



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

## URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

# NEWS

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Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe today announced the award of a 3-year, \$10.5 million contract to the Vertol Division of the Boeing Company for systems management of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration's Urban Rapid Rail Vehicle and Systems Program.

The program's goal is to systematically investigate, test and evaluate new and promising concepts in rapid transit car design. To accomplish this, Vertol will produce two transit cars representative of the "state-of-the-art" in car building today. The cars will be equipped to demonstrate the best available subsystems such as suspension, control, and passenger compartment amenities, and will be demonstrated on the major transit systems in the United States. After demonstration, the cars will be used as laboratories at the Department's High Speed Ground Test Center near Pueblo, Colorado.

Vertol also will conduct a design competition for an advanced concept train, which is expected to provide a totally fresh approach to transit car design.

In making the announcement, Secretary Volpe said "we are hopeful that aerospace techniques, such as airframe construction and component modularity, can now be applied to transit cars."

The most promising advanced concept design will be converted to two hardware prototypes for demonstration to the industry and the riding public. Eventually, an advanced concept train incorporating the best combination of systems and subsystems will be demonstrated in revenue service.

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The program holds the possibility for selective component standardization in the transit car industry. After systematic tests and evaluation of alternatives, operating properties will have definite data on which to base selection and specification of cars and their components.

There are nearly 10,000 rapid transit cars now in service in the United States. Although some of them were built 30 years ago, the rate of fleet replacement is only about 250-300 cars per year. These cars are running on the transit systems in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Chicago. Passengers on the rail systems of these five cities alone account for nearly one-third of all U.S. transit riders.

A rapid transit system in the San Francisco Bay Area will open soon and another in Washington, D. C., is under construction. Serious consideration is being given to rapid transit systems in at least six other cities.

Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal of UMTA said that "the needs of new systems, together with accelerated fleet replacement requirements for existing systems, demand a systems-oriented approach to technological improvement."

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For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043.

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