



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE SATURDAY, A.M.
July 3, 1971

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Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe announced today the beginning of a 4.5 million dollar program for the development of innovative designs and systems for transit buses of the future.

The program will mobilize the resources of a number of different research and development organizations, all operating under the direction of a systems management contractor. The goal is the production of a family of new transit vehicles of improved design, propulsion and adaptability to the changing needs of the future.

The primary contract for systems management of the program, in the amount of \$4,474,650, was awarded to Booz-Allen Applied Research, Inc., of Bethesda, Maryland, by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA). The firm will perform the work through a series of subcontracts which will be let by competitive bidding, and it will evaluate the resulting new designs and systems, selecting those considered most applicable to the needs of the future. It will be responsible for the overall technical planning and integration of the program in conjunction with the UMTA technical and management staff.

Secretary Volpe said the program is designed to fill the gap in research and development activities in the production of mass transit vehicles. "It will concentrate," the Secretary said, "on technological advances for comfort, convenience and efficiency; on new or improved power sources which will meet or exceed anti-pollution standards as they now exist and as they may be revised in the future; and on flexible design concepts which could be applied to vehicles of different types for different uses."

"We also want research," the Secretary added, "which will keep in mind such things as the needs of the elderly and the handicapped for many of who there is no means of movement other than mass transportation."

Urban Mass Transportation Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal said the gap in research and development for transit bus production results from the fact that the market for transit buses is so small that it provides little incentive for research investment by private industry.

"The research program we now are undertaking," said Villarreal, "represents a significant step in fulfilling our responsibility to develop new equipment and technology for the overall improvement of the nation's mass transportation systems."

The program announced today will integrate and expand the smaller individual projects which the Department of Transportation already has under way. The result will be a broad and comprehensive research effort covering all phases of transit bus development. Low pollution, external combustion engines using steam and variations of the steam system already are under development and approaching the demonstration stage. Also under development are internal combustion bus engines with alterations and refinements designed to meet anti-pollution standards, as well as other more exotic power sources.

These and other products of the Department's research and development programs will be available to the transit bus industry as their feasibility is tested through demonstration programs. All demonstration programs will be conducted in a manner which will emphasize response to the public need.

Under the terms of the contract announced today the new program will continue over a period of three years and will be funded on an annual basis. Included in the objectives of the program is research on such advanced systems as dual-mode vehicles which might be used in the future on automated busways where guidance, control and power would be provided from sources outside the bus.

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