April 18, 2007

Mr. Howard Roberts Jr., President
MTA New York City Transit
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

RE: PTSB CASE #8922

Dear Mr. Roberts:

The Public Transportation Safety Board received notice of a multiple injury bus accident involving the MTA New York City Transit, which occurred on East 125th Street at Second Avenue, Manhattan, NY, on April 25, 2006.

Based on a review of the enclosed Abbreviated Report, no further action is necessary.

Sincerely,

Brian O. Rowback
Executive Director
Public Transportation Safety Board.

Enclosure
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
ABBREVIATED BUS ACCIDENT REPORT

1. CASE: 8922
2. PROPERTY NAME: MTA NYCT
3a. ACCIDENT TYPE: Multiple Injury
3b. Accident Severity Index: 0.25
4a. DATE: April 25, 2006
4b. TIME: 6:00 pm
5. ACCIDENT LOCATION: East 125th Street at Second Avenue
6. TOWN/CITY/BOROUGH: Manhattan
7. SUMMONS: None
8. BUS NUMBER: 7673
8a. YEAR: 2003
8b. MAKE: Orion
9. NUMBER OF INJURIES: 5
10. FATALITIES: 0
11. HOURS OF SERVICE: 4 hrs and 51 min in last 24 hrs/54 hrs and 0 min in last 7 days
12. SYNOPSIS:

At approximately 6:00 pm, MTA New York City Transit (NYCT) bus #7673 traveling in the #1 travel lane eastbound on E 125th Street, after crossing Second Avenue, was passing by the entrance ramp to the Triborough Bridge. An auto, moving in the same direction, to the left of the bus, attempted to make a right turn from the #2 travel lane in the front of the bus. The bus driver applied the brakes, however, the left front of the bus struck the right mid side of the auto. Five bus passengers claimed various injuries, were transported to local hospitals, treated and released. The bus sustained slight damage with moderate damage to the auto. The NYC Police responded to the accident and no summonses were issued.

In the vicinity of the accident site, East 125th Street is a 60 foot wide, two-way road divided by a full barrier yellow pavement marking, accommodating two eastbound and two westbound travel lanes. The roadway is straight and level. The entrance ramp to the Triborough Bridge is a one-way road accommodating two eastbound travel lanes. Both roadways are asphalt paved. At the time of the accident it was daylight and the weather was dry and clear. The posted area speed limit is 30 mph.

Bus #7673 is a 2003 Orion transit bus with a seating capacity of 40 passengers. A review of the bus records indicated that Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) are performed at West Farms Depot at regular 3,000 mile intervals, with the most recent completed on April 18, 2006. The bus had traveled 405 miles at the time of the accident. A post accident inspection of bus #7673 was conducted by the Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff in conjunction with NYCT personnel on April 26, 2006. No defects were found that would be considered as causative factors in this accident. Decelerometer tests were performed on the braking systems and showed stopping distances that met the MTA NYCT adopted standards for passenger vehicles of NYS DOT Regulations (Title 17 of NYCRR, Article 3 Part 720).

The bus driver was hired by MTA NYCT on November 18, 2002, and completed the standard “New Bus Operator Training Program”. A review of the bus driver’s Department of Motor Vehicles records for the last three showed no violations or suspensions. New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law, Article 19-A records were complete and up-to-date. A review of the driver’s MTA NYCT record for the last three years revealed one preventable collision accident on 11/20/04, resulting in a verbal warning.
A post accident drug and alcohol test administered to the bus driver 4 hours and 23 minutes after the accident was negative. The delay in administering the drug and alcohol test was due to the bus driver being detained at the scene for the purpose of investigation.

In an interview with the PTSB staff the bus driver indicated that he stopped the bus at a near side bus stop, picked up a few passengers and was crossing the 2nd Avenue with an approximate speed of 12-15 mph when he noticed an auto moving with an approximate speed of 20-25 mph, attempting to make a right turn into the entrance ramp of the Triborough Bridge. He stated that he honked the horn and applied the brakes. However, the bus made contact with the auto.

The auto driver stated that he was stopped for a red traffic signal to the left of the stopped bus. When the signal turned green both vehicles moved across 2nd Avenue. The auto driver claimed that he moved ahead of the bus and attempted to make a right turn.

Three bus passengers and a pedestrian stated that they observed the auto pass the left side of the bus and attempt a right turn in front of the bus.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the accident was the auto driver who was attempting to make a right turn from the #2 travel lane, crossing in front of the moving bus and failing to yield right of way.

Contributing to the accident was the failure of the bus driver to utilize his training in defensive driving techniques while moving through an intersection.

The MTA NYCT reviewed the accident on April 28, 2006, and found it to be preventable. Due to the accident being the first preventable in 12 months and not rated as a major accident, no discipline was issued. The bus driver was retrained, his performance was evaluated as satisfactory and he was returned to passenger service.

Based on the action taken by the MTA NYCT regarding this accident, the Public Transportation Safety Board staff makes no recommendations.

INVESTIGATOR: Mikhail Palanker