintenance-free and backed by industry-leading 4.5-year warranties, our Rotron motors for AC evaporators and condensers are field proven for more than 15 years.

Ordinary motors get sent to the bone yard once their warranties expire. AMETEK designs are engineered to perform for 60,000 hours to keep your vehicles on the road and out of the shop. We offer a full range of motor configurations, operating voltages, horsepower, speed and torque ranges — even custom designs — for any application you have in mind.

Best-of-breed innovation. Top-dog dependability. Learn more about AMETEK’s complete line of brushless DC motors. Call 330-677-3335 or visit: [www.rottrontransit.com](http://www.rottrontransit.com)

**AMETEK**<sup>®</sup>  
TECHNICAL & INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS

## Lincoln Memorial stops reopen

WASHINGTON — The National Park Service has reopened Daniel French Drive on the south side of the Lincoln Memorial for tour bus pick-up and drop-off.

This area is available for tour bus at all times, with no rush-hour restrictions.

There also is drop-off and pick-up on Henry Bacon Drive on

the Memorial's north side. However, during evening rush hour, pick-ups and drop-offs are not permitted on Henry Bacon.

The Daniel French Drive stop also provides easy access to the Korean War Memorial, while the Henry Bacon Drive stop is convenient for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

## Coach sales

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

57.3 percent of the market. A year ago, the three top sellers held 63 percent of the market and two years ago the three best-selling seated coach models captured 80 percent of the market.

For this year's first quarter, the best selling coaches were the MCI J4500, the Van Hool C2045 and

the MCI D4500. A year ago, the three top sellers were the J4500, the D4500 and the Prevost H3-45. Those same three coaches were the top selling trio in last year's fourth quarter.

The seven best selling coaches in the first quarter, in order, were the J4500, C2045, D4500, H3-45, MCI D4505, Prevost X3-45 and Setra S417.

Making the biggest sales

moves during the first quarter this year versus a year ago were the Van Hool C2045, which moved from fourth to second place, and the Prevost X3-45, which moved from seventh to sixth.

Canadian operators purchased 76 coaches during this year's first quarter, representing 14.6 percent of total new coach sales. Canadian new coach sales amounted to 9.3 percent of the market for all of last year.

While ZF auto-stick transmissions were ordered by more than 56 percent of private-sector coach buyers during the first quarter, the transmission's overall share of the motorcoach market was 41.6 percent because public-sector and conversion-shell buyers continue to prefer the Allison transmission.

Questions about *National Bus Trader's* sales reports should be directed to Larry Plachno at (815) 946-2341, or e-mail [lplachno@busmag.com](mailto:lplachno@busmag.com).

# Keep up with everything in the motorcoach industry!

**The Bus & Motorcoach NEWS Website**  
[www.busandmotorcoachnews.com](http://www.busandmotorcoachnews.com)

UMA Members, log on today and check out the features:

- **Electronic access to all articles**
- **Search archives by keyword(s)**
- **View previous issues**
- **E-mail articles to friends or colleagues**
- **Instant access to industry calendar**
- **Electronically submit news for publication**



## Bus & Motorcoach NEWS

4930 West Glendale Avenue, Ste. 6  
 Glendale, AZ 85301

(P): 866-930-8421

(F): 866-930-8426

E-mail: [info@busandmotorcoachnews.com](mailto:info@busandmotorcoachnews.com)

To join United Motorcoach Association, go to: [www.UMA.org](http://www.UMA.org)

## Laidlaw

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

began cutting ticket prices in areas where it experienced the biggest passenger drop-off. Price reductions in selected markets have averaged 3.5 percent, and represent an overall system-wide decrease of roughly 1.5 percent. Greyhound also stepped up marketing in the targeted markets.

Laidlaw executives say the impact so far from the price reductions and expanded marketing has been encouraging, with a noticeable increase in passengers.

Higher insurance costs of \$4 million and increased fuel costs also bit into the fiscal 2007 second-quarter results.

On a consolidated basis, Laidlaw reported a revenue gain for the quarter and six months ended Feb. 28, compared to a year earlier. However, net income for both periods was down significantly.

Laidlaw reported net income of \$18.5 million for the quarter ended Feb. 28, down from \$34 million a year ago. For the six months ended Feb. 28, net income was \$58.6 million, down from \$92.3 million in the prior year.

During the second quarter, Laidlaw's school bus operation completed the acquisition of Langdon's Coach Lines of King City, Ont. Langdon's, which has about 200 school buses and one motorcoach, operates in Ontario and Quebec. It was founded in 1929 by B.J. Langdon and changed hands in 1961 and again in 1976.

Most recently, the principals have been Geoff Galway, president, and Gary Kennedy.

# MCI opens training center, entices young technicians

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Motor Coach Industries officially opened its National Training Center here last month, and announced a cooperative training initiative with regional trade schools to increase industry exposure among student mechanics and technicians.

The opening was coordinated with MCI's spring road-show promotion, the Grand Tour II, and was marked by an open house and customer visits.

The 11,000-square-foot training center, housed in MCI's expansive Louisville Distribution Center, includes four classrooms, a lounge and a coach-driving simulator room. Two of the classrooms can be combined into banquet space, and a 420-square-foot commissary can be used to stage foods and beverages.

The lounge includes an office-conference area where students can meet with fleet support specialists or use phones and computers, including wireless Internet connections.

While the training center will be used primarily to support an aggressive schedule of MCI classes for motorcoach operators and their technicians, it also has the potential for nontechnical staff development as well, especially the driving simulator.

Derrick Anderson, MCI director of operations in Louisville, con-

siders the simulator room to be the crown jewel of the new facility. The simulator runs drivers through a wide variety of situations, including curvy mountain passes, oblivious pedestrians, snow storms, blown tires and other virtual challenges.

The first training at the new facility began the day after the open house with a three-and-a-half-day "technical tune-up" seminar that included a dozen different modules. Six coaches were used for about 50 students.

In March, MCI conducted a regional training seminar at a trade school, Pennco Tech, in Blackwood, N.J. More than 30 students joined 20 industry technicians for the training.

The program was the first in a series of training programs MCI anticipates conducting with other trade schools.

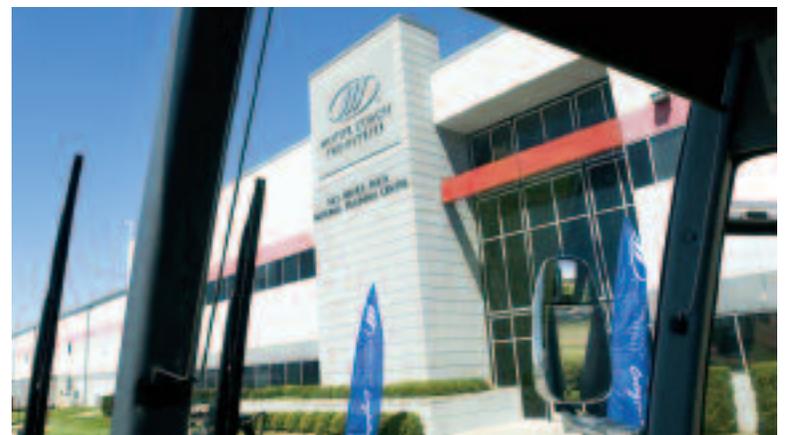
"Hosting training at a trade school exposes future technicians to our industry," said Kevin Jones, MCI's director of training. "Our customer technicians enjoyed their roles as mentors to the students, and everyone benefited from the hands-on approach to learning. With all the advances in motorcoach technology there's no substitute for a teaching environment where you have future technicians learning along side skilled trades people. It produces big

knowledge jumps."

Three Pennco Tech students were invited to attend the technical tune-up session in Louisville last month.

MCI will offer additional regional training seminars in Toronto June 5-7 and in Nashville June 14-15. Another technical tune-up session will be Sept. 25-28 at the Louisville location.

For information about all MCI training, go to [www.mcicoach.com](http://www.mcicoach.com), or contact an MCI fleet support manager.



New training facility shares space with distribution center.

## "STRENGTH IN NUMBERS"



[WWW.BUSCO-OP.COM](http://WWW.BUSCO-OP.COM)

For member information  
call

**NICK OHANIAN**  
Director of Sales

or

**Maria Cabrera**

**888.4.BUS.BIZ • 888.428.7249**

8209 Foothill Blvd. #200 Sunland, CA 91040  
Tel: 818.200.4500 • Fax: 818.200.4501  
[sales@busco-op.com](mailto:sales@busco-op.com) • [info@busco-op.com](mailto:info@busco-op.com)

## Shuttle Bus Leasing

"Your Solution For Shuttling & Fixed Route Contracting"

*Leases Terms Available From 3 Months to 2 Years*

*High Quality, Transit Shuttle Buses*

*Over 1000 Buses In Inventory*

*22' To 60' Models Available*



*Parking Lot Shuttles ~ Seasonal Coverage*  
*Employee Shuttling ~ Peak Demand Coverage*



Top Quality Transit Buses Also  
Available for Sale

**800-287-7253**

**1863 Service Court, Riverside, CA 92507**  
[www.ShuttleBusLeasing.com](http://www.ShuttleBusLeasing.com)

## NW operator sees fast growth since acquisition

SEATTLE — Six months ago, MTR Western, a coach company operating in the Pacific Northwest, purchased Oregon Coachways, a charter, commuter and Amtrak bus service based in Eugene, Ore. (See Oct. 15 *Bus & Motorcoach News*.)

Since the purchase, MTR Western has renamed the company OC&W Coachways; doubled its size, going from 21 to 40 coaches; adopted a new livery, and moved to standardize its fleet with pre-owned Prevost H3-45 and XL-II coaches equipped with Detroit Diesel Series 60 engines and Allison B500 transmissions.

"As MTR takes delivery of its new H3-45's, we're releasing our oldest coaches to our new operation, OC&W," said company President and CEO Darren Berg.

"Although not new, this equipment is nevertheless in excellent condition and is being enthusiastically received by customers up and down the I-5 corridor."

OC&W — short for Oregon,



## Coaches key Quebec campaigns

Campaign buses have become an integral and ubiquitous aspect of modern politics. That certainly was evident early this spring during the Quebec general election. The three principal parties, Action Democratique du Quebec (above), Parti Quebecois (right) and Quebec Liberal Party (above right), had nine leased Prevosts on the road for 33 consecutive days, transporting party leaders and media. Orleans Express supplied six coaches, while Autobus Fleur de Lys provided the other three. The Liberal Party, led by Jean Charest, won a plurality of seats but was reduced to a minority government, Quebec's first in 129 years.

California and Washington — operates in six cities in the three states, Sacramento, Seattle, and Medford, Eugene, Portland and Salem, Ore. All are along Interstate 5.

Berg expects OC&W to be operating 80 coaches by year end.



## Nova Bus updates Website, gets award

SAINT-EUSTACHE, Quebec — Nova Bus has unveiled a redesigned Website that features a clean-line layout and expanded content.

It also reflects the company's

customer-oriented approach, said spokeswoman Nadine Bernard.

That orientation is reflected, she said, by making the Website information easier to access, and the design and menu layouts more

intuitive and browsing more user-friendly.

The site, [www.novabus.com](http://www.novabus.com), includes an extranet where registered users can perform various types of transactions.

Meanwhile, Nova Bus has received the 2006 Volvo Bus Executive Committee Customer Satisfaction BEC award. It is the company's third consecutive BEC award, after having won for operational excellence in 2004 and 2005.

Each year, Volvo Bus' executive committee gives BEC awards to the corporation's worldwide subsidiaries that have achieved operational excellence and outstanding customer satisfaction. The latest award acknowledges Nova Bus' "We Listen, You Drive" customer program.

## 'Top Dogs' honored

MESA, Ariz. — Two leading companies in the entertainer coach industry have been honored by *Tour Guide Magazine* with its Top Dog Awards.

Senators Coaches of Florence, Ala., won the Coach Operator of the Year Award, while Roberts Brothers Coach Co. of Springfield, Tenn., was named Coach Conversion Operator of the Year.

Senators is one of the largest entertainer coach operators in North America with a fleet of more than 80 Prevost coaches. The company's long-time customers include the Rolling Stones, U2, Jimmy Buffet and Rod Stewart.

Roberts Brothers is both a conversion and a leasing company, with a fleet of 73 vehicles, all Prevost XLII and H3 models. Its customers include Lynyrd Skynyrd, Ringo Starr and Hank Williams Jr.

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

### TRADE NETWORK SALES

#### Job Description

- Plan/execute unified Trade Network's sales strategy.
- Develop new Business-to-Business relationships for mutual benefit of all affiliated trade companies.
- Serve as the "go-to-one-stop-service" central resource person for all Trade Network Companies to customers-clients seeking travel and transport services.
- Develop convention and exhibition transport projects and relationships generated from those opportunities.
- Work with Trade companies to develop individualized sales strategies and proposals (RFPs). Provide "home office" support when needed for trade company's desire to seek contract business.

- Coordinate transport work for sports, media, television, and movie projects.
- Manage/organize a "transport-vehicle bank" drawn from network's fleets to service national and international events.
- Provide small- and large-group sales presentations for entire Trade Network; provide on site sales tutorials or training programs, if required.

**Mail Resume to:** BMN NEWS  
c/o Trade Network Sales  
4930 W. Glendale Ave. #6  
Glendale, AZ 85301

**Or E-mail Resume to**  
[info@busandmotorcoachnews.com](mailto:info@busandmotorcoachnews.com)  
Subject: Trade Network Sales



### 2001 Prevost H3-45 Excellent Condition Low Mileage \$249,000

56 passenger, DD Series 60,  
Allison B 500, Jake Brake,  
AM/FM/DVD/VCR/Cass/PA,  
5 Monitors, Cruise Control, Alum

Wheels, Enclosed Overhead Parcel Racks, Lav, Card Table, 275,000 miles

**Call Tom (800) 366-8641**

**email for more pictures - [info@mccarneytours.com](mailto:info@mccarneytours.com)**

**REPOS FOR SALE**  
**Variety of makes and models of "Bank Repos"**  
**across the United States and Priced to Sell!**  
**1-877-737-2221 Ext. 716 for more information!**



### FOR SALE

4 – 1997 Dina Viaggio 1000s  
52 PAX + 1 Escort Seat  
\$50,000 each, includes tires  
2 – 1999 VanHool T-945s  
57 PAX + 1 Escort Seat  
\$145,000 each, including tires

**Call Joe @ 508-993-4503 or  
e-mail [joe@amaralcompanies.com](mailto:joe@amaralcompanies.com)**

**YOUR CLASSIFIED AD  
SHOULD BE HERE!**  
**Call Johnny @ 866-930-8421**

### 2000 H3-45 \$225,000 Miles 290,000

- Very clean owner/operator coach for the last 5 years ~ One driver
- 60 Series, Allison B500, tires 90%+ (FS 400)
- New transmission July/06 @ 260,000 miles installed by Prevost, still under warranty until July/07
- Both alternators replaced March/07
- New air compressor new bushings A/C serviced, New Miter Box,
- Factory White, 56 Pax, American Seating, DVD, VHS, XM, CD Changer, 4 monitors



**See more pictures @ [www.countrycoach.net](http://www.countrycoach.net) or  
[www.busforsale.com](http://www.busforsale.com) see Country Coach**

**For more info: Mark O. Monroe @ 540-347-0011 Cell 540-270-6250**

*Coach is located in Northern Virginia (Washington DC) area*

*Coach available for delivery at the end of May/07*

# NIMCO/Bus Division

973 589-9265 • Toll Free 800-526-8055  
 FAX 973-589-2253 • P.O. BOX 5157 • NEWARK, NJ 07105  
[www.nimcobus.com](http://www.nimcobus.com)

*Supplying the Transportation Industry with  
 Used, Serviceable & Rebuildable Bus Parts  
 for Over 25 Years!*

VOLUME DISCOUNTS • PRIDE IN PERFORMANCE

**DEEP DISCOUNTS!**  
**on all Detroit Diesel & Allison  
 Transmissions**

**SAVE MONEY ~ SAVE TIME**

We sell good running qualified bus components.

**NO RISK PURCHASE PLAN**

We unconditionally guarantee our customers satisfaction.

**WE ALSO STOCK**

- Front and Rear Axle Parts • Engine Accessories
- Alternators and other Electrical Components
- Air Conditioning Components • Body Parts

*We Buy & Sell Buses... Call for a Quote*

## Take Control of Your Costs and Odors!

### Ultra PowrPak XL

Better than ever. Controls  
 odors all week long.

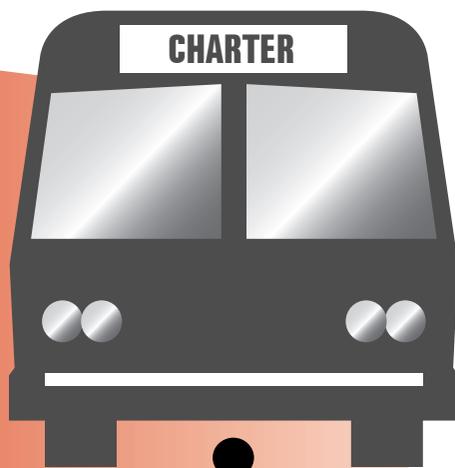


**chempace**  
 corporation "the solution people"

**Call for Free Samples!**  
**1-800-423-5350**

339 Arco Drive • P.O. Box 3484 • Toledo, OH 43607  
 419-535-0101 • Fax 419-535-0531 • [www.chempace.com](http://www.chempace.com)

**Dump  
 CLEAN...**  
**Dump  
 LEGAL!**



### WASHROOM WASTE DISPOSAL UNIT

Installs directly into your  
 existing sewer system!

**L**avatory dump hopper is assembled and ready  
 to install in your existing sewer system. Its  
 cover plate is easily rolled back with the  
 remover tool. Each of your service lanes can easily be  
 equipped with this time-saving unit, which has been the  
 industry standard for over thirty years. All major credit  
 cards accepted.

Call 1-866-LAV-DUMP or email  
[lavdump@yahoo.com](mailto:lavdump@yahoo.com) for additional information.

▲ **Washroom  
 waste is  
 removed  
 quickly,  
 easily and  
 safely**

**HUDSON RIVER CORPORATION**

Call toll free: 1-866-LAV-DUMP | Fax: 1-201-420-3322

## We Purchase Salvage Buses



- All Makes & Models
- Collision & Fire Buses

For More Information Call

**1-800-222-2875**

*Burt Edmunds ext. 157*

*Greg Dotseth ext. 147 or 152*

**ABC**  
 PRE-OWNED PARTS

[www.abc-companies.com](http://www.abc-companies.com)

Here. There. Everywhere.

Presence. That's what we're all about. Backed by the biggest network in the industry along with a dedicated and experienced team, we're behind you all the way. Wherever you are, Prevost Parts is always there. With 7 Prevost-owned Parts & Service facilities and over 150 independent Prevost-qualified repair facilities, we're never far away.

**PREVOST**  
**PARTS**  
COACH & TRANSIT



**CANADA**

QUEBEC • 1-800-463-8876

**UNITED STATES**

ILLINOIS • 1-800-799-9938

NEW JERSEY • 1-800-223-0830

FLORIDA • 1-800-874-7740

TENNESSEE • 1-877-299-8881

TEXAS • 1-866-773-8678

CALIFORNIA • 1-800-421-9958

*All numbers toll free*

▶ Easy to find. Easy to order. [www.prevostparts.com](http://www.prevostparts.com)