PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
ABBREVIATED BUS ACCIDENT REPORT

1. CASE: 9820
2. PROPERTY NAME: MTA LIB
3a. ACCIDENT TYPE: Collision
3b. Accident Severity Index: 0.25
4a. DATE: July 1, 2008.
4b. TIME: 9:15 am
5. ACCIDENT LOCATION: Glen Cove Road at Westbury Boulevard
6. TOWN/CITY/BOROUGH: Hempstead
7. SUMMONS: None
8. BUS NUMBER: 2215
8a. YEAR: 2008
8b. MAKE: NAVISTAR
9. NUMBER OF INJURIES: 5
10. FATALITIES: 0
11. HOURS OF SERVICE: 5 hrs in last 24 hrs/48 hrs and 30 min in last 7 days
12. SYNOPSIS:

On July 1, 2008, at approximately 9:15 am, MTA Long Island Bus (MTA LIB) paratransit bus #2215 (veh1) traveling southbound on Glen Cove Road was entering the intersection with Westbury Boulevard on a green traffic signal. At that time a FedEx truck (veh3) moving in the first travel lane northbound on Glen Cove Road was entering Westbury Boulevard when a brown Toyota (veh2) moving from the bus driver’s left to right ran a red traffic signal and entered the intersection. Vehicle #2 made slight contact with the right front of vehicle #3. Vehicle #3 continued west and collided with the left front of vehicle #1. The bus driver lost control and traveled left crossing two northbound travel lanes striking a blue Toyota (veh4) and a Chevy Suburban (veh5). Then the bus continued to final rest at the south-east corner of the intersection of Westbury Boulevard and Glen Cove Road. Four bus passengers and the driver of vehicle #4 claimed various injuries, were transported to local hospitals, treated and released. Nassau County Police responded to the accident and no summonses were issued. Bus #2215 sustained moderate damage with various damage to the other vehicles.

In the vicinity of the accident site, Glen Cove Road is a 60 foot wide, two-way road divided by a full barrier yellow pavement marking, accommodating two northbound and two southbound travel lanes. Westbury Boulevard is a 62 foot wide, two-way road divided by a full barrier yellow pavement marking, accommodating two eastbound and two westbound travel lanes. Both roads have a designated left turn only travel lane in each direction. Both roadways are straight, level and asphalt paved. Parking is not permitted at the curbs. At the time of the accident it was daylight and the weather was dry and clear. The posted area speed limit is 35 mph. Traffic at the intersection is controlled by six traffic signals.

Bus #2215 is a 2009 International Navistar paratransit type bus with a seating capacity of 10 passengers and 4 wheelchairs. A review of the bus records indicated that Preventive Maintenance Inspections (PMI) at MTA LIB are performed at 3,000 mile intervals. The most recent was completed on May 5, 2008. The bus had traveled 674 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 #2215 was conducted by the Public Transportation Safety Board (PTSB) staff in conjunction with MTA LIB staff on July 2, 2008 and no defects were found that would be considered causative factors in this accident. Further inspection of the bus revealed that a broken tie rod could have caused the bus driver to loose steering after the impact with vehicle 3.
The investigation team was unable to determine what caused the break of the tie rod, the impact with vehicle 3 or the impact against the curb. Decelerometer tests were not performed on the braking systems due to the collision damage to the bus.

The bus driver was hired by MTA LIB on February 5, 2007, and completed the company’s new bus operator training program. A review of the bus driver’s NYS 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 LIB record revealed no collision accidents since the time he was hired. A post accident drug and alcohol test administered to the bus driver 1 hour and 39 minutes after the accident was negative.

In an interview with the PTSB staff the bus driver indicated that he was traveling in the middle lane southbound on Glen Cove Road with an approximate speed of 30-35 mph approaching the intersection with Westbury Boulevard on a green traffic signal. He stated that he looked left and right before entering the intersection and did not see any potential hazards. The bus driver stated that he was covering the brake pedal and after the impact his foot jumped on the gas pedal. He assumed that his foot was on the brake pedal while he was pushing the gas pedal.

The investigation showed that according to the final rest of the vehicles involved in the collision, the location of debris from the impact, the bus driver’s and the other driver’s statements, it is most likely that prior to enter the intersection the bus driver looked left then right and failed to look to the left again. He also failed to reduce the speed before entering the intersection. After the impact the bus driver lost control which resulted in two other involvements.

The Public Transportation Safety Board staff finds that the most probable cause of the accident was the driver of vehicle 2, who failed to stop for a red traffic signal and yield the right of way to other vehicles in the intersection.

Contributing to the accident was the bus driver who failed to drive defensively and maintain control of the bus.

The MTA LIB reviewed the accident on July 8, 2008, and found it to be preventable. The bus driver was retrained for one day without pay and excepted a final warning in his record. His performance was evaluated as satisfactory and he was returned to passenger service.

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

INVESTIGATOR: Mikhail Palanker

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CHIEF, ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SECTION  DATE

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DIRECTOR, PCSB, NYSDOT  DATE