At approximately 12:20 pm, MTA Bus Company (MTA BC) bus #3211 traveling northbound on First Avenue was making a left turn onto 57th Street on a green traffic signal. At the same time a female pedestrian age 65 was walking from north to south, from the bus driver’s right to left, in the crosswalk over the 57th Street on a walk signal. The left front side of the bus struck the pedestrian, knocking her to the pavement and ran the pedestrian over by the left front wheel. The bus continued forward passing over the pedestrian. At that time the bus driver was notified by a bystander that a pedestrian was under the bus. She stopped the bus, exited and observed the pedestrian underneath the rear of the bus. The bus driver reported the accident to the Command Center. The injured pedestrian was extricated by the FDNY and transported to a local hospital where she was pronounced dead at 3:23 pm. NYC Police responded to the accident and the bus driver issued four summonses (failing to yield to a pedestrian in the crosswalk, failing to execute a left turn properly, disobeying a posted sign for turning vehicles, and for defective brake lights. The bus sustained no damage.

In the vicinity of the accident site East 57th Street is 60 foot wide, two-way road, divided by a full barrier yellow pavement marking, accommodating two eastbound and two westbound travel lanes. First Avenue is a 72 foot wide, one-way road divided by white broken line pavement marking, accommodating five northbound travel lanes and two parking lanes. Both roadways are straight, level and asphalt paved. Parking is permitted at the curbs. The traffic at the intersection is controlled by 6 traffic signals for both vehicular and pedestrian passage. 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 #3211 is a 2005 MCI D-4500 coach bus with a seating capacity of 53 passengers. A review of the bus records indicated that Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) at Spring Creek Depot are performed at regular 6,000 (±500) mile intervals or 90 days whichever comes first. The most recent PMI was completed on May 17, 2006. The bus had traveled 3,805 miles at the time of the accident. There were no safety or recurring defects, noted in the 45 days prior to the accident. A post accident inspection of bus #3211 was conducted by the Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff in conjunction with MTA Bus Co staff on July 5, 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 NYCT adopted standards for passenger vehicles of NYS DOT Regulations (Title 17 of NYCRR, Article 3, Part 720).

The bus driver was hired by Command Bus Co. on June 9, 2005, and completed the company’s new bus operator training program and adopted into MTA Bus Company in 2006. A review of the bus driver’s Department of Motor Vehicles records showed no violations or suspensions. New York State Vehicle & traffic Law, Article 19-A records were complete and up-to-date. A review of the driver’s MTA Bus Co records revealed no collision accidents for the time since she was hired. A post accident drug and alcohol test administered to the bus driver 4 hours and 12 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 accident scene for the purpose of investigation.

In an interview with the PTSB staff, the bus driver indicated that she was driving the bus northbound on First Avenue preparing to make a left turn onto East 57 Street, when she was stopped for a red traffic signal, first in the number 6 travel lane. No passengers were on board. The bus driver stated that she observed the intersection and did not see any pedestrians. When the traffic signal turned green she started to turn left onto East 57 Street at a slow rate of speed. When the bus almost completed the turn the bus driver noticed a male standing in the southwest corner of the intersection, waving and yelling “to stop the bus”. She immediately stopped the bus, exited and observed a female underneath the rear of the bus. The driver called the MTA Bus Command Center. She stated that she did not hear or feel anything unusual.

A witness, who was driving an auto directly behind the bus and making a left turn, stated that she observed the female pedestrian walking south to north outside the crosswalk and get struck by the left front tire of the bus.

Another witness who was sitting in the same auto indicated that the pedestrian was walking south to north outside of the crosswalk and the left front of the bus knocked her down to the pavement and the left front tire of the bus ran her over. She stated that the bus moved forward and the pedestrian came to rest directly behind the left rear tires.

A female standing inside the Washington Mutual Bank (south-west corner of the intersection) stated that she observed the female walking south in the crosswalk when the bus started to turn left from First Avenue. She stated that the right front of the bus struck the pedestrian, knocking her down to the pavement and then the bus rolled over her before coming to a stop.

Another female bank employee witnessed that she saw the victim walking from north to south within the crosswalk but did not witness the accident.
NYPD report indicates that according to witnesses the pedestrian was crossing East 57 Street, north to south, within the crosswalk.

The investigation showed that according to the final rest position of the bus, the location and position of the injured pedestrian, the location of accident debris, the statements of the bus driver and the witnesses, it is most probably that the pedestrian was walking in the crosswalk across East 57 Street, from north to south, from the bus driver’s right to left while the bus was performing a left turn from First Avenue onto East 57 Street. Subsequently, the left front panel of the bus struck the pedestrian, knocking her down to the pavement and ran her over by the left front wheel. The bus continued forward dragging the pedestrian for approximately 21-22 feet.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the accident was the failure of the bus driver to identify the pedestrian walking in the crosswalk and yield the right of way.

Contributing to the accident was the failure of the bus driver to properly perform a left turn from a one way roadway onto a two way roadway.

The MTA Bus Company reviewed the accident on August 10, 2006, and found it to be preventable. The bus driver was permanently suspended from passenger service and resigned on February 9, 2007.

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

INVESTIGATOR: Mikhail Palanker