<table>
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<tr>
<th>1. CASE#: 9183</th>
<th>2. PROPERTY NAME: MTA NYCT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3a. ACCIDENT TYPE: Hit Stationary Object</td>
<td>3b. Accident Severity Index: 0.90</td>
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<td>4a. DATE: November 25, 2006</td>
<td>4b. TIME: 8:49 p.m.</td>
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<td>5. ACCIDENT LOCATION: Triboro Bridge exit ramp at 2nd Avenue</td>
<td>7. SUMMONS: No</td>
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<td>8. BUS NUMBER: 6400</td>
<td>9. NUMBER OF INJURIES: 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. FATALITIES: 0</td>
<td>11. HOURS OF SERVICE: 4 hr 45 min in last 24 hrs/47 hrs 40 min in last 7 days</td>
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**SYNOPSIS:**

At approximately 8:49 p.m., MTA New York City Transit (NYCT) bus #6400 was traveling west on the Manhattan bound exit ramp of the Triboro Bridge when the bus operator lost control of the bus. The right front of the bus collided with two sand filled traffic bollards and a concrete barrier. Eighteen of the 60 bus passengers claimed various injuries. Two of the injured were treated at the scene and released. The remaining injured passengers were transported to local hospitals where thirteen were treated and released while the remaining transported passengers (3) left the hospital without being treated. The bus sustained extensive damage to the right front section from the collisions.

In the vicinity of the accident site the Triboro Bridge exit ramp is a westbound roadway divided into three travel lanes. As the ramp approaches Second Avenue, a concrete median divides the roadway into two exits; two lanes to the left and three lanes to the right. Both ramps end at Second Avenue. Both roadways are asphalt paved, slightly curved with a slight downgrade. The roadway is illuminated by standard overhead luminaires which, at the time of the accident investigation, were all functioning as designed. At the time of the accident it was dark, the weather was clear and the pavement was dry. The posted speed limit is 25 mph.

Bus #6400 is a 2004 Orion VII Hybrid transit type bus housed and maintained at the Manhattanville Depot with a seating capacity of 36 passengers. A review of the bus records showed that Preventive Maintenance Inspections are performed at regular 3,000 mile intervals (±500 miles). The most recent was completed on October 16, 2006 and the bus had traveled 1,582 miles since then. There were no safety or recurring defects noted in the 45 days prior to the accident. Physical inspection of the bus on November 27, 2006 found no defects that could be considered a causative factor in the accident. The inspection also found extensive collision damage to the right front section of the bus which extended into the wheelchair lift system. The data contained on the Electronic Control Module (ECM) was downloaded however, this bus model (Hybrid) is not configured to record the last stop and last hard brake applications making it impossible to determine the speed of the bus prior to the collision. Decelerometer tests were performed on the bus’ 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 the MTA NYCT on May 29, 2005 and completed the New Bus Operator Training Program. A review of the driver's Department of Motor Vehicles records for the past three years showed no violations, convictions or suspensions. NYS Vehicle & Traffic Law, Article 19-A records were reviewed and found to be complete, in-order and up-to-date. A review of the driver's NYCT accident record since her date of hire showed one preventable collision accident (08/08/06 - first non major). Post accident drug and alcohol tests performed on the bus driver upon her release from the accident scene, 3 hours and 6 minutes from the time of the accident, were negative.

The bus driver’s written report of the accident indicated that the bus was being operated west in the center lane of the Triboro Bridge exit ramp and approaching the point where the roadway split right and left when black Lexus, traveling to the left of the bus, abruptly cut across the front of the bus toward the right exit split. The statement further indicated that she steered right and braked, the bus hit a barrel of sand, mounted the median and continued skidding until it hit the wall. The statement concludes with the bus driver indicating that the passengers were panicking and wanted to get off of the bus so, after checking that it was safe to do so, she backed the bus away from the wall so the passengers could disembark.

Witnesses of the accident made the following statements to the MTA NYCT Department of Buses (DOB) Supervisor at the scene:
- Two female passengers seated in the front seats on the right side of the bus indicated that prior to the collision the bus driver had been driving very fast and when they asked her to slow down, she ignored them.
- A third female passenger seated in a front seat on the left side of the bus indicated that the bus driver was visibly angry, driving in an erratic manner and driving too fast.
- A standing male passenger indicated that he had experienced difficulty holding onto the grab rail as the bus driver was trying to negotiate the bend on the exit ramp.

All four of the above witnesses indicated that after the collision the bus driver backed the bus away from the concrete barrier against the wishes of many of the bus passengers.

The Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff tried and failed to contact the witnesses (messages left were not returned) referenced in the MTA NYCT DOB Supervisor’s report. However, an MTA NYCT Office of System Safety (OSS) investigator was able to re-interview the three female witnesses via telephone and they indicated that during the entire trip from LaGuardia Airport, the bus driver appeared to have been very angry, that she was constantly arguing with other passengers, was driving very fast and many other passengers were heard voicing concern about their safety. Additionally, the witnesses indicated that they did not observe any vehicle cut off the bus before the accident, as claimed by the bus driver, and that they believed the cause of the accident was the excessive speed of the bus.

The MTA NYCT trains all bus drivers to adjust the speed of the bus according to driving conditions; including (but not limited to) traction, curves, visibility, traffic and terrain. In addition, the MTA NYCT prohibits bus drivers from backing a bus with passengers on board, from backing a bus without a ground guide, or backing a bus into an active street or along any sidewalk.
Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the probable cause of this accident was the failure of the bus driver to adhere to her training and drive at a reasonable speed for conditions and maintain control of the bus.

The MTA NYCT DOB, after reviewing the facts concerning the accident, found the accident preventable and dismissed the bus driver. The dismissal was appealed and on May 1, 2007, after the bus driver had been working a non safety sensitive position, the arbitrator modified the termination to a 60 day suspension. After serving the 60 day suspension the driver was retrained and returned to passenger service.

Based on the action taken by the MTA New York City Transit regarding this accident, the Public Transportation Safety Board staff makes no recommendation in this case.

INVESTIGATOR: Harry W. Gerham

______________________________  ______________________
CHIEF, ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SECTION  DATE

______________________________  ______________________
DIRECTOR, PCSB, NYSDOT  DATE