1. CASE: 9205
2. PROPERTY NAME: MTA BC
3a. ACCIDENT TYPE: Multiple Injury
3b. Accident Severity Index: 0.60
4a. DATE: December 16, 2006
4b. TIME: 8:33 am
5. ACCIDENT LOCATION: 127th Street at 103rd Avenue
6. TOWN/CITY/BOROUGH: Queens
7. SUMMONS: None
8. BUS NUMBER: 8155
8a. YEAR: 1990
8b. MAKE: RTS
9. NUMBER OF INJURIES: 12
10. FATALITIES: 0
11. HOURS OF SERVICE: 0 hrs and 52 min in last 24 hrs/42 hrs and 26 min in last 7 days
12. SYNOPSIS:

At approximately 8:33 am, MTA Bus Company (BC) bus #8155 traveling northbound on 127th Street was crossing the intersection with 103rd Avenue on a green traffic signal. At the same time an auto, moving from the bus driver’s left to right, ran a red traffic signal and entered the intersection. Subsequently, the front of the auto struck the left lower panel of the bus. After the impact the bus continued forward for 302 feet and stopped. The auto being redirected by the collision, mounted the curb of the 127th Street, and came to rest against a residential chain link fence (approximately 15 feet from the point of impact). The bus driver, 10 passengers and the auto driver claimed various injuries, were transported to local hospitals, treated and released. The bus sustained moderate damage with extensive damage to the auto. The NYC Police responded to the accident and no summonses were issued.

In the vicinity of the accident site, 127th Street is a 31 foot wide, two-way road with no pavement marking, accommodating one northbound and one southbound travel lanes. The cross street, 103rd Avenue, is a 40 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 two 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 #8155 is a 1990 RTS transit type bus with a seating capacity of 40 passengers. A review of the bus records indicated that Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) at JFK Depot are performed at 4,000 mile intervals (+/- 500 miles) or 90 days whichever comes first. The most recent PMI was completed on November 21, 2006. The bus had traveled 2,415 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 #8155 was conducted by the Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff in conjunction with MTA BC staff on December 18, 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 BC 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, Inc. on August 5, 1999, completed the company’s new bus operator training program and absorbed into MTA-Bus company in 2005. A review of the bus driver’s Department of Motor Vehicles records showed one cell phone use violation (private vehicle), convicted on 05/20/05, resulting in a penalty of $50. New York State Vehicle & Traffic Law, Article 19-A records were complete and up-to-date. A review of the driver’s MTA BC records for the last three years revealed 3 non-preventable accidents. A post accident drug test administered to the bus driver 13 hours and 57 minutes after the collision was negative. Alcohol testing was not performed due to the excessive amount of time that had elapsed. The delay in administering the alcohol test was due to the bus driver being transported to a local hospital and treated.

In an interview with the PTSB staff, the bus driver indicated that her bus was moving northbound on 127th Street in the second lane of traffic with an approximate speed of 10 mph. The bus driver stated that she observed the auto as she approached the 103rd Avenue intersection. The auto was moving eastbound on 103rd Avenue and was approximately 10 feet from 127th Street intersection. The bus entered the intersection on a green traffic signal and continued through, when the auto ran the red traffic signal and entered the intersection. Subsequently, the front of the auto struck the left front side of the bus. The bus driver indicated that she applied the brakes after the impact and the bus traveled 302 feet to the final rest.

The auto driver stated to a police officer that she was moving eastbound and did not see the traffic signal due to sun glare and struck the bus.

Two bus passengers stated that the bus was moving at a normal speed, however, they did not witness the accident.

The investigation showed that according to the final rest positions of the bus and the auto, the location of the collision debris, the statements of the bus driver, the auto driver, and witnesses, it is most likely that the bus, moving northbound on 127th Street with an approximate speed of 10 mph, entered the intersection with 103rd Avenue on a green traffic signal. The auto entered the same intersection on a red traffic signal due to the driver not seeing the traffic signal due to sun glare.

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

Contributing to the accident was the bus driver who failed to utilize his training in defensive driving techniques while driving through an intersection.

The MTA NYCT reviewed the accident on February 16, 2007, and found it to be preventable. The bus driver was issued a three day suspension, which was modified to one day suspension after appeal. The bus driver was retrained, her performance was evaluated as satisfactory and she 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