April 18, 2007

Mr. Thomas Savage, President
MTA Bus Company
128-15 28th Avenue,
Flushing, NY 11354

RE: PTSB CASE #8960

Dear Mr. Savage:

The Public Transportation Safety Board received notice of a multiple injury bus accident involving the MTA Bus Company, which occurred on 142nd Street at Linden Boulevard, Queens, NY, on May 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
At approximately 7:30 am, MTA Bus Company (MTA BC) bus #5930 traveling northbound on 142nd Street was entering the intersection with Linden Boulevard on a green traffic signal. At that time a pickup truck moving westbound on Linden Boulevard, from the bus driver’s right to left, entered the intersection on a red traffic signal. The right front corner of the bus struck the left front side of the pickup truck. The truck driver, 1 occupant from the truck and 4 bus passengers claimed various injuries, were transported to local hospitals, treated and released. The bus sustained moderate damage with extensive damage to the truck. The NYC Police responded to the accident and no summonses were issued.

In the vicinity of the accident site, 142nd Street is a 30 foot wide two way road, divided by a full barrier yellow pavement marking, accommodating one northbound and one southbound travel lane. Linden Boulevard is a 44 foot wide two way road, divided by a full barrier yellow pavement marking, accommodating one eastbound and one westbound travel lane. Both roadways are straight level and asphalt paved. Parking is permitted at the curbs. The traffic at the intersection is controlled by four traffic signals. 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 #5930 is a 1994 RTS transit bus with a seating capacity of 40 passengers. A review of the bus records indicated that Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) are performed at JFK Depot at regular 4,000 mile intervals, and the most recent was completed on April 27, 2006. The bus had traveled 3,022 miles at the time of the accident. A post accident inspection of bus #5930 was conducted by the Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff in conjunction with MTA BC staff on May 26, 2006 and no defects were found that would be considered causative factors in this accident. Decelerometer tests were performed on the braking systems and showed stopping distances that met the MTA adopted standards for passenger vehicles of NYS DOT Regulations (Title 17 of NYCRR, Article 3, Part 720).

The bus driver was hired by Green Bus Lines (and transferred to MTA-BC later) on March 29, 1978, and completed the company’s new bus operator training program. A review of the driver’s Department of Motor Vehicles records showed no violations or suspensions. New York State Vehicle & Traffic Law, Article 19-A records were completed and up-to-date.
A review of the driver’s MTA BC record for the last three years revealed one preventable collision accident on 3/30/05, resulting in a verbal warning. A post accident drug and alcohol test administered to the bus driver 3 hours and 10 minutes after the accident was negative. The delay in administering the drug and alcohol test to the bus driver was due to the bus driver being detained for the purpose of investigation.

In an interview with the PTSB staff, the bus driver indicated that he was stopped at the near side bus stop on 142nd Street at Linden Boulevard, loading three passengers, while the traffic signal was red. He stated that he saw some autos moving eastbound to stop for the red light. When the traffic signal turned green he proceeded through the intersection at an approximate speed of 8-10 mph. He claimed that when the front of the bus was in the middle of the intersection he observed a pickup truck moving fast from his right to left. The bus driver applied the brakes and swerved to the left in an attempt to avoid a collision, however, the front bumper of the bus struck the left side of the truck.

In an interview with an MTA Bus Supervisor the truck driver claimed that he was traveling westbound on Linden Boulevard on a green traffic signal.

A witness who was standing at the far side bus stop on Linden Boulevard at 142nd Street indicated that he saw an elderly man driving the pickup truck running through the intersection on a red traffic signal. He also claimed that he saw the bus moving from the bus stop at low rate of speed.

A witness who was seated on the right side #4 window seat stated that she observed the bus entering the intersection on a green traffic signal.

The investigation showed that according to the final rest positions of both vehicles, the statements of both drivers, and the statements of three witnesses and performed analyses, it is most likely that the truck entered the intersection on a red traffic signal.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the accident was the failure of the truck driver to stop for a red traffic signal.

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

The MTA BC reviewed the accident on May 25, 2006, and found it to be preventable. The bus driver was issued a five day suspension which he appealed. The bus driver was retrained, his performance was evaluated as satisfactory and he was returned to passenger service.
Based on the action taken by MTA BC regarding this accident, the Public Transportation Safety Board staff makes no recommendations.

INVESTIGATOR: Mikhail Palanker.

__________________________________________  ___________________________
CHIEF, ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SECTION      DATE

__________________________________________  ___________________________
DIRECTOR, PCSB, NYSDOT                    DATE