BRTC
BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION

Hiring and Retention Comparison with Peer Agencies and Surrounding Jurisdictions - 2025

May 2025

Executive Summary

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) operates with a dedicated workforce of nearly 3,400 employees, providing essential transit services to the Baltimore region and beyond. However, as their mission expanded to include statewide responsibilities like commuter bus and MARC service, staffing capacity and financial resources have not always kept pace.

This report outlines strategies to strengthen MTA's workforce by reducing vacancies, especially in hard-to-fill roles, attracting and retaining skilled workers, and ensuring its stability to maintain reliable service. A well-supported workforce is critical to improving transit reliability, advancing state goals for growth, climate action, and equity, and enabling MTA to deliver effective, sustainable transit solutions.

Our report outlines recommendations and strategies to:

▶ **Reduce overall staff vacancies while prioritizing hard-to-fill roles**
▶ **Attract and keep skilled workers**
▶ **Build a strong workforce to keep services running smoothly**

MTA does not have control over most of the issues outlined in this report, as external factors and regulations influence them. The agency's financial resources are governed by state and federal funding cycles, limiting flexibility. Additionally, staffing and compensation decisions are subject to approval from various state agencies. MTA must comply with the State of Maryland's pay scale and collective bargaining agreements with its labor unions. As a result, MTA must navigate complex layers of authority and oversight as it addresses these challenges and implements these recommendations.

General Workforce Recommendations

▶ **Offer Better Pay and Benefits:** Ensure workers receive competitive wages and benefits by working closely with state and union partners to encourage long-term employee retention — *MTA's pay is 11 to 24% below the peer average, further behind the highest-paying peers (WMATA and SEPTA) by 33 to 52%.*
▶ **Grow the Workforce:** Expand MTA's workforce and reduce contractor reliance to prepare for ridership growth, retain institutional knowledge, and prevent staff burnout from high workloads.
▶ **Recruit and Keep Workers:** Provide training, clear career paths, and use workforce data to improve hiring.

Department Specific Recommendations

▶ **Maintenance Staff:** Hire more maintenance workers and expand training programs to keep buses and trains running.
▶ **Capital Project Teams:** Add staff to manage major projects like the Purple and Red Lines.
▶ **Transit Police:** Add community-based safety programs and improve support for officers to help with hiring and retention.

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How to Get There

▶ **Pay and Benefits:** Attract top talent with regular salary benchmarking and benefits enhancements.
▶ **Plan for the Future:** Use data to predict staffing needs and adjust hiring.
▶ **Training and Careers:** Expand apprentice and other training programs and create clear paths for career growth.
▶ **Use Technology:** Invest in tools to make hiring, scheduling, and operations more efficient.
▶ **Community Safety:** Work with local groups to add unarmed safety workers and teach riders about shared safety efforts.

MTA needs strong support for funding and increased staff size to hire and retain skilled workers, especially as ridership grows. Achieving this requires collaboration with the state and union partners, who control staffing levels and compensation for different groups of employees to improve service, meet Maryland's goals, and better serve the community.

Please visit MTA's official website for more detailed information on MTA's strategic plans and performance improvement initiatives. https://www.mta.maryland.gov/
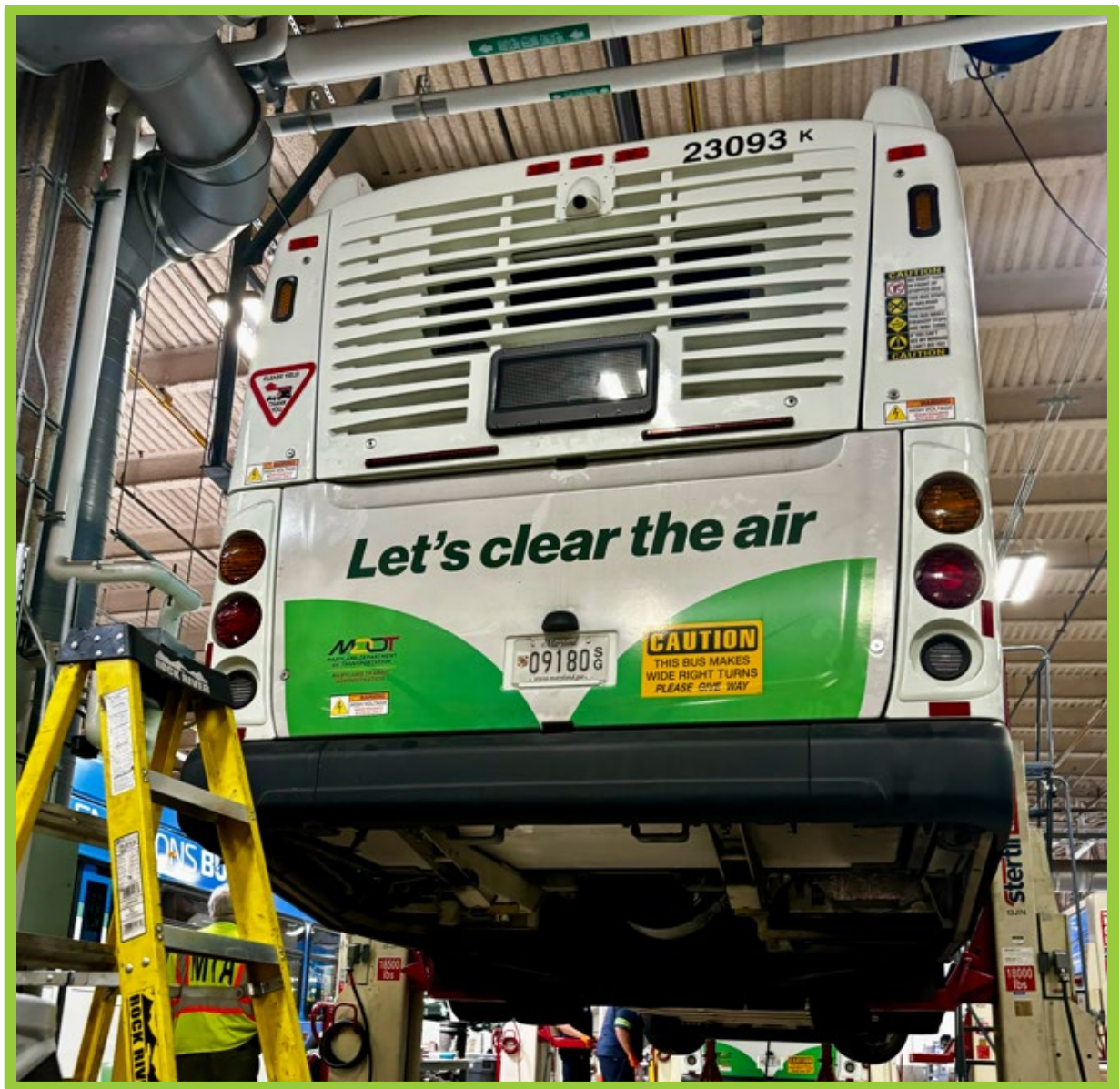

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Introduction

About This Report

This report builds upon the 2022 study titled [Hiring and Retention Comparison with Peer Agencies and Surrounding Jurisdictions](). [The Joint Chairmen's Report]() (JCR) initiated the 2022 report, highlighting the need for a closer examination of staffing issues at the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA).

In the 2022 report, MTA conducted a comprehensive analysis using quantitative and qualitative methods to address these concerns (Maryland Transit Administration, 2022). This new study, conducted by the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC), examines the existing conditions at MTA, including staffing structure, hiring practices, compensation, and employee retention, and compares them to peer transit agencies. The [National Transit Database (NTD)]() and the [American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) 2024 Salary Report]() provided data for peer agency comparisons in this report.

MTA Accomplishments since the 2022 Report

Over the past two years, MTA has implemented many initiatives to enhance hiring and retention:

▶ **Expedited Wage Progression:** In collaboration with Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300, MTA restructured its pay scale effective May 21, 2023. Starting wages increased nearly 10%, with bus operator wages rising from $22.62 to $24.84 per hour and rail operator wages from $24.62 to $26.84 per hour. Operators now reach top pay rates after only three years with the agency. The fiscal year 2025 budget includes $10.76 million for salary increases and fringe benefits, covering cost-of-living adjustments and incremental raises.

▶ **Aggressive Hiring Campaign:** Launched a robust hiring and social media campaign, significantly increasing outreach through job fairs, advertising, and online platforms. On May 13, 2023, MTA held the first on-site bus operator hiring events designed to streamline the hiring process and decrease barriers to employment, issuing 86 conditional offer letters to bus operator candidates that day.

▶ **Accelerated Training and Onboarding:** Streamlined processes to quickly integrate new hires into the workforce.

▶ **Increased Applications:** Efforts led to a significant rise in applications for bus operator positions, with 493 applications from July through September 2023, more than double the number from the same period in the previous year.

▶ **Increased Recruitment Efforts:** Offered hiring and recruitment bonuses, advocated for wage increases, and expanded advertising for open positions.

▶ **New Service Contracts:** In 2022, MTA awarded new Mobility paratransit service contracts that incentivized sufficient staffing levels, including an increase in the minimum wage for operators.

▶ **Leave and Absence Management Program:** Implemented a new directive in January 2023 to improve employee attendance.

▶ **Partnerships:** Collaborated with trade schools and the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Employment and Development and participated in Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) efforts to recruit for skilled trade positions.

▶ **Apprenticeships:** Launched MDOT's first apprenticeship program in collaboration with ATU Local 1300 and Baltimore County Community College in 2024.

▶ **Reviewing Regulations and Procedures:** Assessed regulations, labor agreements, and hiring procedures to reduce barriers to recruitment and retention.

Hiring and Recruitment Structural Barriers

MTA faces significant challenges in staffing due to a complex web of federal and state regulations, fixed staffing allocations, and collective bargaining agreements for most of its employees. These constraints limit MTA's flexibility in hiring and retaining employees, forcing the agency to make difficult choices within an underfunded and highly regulated framework.

MTA's staffing levels are determined by the Governor's office and approved by the Maryland General Assembly. Governor Moore and Secretary Wiedefeld have prioritized increasing MTA's staffing levels and have added over 200 positions over the past two years. MTA has collective bargaining agreements with ATU Local 1300 for operators and mechanics, OPEIU Local 2 for administrative staff, and AFSCME Local 1859 for Police Officers. The rest of MTA's employees are covered under the state's AFSCME agreement and the state salary structure, as determined by the Department of Budget and Management. While the state salary scale does not align with industry-standard salaries, MTA must operate within that structure.

Moreover, while this report briefly touches on how these external factors constrain staffing decisions, we acknowledge that a deeper exploration of these structural barriers is beyond the scope of this document. Nonetheless, many of the issues identified—and the resulting recommendations—are not solely within MTA's power to resolve and will require support from federal and other State of Maryland partners. Addressing these challenges, even at a surface level, is essential to ensuring reliable and effective transit services for Maryland's residents.

Post-Pandemic Ridership Recovery Trends

MTA has demonstrated a strong recovery in ridership post-pandemic, underscoring the resilience of the Baltimore region's public transit services. By the end of 2024, MTA ridership rebounded to over 70% of pre-pandemic levels, with annual increases of 15% from 2022 to 2023 and again from 2023 to 2024.

In FY 2024, overall ridership improved across all modes, and MTA forecasts further increases as pandemic impacts continue to abate. This trend suggests that, while commuter trips may have decreased, transit is being used more for non-work trips, eventually aligning overall usage with pre-pandemic patterns. Moreover, among the top 25 U.S. transit agencies based on daily ridership between January and August, MTA recorded the most significant year-over-year increase of 11.5% between 2023 and 2024 (Maryland Department of Transportation, 2025).

This regional growth aligns with national trends. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) reported a 17% increase in transit ridership nationwide in 2023, showcasing a robust recovery nationwide (Metro Magazine, 2025).

Furthermore, S&P Global's report, "2025 U.S. Transportation Infrastructure Activity Estimates: Generally Steady Demand and Growth," projects that transit ridership in the U.S. will reach 90% of pre-pandemic levels by 2027, with an average annual growth rate of 6.3%. This projected growth for transit ridership outpaces other transportation sectors, such as vehicular traffic (+1.5%) and port container volumes (+1.0%), over the same period (S&P Global, 2025).

The sustained growth in ridership highlights the vital need for MTA to maintain and expand its workforce. A larger, well-prepared team is essential to:

▶ Ensure reliable and efficient service to accommodate growing demand.

▶ Support the operational needs of increasing ridership levels across all transit modes.

▶ Provide a high-quality customer experience to sustain and further build ridership.

▶ Address growing maintenance and state-of-good-repair needs.

Investing in workforce development is vital for MTA to adapt to these rising demands, strengthen service reliability, and continue supporting Maryland's mobility needs and economic growth objectives.

MTA Peer Comparison

Peer System Identification and Selection

For the 2025 report, BRTC and MTA staff selected a set of peer transit systems that best reflect MTA's operational and modal characteristics. When defining peer transit systems for comparison, it was necessary to consider their operational and modal characteristics, service delivery, infrastructure, and modal diversity. These attributes ensure that the analysis provides meaningful insights. By focusing on agencies with similar operational and modal characteristics, we can more accurately assess how different systems manage and deliver their services. Comparing infrastructure allows us to understand how regions utilize physical assets and resources. Lastly, considering modal diversity ensures that fair comparisons are possible between agencies with similar transit modes, such as an extensive bus network, heavy rail, light rail, and regional commuter services.

For the 2025 report, two previously included peer transit systems from the 2022 report were omitted due to specific factors affecting their comparability:

▶ **Virginia Railway Express (VRE)** shares similarities in providing regional rail services. Still, its operational scope differs significantly from that of MTA and other peer systems. Specifically, VRE offers exclusively commuter rail services and does not operate any bus service. In contrast, MTA's fleet mix and service offerings are more diverse, encompassing the Baltimore region's commuter rail, heavy rail, and light rail services. MTA's most significant portion of ridership and services comes from an extensive bus system. As a result, including VRE would not provide a balanced or comprehensive comparison.

▶ **Metro Transit** of the Twin Cities metro area in Minnesota was also omitted from the 2025 analysis. Due to the absence of reported data in the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) 2024 Salary Report, we removed it from the peer analysis. The lack of available data would hinder a consistent and equitable comparison with other peer systems. Given the importance of standardized data sources to ensure analytical accuracy, Metro Transit's exclusion was necessary to maintain the report's integrity.

We selected the remaining peer systems in the analysis based on their alignment with MTA's modal diversity, service scope, and data availability. This approach ensures the comparative analysis remains robust, relevant, and valuable for guiding transit policy and operational improvements within the Baltimore region.

While some analysis includes the broader transit industry, this report's peer agency analysis focuses on the following peer agencies:

▶ Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority of Cleveland, Ohio (GCRTA)

▶ Pittsburgh Regional Transit of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (PRT)

▶ Regional Transportation District of Denver, Colorado (RTD)

▶ Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (SEPTA)

▶ Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority of Washington, DC (WMATA)

In all tables and charts in the report, each transit system is referred to by its acronyms for convenience. WMATA was included as a peer agency because it shares proximity and draws from the same labor and economic markets. It also has regional significance in competing for transportation funds from the State of Maryland.

Table 1: 2023 National Transit Database Metrics for MTA and Peer Systems

Transit Agency	Revenue Vehicles	Modes	Passenger Miles	Passenger Trips	Vehicle Revenue Miles	Vehicle Revenue Hours	Operating Expenditures (millions)	Capital Expenditures (millions)
MTA	1,971	6	343,206,699	57,907,024	56,442,688	3,770,860	$932	$713
GCRTA	555	5	102,838,552	22,415,370	20,944,756	1,565,468	$296	$60
PRT	763	4	155,119,545	37,908,532	26,447,131	2,025,498	$492	$95
RTD	1,750	4	382,906,503	64,533,895	48,200,621	3,350,528	$901	$98
SEPTA	2,757	6	834,809,485	197,264,920	80,225,805	6,794,130	$1,514	$497
WMATA	3,473	3	912,604,948	231,023,784	129,413,131	8,664,787	$2,719	$2,252

Source: National Transit Database (NTD) 2023 System Profiles

Table 1 above presents statistics from the FTA's National Transit Database (NTD) 2023 system profiles, comparing MTA with five peer systems. These data points provide insight into each system's scale, usage, and funding.

Efficiency Peer Comparison of Transit Metrics

The analysis of key efficiency metrics—derived from FTA 2023 data and calculated on a per-employee basis—demonstrates that MTA is performing strongly relative to its peers. For ease of understanding, conditional formatting was applied to the data table comparing MTA and peer systems; the highest efficiency values are shown in varying shades of green, while lower values appear in shades of yellow, making patterns in the distribution more apparent.

Table 2: 2023 National Transit Database Metrics Divided by Total Workforce Size

Transit Agency	Revenue Vehicles	Passenger Miles	Passenger Trips	Vehicle Revenue Miles	Vehicle Revenue Hours	Operating Expenditures	Capital Expenditures
MTA	0.58	101,510	17,127	16,694	1,115	$275,633	$210,957
GCRTA	0.26	48,623	10,598	9,903	740	$139,960	$28,577
PRT	0.30	61,482	15,025	10,482	803	$194,846	$37,826
RTD	0.64	139,900	23,578	17,611	1,224	$329,341	$35,767
SEPTA	0.31	93,036	21,984	8,941	757	$168,733	$55,360
WMATA	0.27	71,554	18,114	10,147	679	$213,199	$176,587
Peer Average	0.39	86,018	17,738	12,296	887	$220,285	$90,846

Source: National Transit Database (NTD) 2023 System Profiles

When examining passenger miles per employee, vehicle revenue miles, vehicle revenue hours, and operating expenses managed per employee, MTA ranks second among peer transit agencies, indicating that the agency is highly effective in using its human resources to deliver transit services despite staffing challenges.

One particularly striking finding is in the management of capital expenditures. MTA manages over $210,000 in capital expenditures per employee, far exceeding the peer average of just over $90,000. This high ratio reflects robust operational efficiency and a strong capacity to oversee and execute large-scale capital projects—an essential factor in supporting long-term infrastructure investments and ensuring service reliability. However, while this high ratio speaks volumes about MTA's exceptional workload and high staff performance, it may also signal that staff are taking on heavy workloads, which could lead to employee burnout or errors if not adequately supported. This insight supports later recommendations that MTA should increase its capital staff to ensure successful project outcomes.

Overall, these efficiency measures highlight the strength of MTA's strategic workforce management. By leveraging a lean yet highly productive team, MTA is well-positioned to meet the demands of a growing transit system and maximize its capital investments. At the same time, addressing potential overload in key areas is critical to safeguard long-term performance and service reliability.

Compensation Peer Comparison of APTA Salary Survey

We used APTA's 2024 salary data to compare MTA and peer systems across three employee categories: department heads, management staff, and professional staff. Table 3 below shows each category's average salary range and actual pay, highlighting distinct patterns among the six transit agencies.

Table 3: Aggregated MTA and Peer Compensation Data from APTA's 2024 Salary Survey

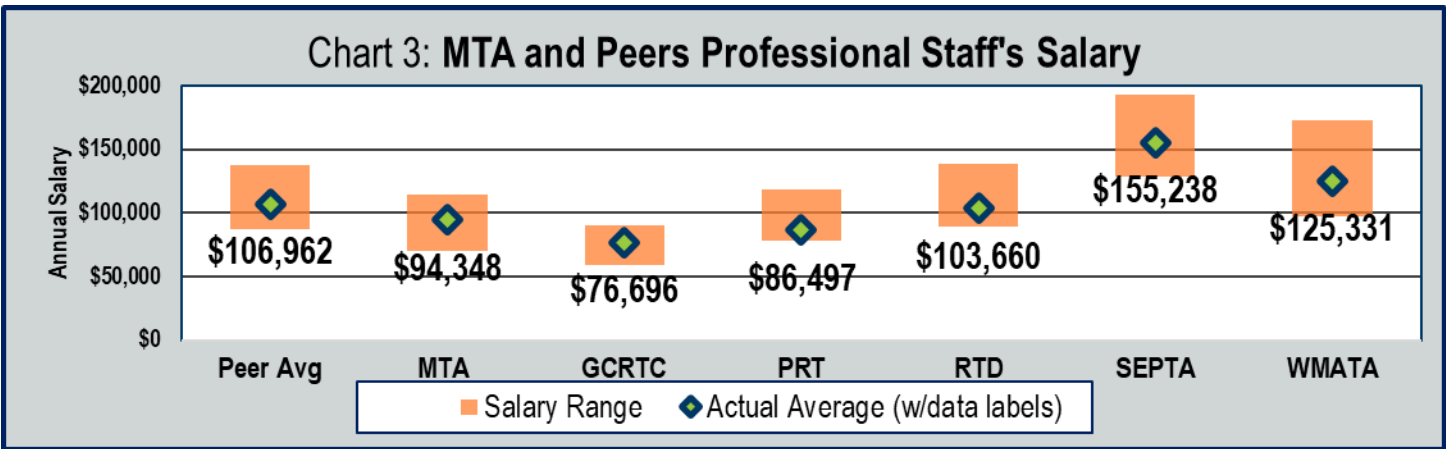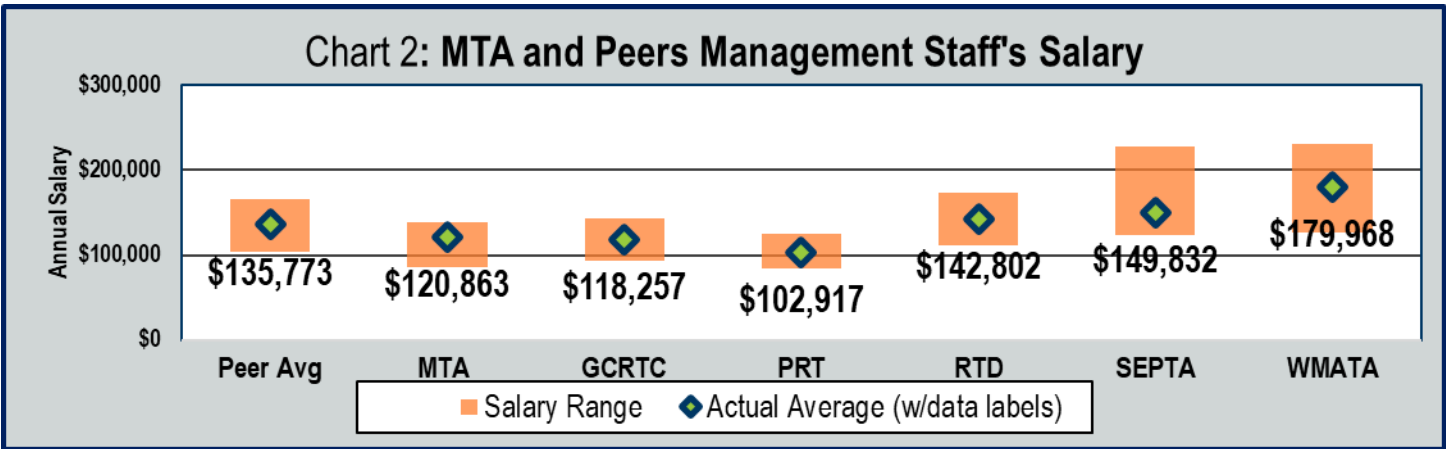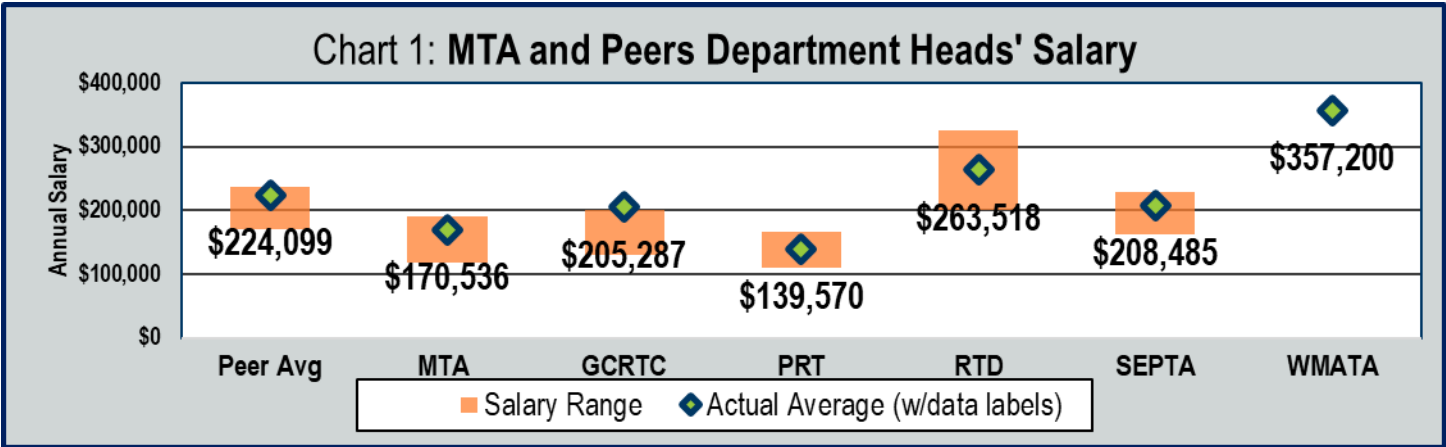|	Dept Head Average Pay	Dept Head Salary Range Midpoint	Mgmt Average Pay	Mgmt Salary Range Midpoint	Prof Average Pay	Prof Salary Range Midpoint
MTA	**$170,536**	**$154,664**	**$120,863**	**$112,525**	**$94,348**	**$92,351**
GCRTC	$205,287	$167,919	$118,257	$118,031	$76,696	$74,648
PRT	$139,570	$138,036	$102,917	$104,463	$86,497	$86,448
RTD	$263,518	$263,518	$142,802	$142,802	$103,660	$103,659
SEPTA	$208,485	$195,730	$149,832	$154,629	$155,238	$157,024
WMATA	$357,200	$340,305	$179,968	$177,985	$125,331	$128,177
Peer Average	**$224,099**	**$210,029**	**$135,773**	**$135,072**	**$106,962**	**$107,051**

Source: APTA's 2024 Salary Survey

Table 4 presents a comparative analysis of compensation for department heads, management staff, and professional staff at MTA versus peer agencies based on APTA's annual salary report. The data reveals that MTA's average salaries, in both actual pay and salary range midpoint, fall below industry norms, with the most significant gap observed in the department head category. Compared to peer averages, MTA's compensation deficit ranges from −12% to −26%. When benchmarked against the highest compensation figures among peers, MTA's pay disparity widens further to between −33% and −55%. Notably, the top salary values in these comparisons come from the nearest large urban systems, WMATA and SEPTA, underscoring the competitive challenges MTA faces in hiring and recruiting skilled staff in the Eastern Seaboard labor market.

Table 4: MTA Percentage Difference from Average and Highest Peer Annual Salaries

	Dept Head Average Pay	Dept Head Salary Range Midpoint	Mgmt Average Pay	Mgmt Salary Range Midpoint	Prof Average Pay	Prof Salary Range Midpoint
$ Difference from Peer Average	$53,563	$55,365	$14,910	$22,547	$12,614	$14,700
% Difference from Peer Average	-24%	-26%	-11%	-17%	-12%	-14%
$ Difference from Highest Value	$186,664	$185,641	$59,105	$65,460	$60,890	$64,673
% Difference from Highest Value	-52%	-55%	-33%	-37%	-39%	-41%

Source: APTA's 2024 Salary Survey

The following charts illustrate the 2024 APTA salary survey data, comparing MTA salaries with peer transit systems. They display the average salary and the average low and high ends of salary ranges for the three employee categories defined in the survey.

Chart 1: **MTA and Peers Department Heads' Salary**

Peer Avg: $224,099
MTA: $170,536
GCRTC: $205,287
PRT: $139,570
RTD: $263,518
SEPTA: $208,485
WMATA: $357,200

Legend: ■ Salary Range ◆ Actual Average (w/data labels)

Chart 2: **MTA and Peers Management Staff's Salary**

Peer Avg: $135,773
MTA: $120,863
GCRTC: $118,257
PRT: $102,917
RTD: $142,802
SEPTA: $149,832
WMATA: $179,968

Legend: ■ Salary Range ◆ Actual Average (w/data labels)

Chart 3: **MTA and Peers Professional Staff's Salary**

Peer Avg: $106,962
MTA: $94,348
GCRTC: $76,696
PRT: $86,497
RTD: $103,660
SEPTA: $155,238
WMATA: $125,331

Legend: ■ Salary Range ◆ Actual Average (w/data labels)

Source: APTA's 2024 Salary Survey

Findings from this analysis include

▶ **Consistent Below-Average Compensation:** In all three categories (department heads, management staff, and professional staff), MTA, GCRTA, and PRT offer salaries below the peer average for both salary midpoints and actual pay.

▶ **Higher Compensation Agencies:** RTD, SEPTA, and WMATA offer higher overall compensation.

- WMATA has the highest salary range midpoint and actual salaries for department heads and management staff, and offers above-average pay across all six metrics.
- SEPTA offers slightly below-average compensation for department heads but pays above-average salaries for management and professional staff. It has the highest salaries for professional staff.
- RTD compensates above average for department heads and management staff but falls slightly below average for professional staff.

One major obstacle MTA faces in attracting and retaining talent is the competition from nearby urban transit providers like SEPTA and WMATA, which offer significantly higher salaries. This persistent compensation gap leads to the steady loss of skilled employees to better-paying systems. MTA's reliance on consultants in key professional roles compounds its challenges, weakens internal capacity, and creates additional hurdles in recruitment and retention. Consultant firms face fewer constraints and can offer more competitive compensation, often outbidding MTA for the same pool of regional transit talent. The combination of inflexible public pay structures and consultant dependence puts MTA at a sustained disadvantage.

The analysis shows that on a per-employee basis, MTA is highly efficient compared to its peers. MTA ranks second in metrics like passenger miles, vehicle revenue miles, revenue hours, and operating expenses per employee. MTA manages over $210,000 in capital expenditures per employee—more than double the peer average of around $90,000. This impressive efficiency indicates strong operational performance. However, it also suggests that staff might be overworked, leading to burnout or errors if managers do not provide additional support.

At the same time, MTA's compensation levels for department heads, management, and professional staff are significantly lower than those of nearby competitors such as WMATA and SEPTA. This disparity contributes to the migration of skilled employees, challenging recruiting and retaining talent. To sustain long-term service reliability and meet growing transit demands, MTA must address these issues by increasing compensation and support and expanding its workforce to reduce the burden on current staff.

Benefits and Other Compensation

Employee compensation directly impacts recruiting and retaining skilled workers. For MTA, ensuring that its compensation strategies align with industry standards is crucial to building a sustainable and motivated workforce. This section highlights strategies MDOT and MTA can implement to improve employee compensation and how these efforts can address staffing issues.

Benefits at MTA

Robust benefits are essential for attracting and retaining skilled transit workers, particularly in a competitive labor market. MTA's comprehensive benefits support workforce stability, enhance employee well-being, and improve service reliability.

Key Advantages of a Strategic Benefits Package:

- ▶ **Attracting and Retaining Talent:** Competitive benefits set MTA apart from other employers and help draw high-quality candidates while fostering long-term employee commitment (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2023).
- ▶ **Enhancing Productivity and Well-being:** Wellness programs, childcare and elder care support, and stress management resources improve morale, reduce absenteeism, and increase engagement (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2024).
- ▶ **Maintaining Market Competitiveness:** Benchmarking against peer transit agencies ensures MTA remains attractive in an evolving labor market (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2023).
- ▶ **Strengthening Union Partnerships:** Collaborating with unions ensures benefits align with workforce needs, fostering a positive workplace culture.
- ▶ **Supporting Long-Term Retention:** Expanding retirement options and financial planning services encourages skilled employees to stay with MTA.
- ▶ **Fostering Inclusion:** Customizable benefits and diversity initiatives help meet the needs of a diverse workforce while reinforcing MTA's mission (American Public Transit Association, 2023).

MDOT and MTA can strengthen their workforce, improve job satisfaction, and ensure reliable transit services for Maryland's residents by enhancing their benefits through union collaboration, wellness initiatives, and industry benchmarking.

Current MTA Benefits Package

MTA offers a competitive package for State employees, including:

- ▶ More than 40 days of paid leave and holidays in the first year
- ▶ Health insurance, including medical, dental, prescription drug, and vision coverage
- ▶ Membership in a defined-benefit pension plan and eligibility to participate in two supplemental retirement plans
- ▶ Tax-deferred savings plan
- ▶ Life insurance
- ▶ A whole-life program and a counselor-on-call program that offers no-cost, confidential, 24/7 support to employees and their dependents
- ▶ Continuous training and development
- ▶ Tuition reimbursement and student loan forgiveness
- ▶ Transportation benefits on local buses, Light Rail, Metro Subway, MARC Train, and Commuter Bus

MTA Compensation Levels

Competitive compensation is vital to attracting skilled workers and maintaining workforce stability. MTA's compensation packages reflect the complexity of its workforce, which spans diverse job roles and includes approximately 2,600 union-represented employees across three unions.

Compensation Structures and Enhancements

▶ **Non-Union Employees:** Receive salary increases consistent with Statewide public sector adjustments.

▶ **Union Employees:** Eligible to receive negotiated bonuses, attendance incentives, tool allowances, and overtime pay. Pension plans for unionized employees typically provide more significant benefits with lower contributions than those for non-union State employees.

- ▶ Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1300: Representing operators and maintenance staff.
- ▶ Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 2: Representing clerks, accountants, and schedulers.
- ▶ American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 1859: Representing transit police officers and fare inspectors.

Budget Allocations Supporting Workforce Development

The fiscal year 2025 budget includes $10.76 million for salary increases and fringe benefits, covering cost-of-living adjustments and incremental raises. These actions highlight the Governor's commitment to remaining competitive amid rising labor market pressures. (Maryland Department of Legislative Services, 2024)

Vacancy and Turnover Rates

Overview and Impact of Staffing Vacancies

Transit agencies nationwide struggle with staff vacancies and face challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified operators. An aging workforce, service disruptions, and impacts on critical functions like patient transport compound these issues. These vacancies drive absenteeism and turnover, underscoring the need for effective retention strategies.

At MTA, staffing gaps can affect operations, service levels, and employee well-being. Beyond daily disruptions, vacancies hinder the rollout of new initiatives, infrastructure improvements, and long-term strategic goals, ultimately impacting Baltimore's mobility and economic vitality.

Understanding the Costs of High Turnover

Employee turnover at MTA can present some challenges. While recent efforts to address staffing have been successful, ongoing recruitment and training demands can stretch resources, potentially shifting focus away from other essential operations. Departures can sometimes lead to delays or missed trips, impacting service reliability and ridership. The turnover cycle can also contribute to increased workloads for remaining staff, potentially affecting morale and leading to burnout.

The loss of experienced employees also means a reduction in the availability of institutional knowledge, which may affect service quality. High turnover could sometimes introduce safety concerns, as new hires may take time to become thoroughly familiar with protocols. Persistent turnover could also influence the organization's reputation. Still, it's important to note that MTA is actively addressing these challenges to maintain service effectiveness and public confidence.

Staff Vacancies at MTA

MTA Vacancy Changes

Chart 4 below illustrates how MTA has experienced fluctuating vacancy rates over the past two decades, ranging from 2.5% in FY 2010 to 8.8% in FY 2022, with an average vacancy rate of 4.9%. During this same 20-year period, the size of MTA's workforce has ranged from a low of 3,042 in FY 2006 to a high of 3,382 in FY 2024, with an average workforce size of 3,236 employees. These data points highlight a relatively stable but gradually increasing workforce size despite the challenges associated with rising vacancy rates.

Chart 4: MTA Vacancy Rates and Total Staff for Fiscal Years 2005 to 2024
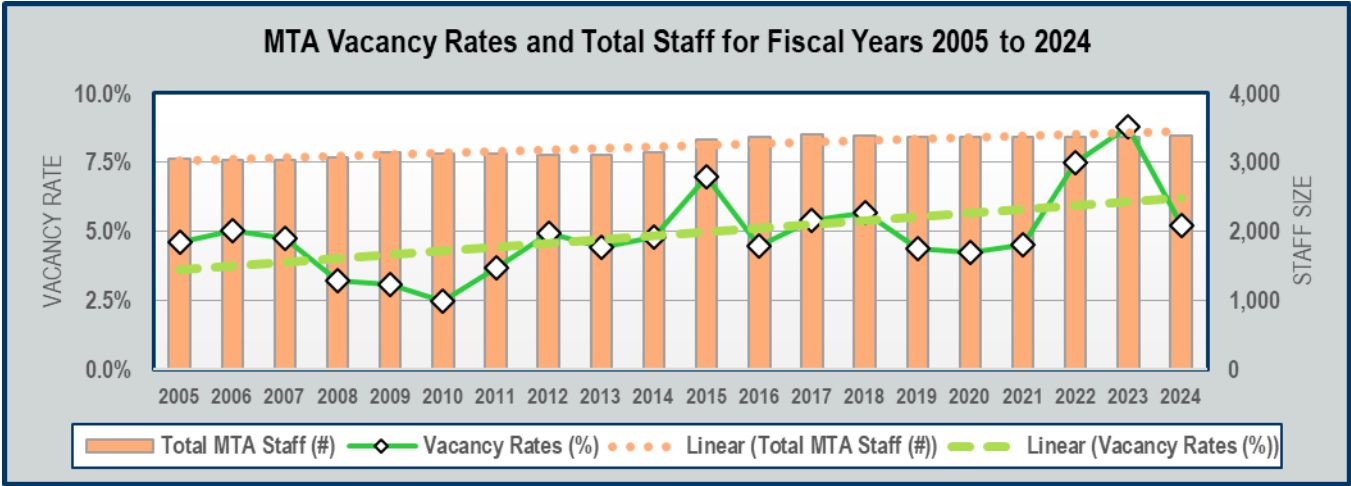
Source: Compiled from Annual MTA Operating Budget Analyses FY2006 to FY2025 https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Search/Publications

MTA recorded the highest vacancy rates during fiscal years 2022 and 2023, a period significantly impacted by the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This disruption affected the broader labor market and led to staffing challenges for many transit agencies. In January 2023, MTA had 295 vacant positions, reflecting a vacancy rate of 8.77%.

However, targeted hiring and retention initiatives improved the vacancy rate, with vacant positions decreasing to 176.5 (5.22%) by January 2024. This improvement demonstrates the positive impact of MTA's focused workforce stabilization efforts. These trends point to the need to prioritize innovative recruitment and retention strategies to maintain this positive momentum and avoid a return to the higher vacancy rates of the recent past.

MTA Vacancies in Comparison to Other MDOT Modal Administrations

As shown in Table 5 below, MTA has significantly reduced its vacancy rate in the most recent reporting period, decreasing from 7.5% in 2022 to 5.2%, the lowest vacancy rate among all MDOT modal administrations. The Maryland Aviation Administration and State Highway Administration follow, each with a 6.3% vacancy rate. MTA reported the highest rate at 13.6%.

Table 5: MTA Vacancy Rates 2022 to 2024 in Comparison to Other Modal Office

MDOT Modal Administrations	Fiscal Year	Vacancy Rate
Maryland Transit Administration	2022	7.5%
Maryland Transit Administration	**2024**	**5.2%**
Maryland Aviation Administration	2024	6.3%
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration	2024	7.2%
Maryland Port Administration	2024	9.5%
Maryland Transportation Authority	2024	13.6%
MDOT Secretary's Office	2024	8.5%
State Highway Administration	2024	6.3%

Source: MTA 2022 Report "Hiring and Retention Comparison with Peer Agencies and Surrounding Jurisdictions" and internal MTA data

Frontline Vacancies

Table 6 contextualizes MTA's most recent staff vacancy rates by category alongside comparative data from APTA's 2022 report on large transit agencies. MTA has reduced its overall frontline vacancy rate from 7.9% in 2022 to 4.7% in 2024, reflecting significant improvements in several categories.

Compared to the 2022 vacancy rates at the 50 largest agencies, MTA had higher vacancy rates in four of the six available employee classifications compared to the 50 largest agencies. By 2024, MTA's vacancy rates in these six peer-comparable categories have decreased in four areas, with metro maintenance vacancies aligning with the peer average. However, light rail maintenance continues to be a significant concern. In 2024, its vacancy rate increased, exceeding twice the peer average. It is important to note that the light rail maintenance department is relatively small, so even a single vacancy can disproportionately impact the overall vacancy rate, further amplifying the challenge.

Table 6: MTA Frontline Staff Vacancy Rates 2022 to 2024

Frontline Positions	Vacancies (#)	Total Positions (#)	2024 Vacancy Rate	2022 Vacancy Rate	50 Largest Transit Agencies (2022) Vacancy Rate
Operators		1,586	**2.4%**	**5.7%**	
Bus	23	1,381	**1.7%**	5.1%	18.0%
Metro	8	121	**6.6%**	13.0%	10.0%
Light Rail	7	84	**8.3%**	12.0%	10.0%
Maintenance Personnel		581	**7.4%**	**12.7%**	
Bus	21	417	**5.0%**	9.9%	13.0%
Metro	11	110	**10.0%**	15.5%	10.0%
Light Rail	11	54	**20.4%**	16.7%	10.0%
Maintenance of Way	11	132	**8.3%**	11.8%	
Police Officers	27	225	**12.0%**	10.7%	
All MTA Frontline	**119**	**2,524**	**4.7%**	**7.9%**	

Source: MTA 2022 Report "Hiring and Retention Comparison with Peer Agencies and Surrounding Jurisdictions" and internal MTA data

Operator Vacancies

The overall vacancy rate for all operators (bus, Metro, and light rail) dropped from 5.7% in 2022 to 2.4% in 2024. Notably, the large pool of bus operators, comprising 1,381 of 1,566 total operator positions, saw their vacancy rate fall to just 1.7% in 2024, greatly enhancing service delivery and on-time performance. MTA achieved these gains through targeted recruitment strategies, including expedited wage progression for rail and bus operators, an aggressive hiring and social media campaign, and an accelerated training and onboarding process. As a result, there was a notable increase in applications for bus operator positions and a significant decrease in vacancy rates across frontline staff categories.

Meanwhile, metro operator vacancies nearly halved from 13% in 2022 to 6.6% in 2024, and light rail operator vacancies dropped from 12% to 8.3%. However, light rail remains the most challenging mode to staff. A key reason for rail transit hiring is that, due to collective bargaining agreements, light rail and metro operator roles must first be offered internally to union members before opening to external candidates—something not faced in bus operator recruitment.

Maintenance Vacancies

Maintenance staff, encompassing vehicle maintenance and rail infrastructure roles, play an essential role in ensuring the reliability and safety of MTA operations. With only 713 maintenance positions—less than half the 1,566 operators—bolstering these ranks is critical as deferred vehicle and infrastructure replacement collides with rising ridership.

As of FY 2024, the overall vehicle maintenance vacancy rate had fallen from 12.7% in 2022 to 7.4%, but remained more than three times higher than operator vacancies. Light rail maintenance was the most acute challenge, with 20.4% vacant, and metro maintenance at 10%. Maintenance of Way employees, responsible for track and infrastructure upkeep, had reduced vacancies from 11.8% to 8.3%—enough to eliminate all slow zones on both Metro and light rail services, but still well above the 4.7% frontline average.

The most recent integral MTA data shows that building on those FY 2024 gains, targeted recruiting campaigns in late 2024 and early 2025 have driven vacancy rates down into the high single digits: light rail maintenance is now down to 8.0%, Maintenance of Way to 8.9%, and metro maintenance has held at 10.0% even as head count rose. These improvements reflect a strategic focus on outreach to technical schools and veterans' groups,

expedited wage-progression tied to certification milestones, and an accelerated apprentice pipeline that quickly brings new technicians up to speed.

The FY 2025 Maryland budget doubles down on these efforts, adding 108 new reliability positions—including 10 slots for a bus maintenance apprenticeship program designed to build a steady pipeline of skilled workers. While bus operator recruiting has been a resounding success, maintenance roles demand specialized expertise in diesel engine overhaul, electrical diagnostics, and HVAC certification—skills in short supply and in high demand. MTA's proven recruitment strategies and momentum must be continued and refined: campaigns tailored to technical training programs, hands-on apprenticeship cohorts with rapid onboarding, and wage-progression steps keyed to certification achievements (Nixon, 2023) (Transit Center, 2024). Because the maintenance workforce is relatively small, each new hire delivers outsized gains in service reliability.

As deferred vehicle and infrastructure replacement pressures grow, sustaining and expanding this skilled maintenance cadre will be essential. By pairing robust budgetary investment with targeted recruitment and training, MTA can ensure its rail and bus systems remain safe, reliable, and ready to meet the Baltimore region's evolving transit needs.

Police Vacancies

MTA Transit Police Department continues to face significant staffing challenges, with its vacancy rate increasing from 10.7% in 2022 to 12.0% in 2024. This trend reflects broader difficulties in recruiting and retaining police officers nationwide, compounded by financial and societal pressures, changing workforce expectations, and growing public scrutiny of law enforcement.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, recruiting new police officers was difficult (Police Executive Research Forum, 2020). Negative public perception, driven by high-profile incidents and media coverage, made law enforcement careers less appealing (Hernández, 2024) (Breslin, 2024). Younger generations, such as Millennials and Gen Z, often seek careers with better work-life balance, remote work opportunities, and financial stability, further limiting interest in policing (Breslin, 2024) (Hutton, 2024).

The pandemic made these problems worse. Many law enforcement agencies canceled recruitment events, delayed training academies, and officers faced significant health risks (Hutton, 2024) (Breslin, 2024). Crime rates rose, public attitudes shifted, and behavioral health issues increased (Hutton, 2024). These factors caused burnout and led to a wave of resignations and retirements.

The situation has not improved significantly post-pandemic. Many officers have left the profession entirely or moved to smaller agencies to avoid the pressures of large metropolitan police departments. Despite higher salaries and bonuses, recruitment struggles persist (Hernández, 2024) (Breslin, 2024) (Mathson, 2025). Although Gen Z's trust in policing has slightly increased, many younger individuals are still reluctant to pursue law enforcement careers (Breslin, 2024) (Hutton, 2024).

MTA Transit Police face these systemic headwinds plus unique operational demands: ensuring safety aboard moving vehicles and in crowded stations requires specialized training, which narrows the field of qualified candidates. Competing directly with neighboring agencies like WMATA only intensifies the challenge, especially given the elevated public scrutiny urban police forces now endure. To address this, MTA Transit Police must adopt a multifaceted strategy.

First, compensation and incentives need an overhaul: starting pay should be raised, and role-specific bonuses should be introduced to make the agency more competitive (Hernández, 2024) (Hutton, 2024). Second, MTA should continue efforts and seek opportunities to further streamline its hiring pipeline through simplified application processes and fast-track pathways for proven candidates (Hutton, 2024) (Police Executive Research Forum, 2020). Third, officer wellness must be prioritized by expanding behavioral health and peer-support programs to reduce burnout and improve retention (Breslin, 2024).

Beyond traditional law enforcement, MTA can enhance safety by deploying non-policing tools and personnel. Empowering riders through public-awareness campaigns such as "Together We Have the Power to Stop Harassment" and training them in the "3Ds" of safe intervention—Distract, Delegate, Direct—can defuse minor incidents before they escalate (Maryland Transit Administration, 2022) (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, 2022) (Maryland Transit Administration, 2024). Simultaneously, unarmed community safety personnel trained in de-escalation and conflict resolution can handle routine disturbances, freeing sworn officers to focus on critical incidents (Pan, 2022). Partnering with civic organizations to field safety ambassadors provides additional eyes and ears on the system while alleviating patrol workloads (Hernández, 2024) (Police Executive Research Forum, 2020) (Police Executive Research Forum, 2022).

Data should guide all efforts. Analyzing recruitment and retention metrics will reveal where the most significant gaps lie and which interventions yield measurable improvements, while ongoing surveys of officer well-being can ensure support programs remain responsive and effective (Breslin, 2024). Ultimately, securing and projecting a sense of safety is vital to restoring public trust and boosting ridership; these reforms must be driven by the transit police leadership, with human resources support.

Operations Management Vacancies

Table 7 highlights the raw staff numbers and vacancy rates for the management roles supporting MTA operations in 2024, alongside comparisons to 2022 data. Significant progress has been made, with the overall vacancy rate for these crucial positions dropping from 18.9% in 2022 (24 vacancies out of 127 positions) to just 2.5% in 2024 (4 vacancies out of 157 positions). Notably, six of the nine operational management categories are now fully staffed. This improvement is even more remarkable given that MTA added 30 new management roles during this period, increasing total positions from 127 to 157 in just two years. The highest vacancy rate is 5%, as seen by the operations control center managers for light rail operations.

Table 7: MTA Frontline Management Staff Vacancy Rates 2022 to 2024

	Positions (#)	Vacancies (#)	2024 Vacancy Rate (%)	2022 Vacancy Rate (%)
Bus Operations				
Division Management	18	0	**0.0%**	6.7%
Field Supervision	51	2	**3.9%**	13.3%
Operations Control Center	28	0	**0.0%**	23.1%
Light Rail Operations				
Division Management	3	0	**0.0%**	33.3%
Field Supervision	7	0	**0.0%**	28.6%
Operations Control Center	20	1	**5.0%**	16.7%
Metro Rail Operations				
Division Management	2	0	**0.0%**	50.0%
Field Supervision	5	0	**0.0%**	0.0%
Operations Control Center	23	1	**4.3%**	26.3%

Source: MTA 2022 Report *"Hiring and Retention Comparison with Peer Agencies and Surrounding Jurisdictions"* and internal MTA data

Non-Operations Vacancies

Definition: PIN (Personal Identification Number) is the designation the State of Maryland uses to authorize and allocate a finite number of permanent positions within state agencies.

For the 2022 report, MTA experienced vacancy rates exceeding 10% in several support departments, including Accounting, Human Resources, Engineering, Information Technology, Procurement, and Training. This trend

aligns with feedback from peer agencies, which also reported challenges in filling similar roles, particularly in engineering and accounting (Maryland Transit Administration, 2022).

Table 8 below presents the staff count and vacancy rate for non-operations departments at MTA. This data includes both state employees and embedded consultant positions, with corresponding vacancy rates from 2022 included for comparative purposes. This analysis aims to track progress in filling non-operations positions and identify trends to inform staffing strategies.

Table 8: MTA Non-Operations Vacancy Rates 2022 to 2024

	State Employees	PINs	Consultants	Total	Vacancy Rate-2024	Vacancy Rate-2022
Planning & Programming	17	18	35	53	2%	9%
Engineering	22	23	72	95	1%	11%
Commuter Bus	7	7	6	13	0%	13%
Information Technology	31	32	41	73	1%	12%
MARC	20	20	28	48	0%	8%
Safety	23	24	41	65	2%	11%
Service Development	14	15	11	26	4%	24%
Track and Structures	2	3	8	11	9%	7%

Source: MTA 2022 Report "Hiring and Retention Comparison with Peer Agencies and Surrounding Jurisdictions" and internal MTA data

Findings of Non-Operations Vacancies:

▶ **Significant Improvement in Vacancy Rates:** The vacancy rate has improved substantially for seven of the categories analyzed. The highest vacancy rate across these categories is service development, which has dropped to just 4%—a dramatic reduction from the 24% vacancy rate in 2022.

▶ **Tracks and Structures Exception:** The one category where the vacancy rate increased is tracks and structures, which rose from 7% in 2022 to 9%. However, this increase is due to a single state vacancy in a department with only 11 staff at full capacity, which puts the increase in context.

Implications of Consultant Reliance

Like many government entities, MTA has increasingly relied on consultant staff to fill various roles across the agency. These consultants serve in embedded positions, augmenting the state staff and providing the flexibility to scale staffing levels in response to project demands. This approach ensures that MTA can meet the varying needs of different projects and access specialized skill sets as needed (Maryland Transit Administration, 2022) (Office of the Comptroller of Maryland, 2025).

However, this model comes with significant downsides. Employing embedded consultants, while sometimes necessary, presents several drawbacks compared to direct hiring. Consultants typically cost more due to higher hourly rates and a lack of long-term cost-effectiveness. Their temporary engagements often result in a loss of institutional knowledge. There's also the potential for conflicts of interest due to their work with other clients and reduced control and accountability from their indirect supervision. Reliance on contractors can negatively affect agency employee morale by undervaluing existing staff, limiting their development opportunities, fostering dependence on external expertise, and undermining internal capacity building (Maryland Transit Administration, 2022) (Office of the Comptroller of Maryland, 2025).

The scale of this issue is notable: an analysis of MTA's non-operations workforce revealed that 242 of 384 positions—over 63%—are staffed by external consultants, with fewer than 37% of those roles filled by permanent MTA staff, even after accounting for vacancies. This high level of consultant reliance doesn't just reflect an operational choice; it's become a structural weakness. It also challenges MTA's abilities to hire and retain permanent staff for these positions. By facing fewer constraints, consultant firms can act more nimbly

with compensation and often outbid MTA for the same pool of regional transit professionals, undermining the agency's ability to build and maintain a strong internal workforce (Office of the Comptroller of Maryland, 2025).

While consultants are appropriate for specialized, short-term needs or when an objective assessment is required, MTA must weigh these benefits against long-term strategic costs and shift the balance back toward rebuilding in-house expertise.

Strategic Recommendations

MTA's recent success in addressing non-operations staff vacancies over the past two years demonstrates that providing it with more PINs could lead to further improvements in staffing. Increasing the availability of state positions would enable MTA to build a more stable, long-term technical workforce, reducing reliance on consultants and mitigating the administrative issues currently faced by state employees.

By further investing in permanent state staff and strengthening recruitment efforts in non-operations roles, MTA can continue its progress in filling vacancies, ensuring a skilled workforce, and improving overall organizational efficiency.

Turnover and Vacancy Rates at MTA

An analysis of MTA's vacancy and turnover rates over the past 20 years reveals insights into workforce trends and their implications for agency operations.

Chart 5: MTA Total Staff, Turnover, and Vacancy Rates 2005 to 2024
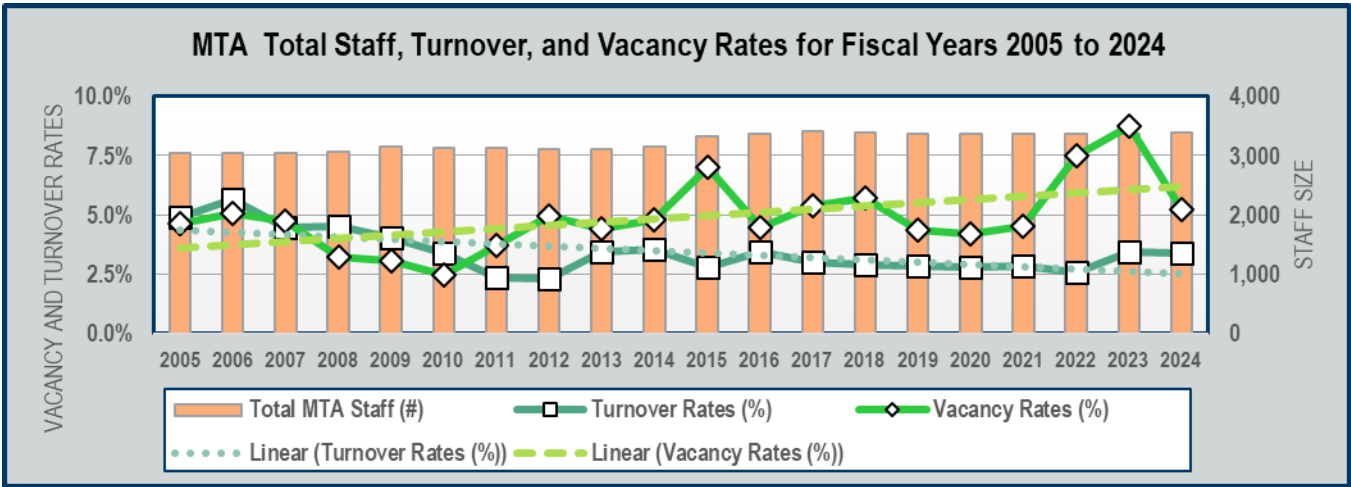
Source: Compiled from Annual MTA Operating Budget Analyses FY2006 to FY2025 https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Search/Publications

Data Trends

MTA's workforce data reveals a complex staffing landscape shaped by stability and volatility. Turnover rates have remained relatively stable, averaging around 3.4%, indicating that employees tend to remain with the agency once the agency brings them on. In contrast, vacancy rates have fluctuated significantly, especially in the years following 2011, with several sharp spikes that underscore persistent challenges in recruitment and retention. Despite these fluctuations, MTA's overall workforce has grown slowly but steadily, demonstrating a gradual labor force expansion even amid continued staffing pressures. This pattern reflects the agency's resilience and the need for structural improvements to support long-term staffing stability.

Implications for MTA

Since 2011, MTA has experienced rising and increasingly erratic vacancy rates, a trend that poses multiple operational risks. Prolonged vacancies can lead to delayed or disrupted service delivery (Alliance for a Just Society, 2024) (American Public Transportation Association, 2023). In addition, staffing gaps often force remaining employees to absorb additional responsibilities, contributing to stress, diminished morale, and potential declines in productivity (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024) (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2024). To maintain operations, MTA has frequently relied on overtime, a stopgap measure that significantly inflates labor costs (American Public Transit Association, 2022).

In contrast to the volatility in vacancy rates, turnover at MTA has remained low and steady. This low staff turnover indicates that once the agency hires employees, they are generally satisfied and inclined to remain. These stable turnover rates suggest that MTA's retention practices have been relatively effective and that the more pressing workforce issue lies in recruitment, not retention.

At the same time, MTA's workforce has grown steadily in recent years. This expansion demonstrates a strategic commitment to scaling operations to meet service demands. However, as the size of the workforce increases, addressing the root causes of persistent hiring challenges becomes even more urgent to ensure that the agency can sustain and build on its operational capacity.

Recommendations

A key recommendation is to continue to streamline recruitment processes by identifying and mitigating hiring bottlenecks that slow down candidate selection and onboarding. Incorporating technology into these workflows, such as automated screening and digital onboarding tools, can accelerate timelines and improve the candidate experience (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024) (Transit Center, 2024) (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2023).

MTA could enhance its recruitment strategies by benchmarking compensation and benefits against peer agencies to stay competitive in a tight labor market. Developing targeted outreach campaigns will also help attract a broader pool of qualified candidates, particularly for hard-to-fill roles. Outreach efforts should be data-informed and focused on specific skill sets or communities with high potential for talent recruitment (American Public Transit Association, 2023) (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024) (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2023) (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2024).

Employer branding also plays a critical role in long-term workforce sustainability. MTA should continue actively promoting its strengths, including stable employee retention rates and opportunities for professional development (American Public Transit Association, 2023) (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024). A proactive partnership with local universities, community colleges, and vocational training programs can further build a robust pipeline of future transit professionals and strengthen MTA's reputation as an employer of choice (American Public Transit Association, 2023) (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024).

Finally, ongoing monitoring of workforce metrics is essential. Regularly analyzing vacancy and turnover trends will allow MTA to identify emerging staffing challenges early and respond proactively (American Public Transit Association, 2023) (Transit Center, 2023). In addition, future workforce needs should be forecasted by MTA using predictive analytics tools based on planned service expansions and system changes, ensuring that recruitment strategies align with long-term operational goals. (American Public Transit Association, 2023) (Breslin, 2024).

Core Bus Service Success

Ensuring a fully staffed bus operator workforce is critical to service reliability and customer satisfaction. By systematically analyzing staffing levels alongside service performance, MTA can demonstrate how targeted recruitment efforts directly translate into tangible improvements on the street. This section examines the relationship between bus operator staffing and service outcomes, reviewing quarterly trends from Q1 2022 to Q4 2024 to highlight how these gains have unlocked both near-term reliability benefits and service expansions.

Definition of metrics

▶ **New Operator Hires:** The number of new bus operators brought into the workforce each quarter. Higher hiring rates indicate efforts to fill vacancies and expand service capacity.

▶ **Operator Vacancy Rate (%):** The percentage of unfilled bus operator positions. A high vacancy rate suggests workforce shortages that may impact service reliability.

▶ **Cut Service (%):** The percentage of scheduled bus service not delivered due to operator shortages or other operational constraints. A lower cut service percent indicates more reliable service for riders.

Table 9 and Chart 6: Cut Service and Core Bus Staffing

	Cut Service %	Operator Vacancy Rate %	New Operator Hires
Q1 22	10.3%	3.5%	49
Q2 22	11.8%	4.0%	60
Q3 22	8.9%	4.2%	72
Q4 22	11.6%	4.4%	61
Q1 23	9.2%	4.2%	72
Q2 23	9.1%	4.6%	102
Q3 23	8.6%	4.1%	121
Q4 23	11.3%	2.4%	125
Q1 24	8.9%	1.6%	115
Q2 24	5.5%	1.1%	134
Q3 24	2.7%	1.7%	117
Q4 24	2.5%	1.9%	61
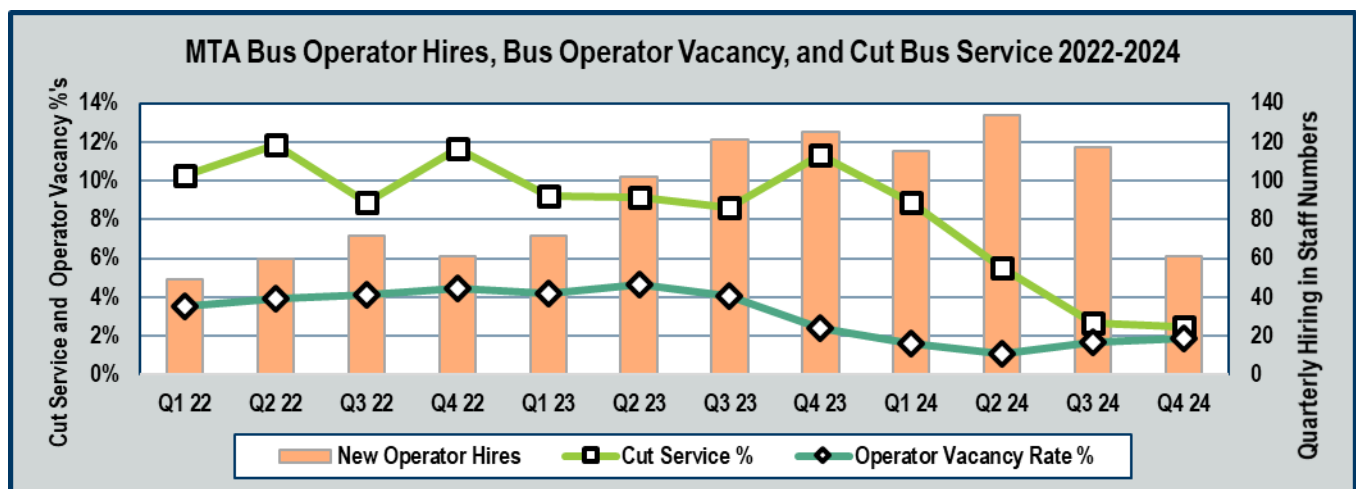
Source: MTA internal data

Analysis and Results

As seen in Table 9 and Chart 6 above, from Q1 2022 through Q4 2024, the interplay between hiring, vacancies, and cut service paints a clear picture: when MTA commits to aggressive recruitment, vacancy rates fall, and after a brief lag, service reliability improves markedly. Bus operators constitute the largest category of MTA staff—over 1,300 positions within a total workforce of roughly 3,300—so stabilizing this group was essential to reversing chronic service cuts.

In 2022 and early 2023, quarterly hires were modest (49–72 operators), and vacancy rates hovered between 3.5% and 4.6%. In Q2 2023, MTA escalated its hiring campaign, peaking at 134 new hires in Q2 2024. As a result, the operator vacancy rate plunged from 4.6% to just 1.07% over twelve months. Hiring then eased slightly in Q3 and Q4 2024, with vacancy rates settling between 1.6 and 1.9%.

Despite this hiring surge, cut service did not immediately decline. High rates of unserved bus service persisted through much of 2023, reaching 11.3% in Q4, due to the time required for training, onboarding, and route integration. By Q3 2024, however, cut service had fallen sharply to 2.67%. It stabilized at 2.5% in Q4, confirming workforce stabilization's lagged but profound impact on the reliability of services.

MTA's ability to sustain aggressive hiring from mid-2023 through mid-2024 was pivotal in driving down vacancy rates and anchoring service reliability. This experience underscores the necessity of proactive workforce planning: recruiting must outpace anticipated demand to avoid service disruptions. While late 2024 vacancy stabilization validated these efforts, ongoing recruitment and retention strategies will be critical to address turnover, retirements, and future ridership growth.

Enabling Future Service Enhancement

With vacancy rates at multi-year lows and a fully staffed operator pool, MTA plans to implement significant proposed service improvements in Fall 2025 that previous staffing shortages made infeasible. Recognizing the importance of maintaining this momentum, MTA has also authorized the addition of 70 new operator PINs for fiscal year 2026, further strengthening capacity and ensuring the resilience of the bus network.

Conclusion

The correlation between robust hiring, low vacancy rates, and improved service reliability is unmistakable. By reducing operator vacancies from over 4.5% to below 2%, MTA cut unserved bus service by more than 8% within a year. These staffing gains underpin current reliability achievements and enable the Fall 2025 service enhancements and the 70 additional operator PINs planned for FY 2026. To sustain and build upon these successes, MTA must continue proactive recruitment, invest in comprehensive training, and reinforce retention, securing the transit workforce that riders depend on today and in the years ahead.

BRTC

Full Recommendations and Implementation

The BRTC has undertaken analyses to address workforce challenges that hinder the delivery of reliable, safe, and efficient transit services. Our findings have culminated in strategic recommendations to bolster workforce capacity, enhance recruitment and retention, and align staffing strategies with MTA's long-term operational and policy goals.

However, MTA faces a complex mix of funding and decision-making constraints. As a state agency operating under MDOT, multiple regulatory bodies and oversight agencies control MTA's budget and hiring decisions.

Funding Constraints

▶ MTA's financial resources come from state appropriations and federal grants. MTA derives its financial resources from state appropriations and federal grants administered primarily by the FTA. This funding is tied to the state's budget cycle and specific federal conditions, limiting flexibility.

▶ The agency operates within a fixed framework of permanent positions—known as Personal Identification Numbers (PINs). With the Administrator's approval, MTA's human resources department can reallocate existing PINs to fill permanent roles. However, departments must justify and submit any requests for additional PINs beyond the current allocation to the Transportation Secretary's Office (TSO). If TSO lacks available PINs, it must request additional funding from the Maryland Department of Budget and Management (DBM), with any impact on positions covered by collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) requiring union discussions.

Decision-Making Constraints

▶ Statewide pay equity laws, CBAs, and the State of Maryland salary scale heavily influence staffing decisions. However, the peer compensation analysis shows these standards do not align with industry norms. For example, with the Administrator's approval, MTA HR submits proposals to TSO for compensation adjustments. Adjustments beyond step 21 require explicit TSO approval, and any changes affecting employees in the EPP salary plan require further approval from the Governor/DBM. Similarly, salaries for employees covered by CBAs must be negotiated with the union, limiting flexibility in addressing competitive pay gaps.

▶ Although MTA has the autonomy to create programs within its budget, any salary impact must undergo the same approval process, limiting the agency's ability to adapt staffing and compensation strategies quickly.

These multi-layered constraints mean that this report outlines many recommendations and implementation paths that require external support and collaboration with federal and state partners. Despite these limitations, MTA has made noteworthy progress, notably reducing overall vacancy rates from 7.5% to 5.2% amid rising post-pandemic ridership. However, the challenges persist, particularly in filling roles that require specialized skills, such as rail maintenance and transit police.

We developed our implementation strategies with these constraints in mind. We have identified key partners and barriers that MTA must work with—from TSO and DBM to union representatives—to secure the flexibility needed to grow the workforce. Addressing these systemic limitations is essential to ensure that MTA meets its current operational needs and is well-positioned for continued improvements in service delivery, with the possibility of expansion with rising ridership and the State of Maryland's policy goals.

General Workforce Recommendations

The 2024 APTA salary survey shows that MTA compensation for department heads, managers, and professional staff significantly trails peer agencies. Department heads earn an average of $53,000 less than their counterparts nationally and nearly $93,000 less than those at SEPTA. Similar gaps exist across other roles. MTA salaries range from 11 to 24% below peer averages and up to 52% below the highest-paying agencies. These disparities undermine MTA's ability to retain and attract specialized talent, particularly as better-paying opportunities exist at other agencies and in the private sector.

Despite these compensation challenges, MTA ranks high in efficiency among the peer transit systems analyzed. It places near the top in key metrics such as passenger miles, revenue hours, and capital spending per employee, which is more than double the peer average. While these figures reflect a productive and committed workforce, they also suggest potential risks of overwork and burnout if staffing and compensation levels are not addressed.

MTA's increasing dependence on contractors for core functions further complicates workforce stability. In some areas, like engineering, consultants outnumber state staff by more than 3 to 1. Contractor firms often offer higher pay and greater flexibility, making it harder for MTA to compete for talent under state salary constraints. The report recommends a phased plan to shift key roles back to permanent positions, helping retain institutional knowledge and improve workforce cohesion.

The analysis also reviewed hiring trends, highlighting mixed results. A 2023 recruitment campaign saw notable success in bus operator hiring. Still, vacancies remain high in light rail maintenance and transit police, reflecting broader national challenges. These findings suggest a comprehensive workforce strategy centered on competitive compensation, professional development, and modern HR tools to support long-term service reliability.

Enhance Compensation

- ▶ Conduct a comprehensive salary review to align pay rates across all employee categories with peer transit systems (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2023) (Transit Center, 2023).

- ▶ Adjust compensation packages to reflect competitive benchmarks, addressing disparities contributing to staff attrition. (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2023) (Transit Center, 2023)

- ▶ Secure necessary budget approvals and implement transparent communication strategies to inform current and prospective employees of salary improvements (American Public Transit Association, 2023) (Transit Center, 2023).

Build Workforce Capacity

- ▶ Reduce reliance on contractors by transitioning indispensable roles to permanent staff positions with competitive salaries (Maryland Transit Administration, 2022).

- ▶ Identify pivotal roles where contractors fulfill essential functions, such as engineering or project management, and prioritize these for conversion to permanent roles (American Public Transportation Association, 2023).

- ▶ Develop a phased plan to systematically increase directly employed professional permanent positions (PINs), ensuring operational stability and reducing long-term costs associated with contractor dependency (Maryland Transit Administration, 2022).

Strengthen Recruitment and Retention

▶ Develop a comprehensive strategy that combines competitive compensation with robust training programs tailored to different job categories (American Public Transportation Association, 2023) (American Public Transit Association, 2022).

▶ Expand career development opportunities, such as mentorship programs and leadership pathways, to retain talented employees and reduce turnover rates (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024) (American Public Transit Association, 2021).

▶ Continuously monitor and assess workforce needs through data-driven tools to identify emerging challenges and refine recruitment strategies accordingly (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024) (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2024).

Targeted Recommendations

Addressing specific workforce segments requires tailored strategies grounded in each group's operational context. For maintenance workers, the report emphasizes that aging infrastructure and deferred repairs increase the urgency of building a robust, skilled workforce. A streamlined hiring process, expanded training capacity, and stronger pipelines through partnerships with technical schools are essential to sustaining long-term maintenance capability, which will continue the positive trajectory staffing those positions.

In the capital staffing area, the analysis underscores MTA's need to rebuild its in-house engineering and project management workforce. Although engineering vacancies dropped from 11% in 2022 to 1% in 2024, this shift was mainly due to short-term consultant use—a practice that risks higher costs and weaker institutional continuity. The current workload is challenging, with capital spending per employee more than double the peer average. Long-term staffing stability will require a strategic hiring plan and competitive compensation to reduce contractor reliance and support successful project delivery.

Transit police staffing faces different but equally pressing challenges. The unit's 12% vacancy rate in 2024 reflects national trends. Still, the analysis identifies promising models from peer systems that integrated unarmed safety personnel to improve recruitment, public engagement, and officer workload. Implementation of these approaches, alongside better wellness support and streamlined hiring, will depend on leadership from the Transit Police itself rather than MTA human resources.

Maintenance Workers

Fill Maintenance Gaps

▶ Implement targeted recruitment campaigns to attract metro and light rail (LRT) maintenance staff, leveraging incentives such as sign-on bonuses and clear pathways for skill progression (American Public Transportation Association, 2023) (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024) (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2024).

▶ Simplify the hiring process to reduce time-to-hire and establish cross-training programs to increase staff flexibility and capability (American Public Transit Association, 2021) (American Public Transportation Association, 2023).

Expand Training

▶ Increase the number of maintenance trainer positions to ensure a steady pipeline of skilled workers (Transit Center, 2024).

▶ Expand and refine partnerships with technical schools and community colleges to create specialized training programs, fostering long-term workforce development (American Public Transportation Association, 2023) (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024).

Capital Staff

Restore Skilled Capital Staff Internal Workforce

▶ Increase MTA's capital staff to manage major projects like the Purple and Red Lines, ensuring effective oversight, timely completion, and successful integration into the transit network.

▶ Add permanent engineering and construction management positions to support the growing capital program while reducing MTA's frequent reliance on external contractors (Maryland Transit Administration, 2022) (Office of the Comptroller of Maryland, 2025).

Transit Police

Boost Recruitment

Increase starting salaries and introduce retention bonuses for specialized transit police roles. (American Public Transportation Association, 2023) (Mineta Transportation Institute, 2024) (Hutton, 2024)

▶ Streamline hiring processes and implement wellness programs to support officer mental health and job satisfaction (American Public Transportation Association, 2023) (Transit Cooperative Research Program, 2024).

Diversify Public Safety

▶ Implement community-based safety initiatives alongside traditional policing, integrating social workers and public educators to address the root causes of crime (Mitman, 2023) (Police Executive Research Forum, 2022).

▶ Develop partnerships with local organizations to provide unarmed safety personnel for non-emergency situations, fostering a collaborative approach to transit security (Hernández, 2024) (Pan, 2022).

Implementation Strategies

The overarching insights gained through these analyses informed the implementation strategies. Recommendations such as benchmarking salaries, leveraging advanced analytics, expanding training programs, and integrating community engagement reflect the interconnected nature of workforce challenges. By addressing systemic and targeted issues, MTA aims to create a resilient and adaptable workforce capable of supporting Maryland's broader climate, equity, and mobility objectives.

Competitive Compensation and Benefits

▶ Regularly benchmark salaries against peer agencies and enhance benefits packages, including tuition assistance, childcare support, wellness programs, and student loan forgiveness.

Workforce Planning and Analytics

▶ Leverage advanced data analytics to forecast staffing needs and refine hiring strategies based on real-time workforce trends.

▶ Develop and refine methods and tools to continuously assess the effectiveness of recruitment and retention initiatives.

Training and Career Development

▶ Expand training programs tailored to specific workforce areas, such as maintenance, operations, and capital project management.

▶ Create apprenticeship and mentorship programs to build career pipelines and foster professional growth.

Leveraging Technology

▶ Invest in modern workforce planning tools and automation technologies to improve recruitment efficiency and operational scheduling.

▶ Utilize predictive analytics to anticipate workforce gaps and optimize resource allocation.

Public Safety and Community Engagement

▶ Partner with community organizations to integrate unarmed safety personnel into transit systems.

▶ Educate the public on collaborative safety measures, such as reporting tools and intervention strategies, to strengthen community trust.

Implementing these recommendations will enable MTA to overcome its workforce challenges, ensuring reliable transit services while advancing Maryland's broader climate, equity, and mobility objectives. Strengthening recruitment, retention, and training efforts will build a resilient workforce supporting the Baltimore region's growing transit needs.

Implementation Matrices

The matrix tables below present strategies for strengthening MTA's hiring and recruitment to support workforce for increasing ridership.

Each table shows:

▶ **Action —** What we recommend doing
▶ **Feasibility —** How realistic it is to make it happen
▶ **Who's Involved —** Which MTA teams and outside partners we'll need
▶ **Timeline —** Rough estimate of how long it will take
▶ **Resources & Barriers —** What support is needed and what might get in the way

Organization of Three Kinds of Matrices

General Recommendations — These are high-level ideas, best practices, and process improvements that set the stage for long-term success across the agency.

Targeted Recommendations — These focus on particular teams or job categories that need tailored solutions.

Targeted Recommendations by Issue Area — This section covers the most pressing challenges, such as compliance gaps, budget issues, or service bottlenecks. It offers targeted fixes to resolve them and measure progress.

Acronym	Definition
CBA	*Collective Bargaining Agreement: The long term periodically negotiated labor contracts with the three labor unions that the majority of the MTA workforce is part of*
DBM	*Maryland Department of Budget and Management: The state agency that supports other state agencies though budgeting, resource management, and personnel services*
HR	*Human Resources: This refers to MTA's human resources professionals*
IT	*Information Technology: This refers to MTA's information technology professionals*
MDOT	*Maryland Department of Transportation: The state's integrated transportation agency, overseeing a multimodal network*
MDTA	*Maryland Transportation Authority: A division of the Maryland Department of Transportation responsible for financing, constructing, operating, and maintaining Maryland's toll facilities*
MTA	*Maryland Transit Administration: The modal administration of the Maryland Department of Transportation that operates a comprehensive public transportation network across the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area*
PIN	*Personal Identification Number: The designation the State of Maryland uses to authorize and allocate a finite number of permanent positions within state agencies*
TSO	*Transportation Secretary's Office: The central executive office of the Maryland Department of Transportation, providing leadership, strategic direction, and oversight across MDOT's modal administration*

General Workforce Recommedations

Implementation Recommendation	Required Action(s)	Problem Solved	MTA Staff Impacted	Feasibility/Level of Effort	Practical Timeline	Other Responsible Parties	Key Partners and Resources Required	Notes
Improve Compensation and Benefits to Stay Competitive, with Regular Benchmarking	Conduct a salary review; align compensation with local peers; secure budget approvals; ensure industry-competitive pay; implement communication strategies.	Standardizes pay and benefits to reduce staff attrition and poaching by local agencies.	HR, Finance, and Management	Moderate feasibility / High effort	12-24 months	Gov, DBM, MDOT, HR, Finance, and Unions	Peer transit agencies for data and compensation benchmarking tools	MTA HR submits proposals to TSO with Administrator approval. Salary adjustments beyond step 21 require TSO approval. EPP placements need Gov/DBM approval, and CBA-covered salaries must be negotiated with the union.
Build Workforce Capacity	Convert key roles to permanent staff through a phased PIN expansion plan.	Lowers contractor dependence and enhances stability.	HR, Operations, and Management	Moderate feasibility / High effort	12-24 months	MDOT, HR, Operations, DBM, Finance, and Unions	Contractors and industry experts	MTA HR, with Administrator approval, can reallocate existing PINs for permanent roles. Additional PINs require agency justification, budget review, and TSO approval. If available, TSO may allocate PINs; otherwise, DBM approval is needed. Changes affecting CBA positions must be discussed with the union.
Strengthen Recruitment and Retention	Create a strategy that integrates competitive pay, job-specific training, career development, and ongoing workforce assessment.	Attracts and retains talent, reduces turnover rates.	HR, Training, and Management	High feasibility / Moderate effort	6-18 months	HR, Management, MDOT, DBM, and Unions	Mentorship programs, leadership pathways, and data-driven tools	MTA can create programs within its budget, but salary impacts require approval. MTA HR submits proposals to TSO, with adjustments beyond step 21 needing TSO approval. EPP salary placements require Gov/DBM approval, and CBA-covered salaries must be discussed with the union.

Targeted Recommendations

Implementation Recommendation	Required Action(s)	Problem Solved	MTA Staff Impacted	Feasibility/Level of Effort	Practical Timeline	Other Responsible Parties	Key Partners and Resources Required	Notes
Fill Maintenance Gaps	Launch targeted recruitment campaigns to attract and retain skilled maintenance workers, develop pipeline programs, simplify the hiring process, and establish cross-training initiatives.	Attracts metro and light rail maintenance staff, reduces hiring time, and enhances staff flexibility.	HR, Maintenance	High feasibility/ Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Operations, Maintenance, and Unions	Technical schools and community colleges	MTA is implementing efforts, including a third-party rail maintenance contract. Any impact on union positions will require discussions with the union.
Expand Training	Expand maintenance trainer positions and collaborate with technical schools to develop specialized training programs.	Maintains a steady pipeline of skilled workers and supports long-term workforce development.	HR, Training, Maintenance	High feasibility/ Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Operations, and Unions	Technical schools and community colleges	Any additional pins beyond the agency's current allocation must be requested, with justification and budget implications. The request requires approval from TSO. If pins are available in the TSO pool, they may be allocated. If not, TSO will request pins from DBM. Any impact on union positions requires union discussions.
Sustain Bus Service Gains	Enhance successful recruitment strategies and boost training capacity.	Ensures consistent service quality and supports the onboarding and development of new operators.	HR, Training, Operations	High feasibility/ Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Operations, Training, and Unions	Peer transit agencies	MTA has the authority to create programs within their budget. Any impact on union positions requires discussions with the union.
Restore Skilled Capital Staff Internal Workforce	Expand capital staff by adding permanent engineering and construction management positions.	Oversees major projects and reduces dependence on external contractors.	HR, Capital Projects	Moderate feasibility/ High effort	12-24 months	HR, Planning, Capital Projects, and Unions	Industry experts and contractors	MTA HR, with the Administrator's approval, can reallocate pins to fill permanent roles. Any additional pins beyond the agency's current allocation must be requested, with justification and budget implications. The request requires TSO approval. If pins are available in the TSO pool, they will be allocated; if not, TSO will request pins from DBM. Any impact on CBA positions must be discussed with the union.
Boost Recruitment for Transit Police	Increase starting salaries, introduce retention bonuses, streamline hiring processes, and implement wellness programs.	Enhances recruitment and retention, while supporting officer mental health and job satisfaction.	HR, Transit Police	High feasibility/ Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, MTA Police, Unions, MDOT, and MDTA	Wellness program providers	MTA can create programs within its budget, but salary impacts require approval. MTA HR submits proposals to TSO, with adjustments beyond step 21 needing TSO approval. EPP salary placements require Gov/DBM approval, and CBA-covered salaries must be discussed with the union. Incentive and bonus programs for police must be approved by MDOT, and discussions with MDTA are necessary due to the impact on their police force.
Diversify Public Safety	Launch community-based safety initiatives and build partnerships with local organizations.	Addresses the root causes of crime and promotes a collaborative approach to transit security.	MTA Police Management,	High feasibility/ Moderate effort	6-12 months	MTA Police	Community organizations, social workers and public educators	The police, not HR, would take an active role in this initiative.

Targeted Recommendations by Issue Area

Implementation Recommendation	Required Action(s)	Problem Solved	MTA Staff Impacted	Feasibility/Level of Effort	Practical Timeline	Other Responsible Parties	Key Partners and Resources Required	Notes
Expand Maintenance Training Capacity	Restore maintenance trainer positions.	Maintains a steady pipeline of skilled maintenance workers and enhances long-term system resilience.	HR, Operations, Maintenance	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Maintenance, Unions, MDOT, and DBM	Technical schools and community colleges	MTA HR, with the Administrator's approval, can reallocate PINs for permanent roles. More PINs beyond the current allocation must be requested with justification and budget implications, and approved by TSO. If PINs are available in the TSO pool, they will be allocated; if not, TSO will request them from DBM. Any impact on CBA positions must be discussed with the union.
Sustain and Replicate Bus Service Success	Implement targeted recruitment and training strategies for rail operators and maintenance teams.	Improves vacancy rates and service reliability.	HR, Operations, Maintenance	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Operations, and Unions	Peer transit agencies	MTA can create programs within their budget, but compensation impacts require approval. MTA HR, with the Administrator's approval, submits proposals to TSO. Salary adjustments beyond step 21 and EPP salary plans need TSO and Governor/DBM approval. CBA salaries must be discussed with the union.
Diversify Public Safety Approaches	Expand community-based safety personnel and implement unarmed safety programs.	Reduces pressure on transit police and enhances system security.	HR, MTA Police	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, MTA Police,and Unions	Community organizations and safety program providers	MTA can create programs within their budget, but compensation impacts require approval. MTA HR, with the Administrator's approval, submits proposals to TSO. Salary adjustments beyond step 21 and EPP salary plans need TSO and Governor/DBM approval. CBA salaries must be discussed with the union.
Monitor and Address Rail Infrastructure Staffing Needs	Ensure adequate staffing in right-of-way maintenance.	Prevents long-term challenges for metro and light rail reliability.	HR, Maintenance, Operations	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Maintenance, Operations, and Unions	Industry experts and contractors	MTA HR, with the Administrator's approval, can reallocate PINs to fill permanent roles. Any additional PINs beyond the agency's current allocation must be requested, with justification and budget implications. The request requires approval from TSO. If PINs are available in the TSO pool, they will be allocated; if not, TSO will request PINs from DBM. Any impact on CBA positions must be discussed with the union.
Proactive Hiring & Retention	Sustain a pipeline of operators to avoid future vacancies.	Mitigates future vacancy spikes and ensures consistent service reliability.	HR, Operations	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Operations, and Unions	Peer transit agencies	MTA has the authority to create programs within their budget. Any impact on union positions requires discussions with the union.
Anticipate Lag Between Hiring & Service Improvement	Invest in the workforce proactively to improve service rates.	Reduces lag between hiring and service improvement.	HR, Operations	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Operations, and Unions	Peer transit agencies	MTA has the authority to create programs within their budget. Any impact on union positions requires discussions with the union.
Monitor and Adjust Hiring Targets	Shift focus to workforce sustainability through retention efforts.	Ensures a balanced workforce and helps stabilize vacancies.	HR, Operations	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Operations, and MDOT	Peer transit agencies	MTA can create programs within their budget, but salary impacts and retention bonuses/incentives require approval. MTA HR, with the Administrator's approval, submits proposals to TSO. Salary adjustments beyond step 21 and employees in the EPP salary plan need TSO and Governor/DBM approval, respectively. Salaries for CBA-covered employees must be negotiated with the union. Incentive/bonus programs for police require MDOT approval, with discussions with MDTA due to the impact on their police force.
Streamline Recruitment Processes	Identify and resolve bottlenecks while leveraging technology.	Speeds up candidate selection and onboarding.	HR, Management	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Recruitment Team, and IT	Recruitment technology providers	MTA has the authority to create programs within their budget.
Enhance Recruitment Strategies	Benchmark compensation and create targeted outreach programs.	Attracts qualified candidates.	HR, Management	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Recruitment Team, Compensation Team, Unions, and MDOT	Peer transit agencies and industry benchmarking tools	MTA has the authority to create programs within their budget; however, compensation impacts require approval. MTA HR, with the Administrator's approval, submits proposals to TSO. Salary adjustments beyond step 21 require TSO approval. Employees in the EPP salary plan need Governor/DBM approval. Salaries for employees covered by CBAs must be negotiated with the union.
Strengthen Employer Branding	Highlight MTA's strengths and collaborate with educational institutions.	Builds a talent pipeline and attracts qualified candidates.	HR, Management, Marketing	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, Recruitment Team, and Marketing	Educational institutions and community organizations	MTA has the authority to create programs within their budget.
Monitor Workforce Metrics	Analyze vacancy and turnover rates using predictive analytics.	Anticipates challenges and predicts staffing needs.	HR, Analytics	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR Department and Analytics Team	Data analytics providers	MTA has the authority to create programs within their budget.
Improve Recruitment and Retention	Increase salaries, introduce bonuses, streamline hiring, and expand wellness programs.	Enhances the recruitment and retention of transit police officers.	HR, MTA Police	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, MTA, Police, Unions, MDOT, and MDTA	Wellness program providers	MTA can create programs within their budget, but salary impacts and retention bonuses/incentives require approval. MTA HR, with the Administrator's approval, submits proposals to TSO. Salary adjustments beyond step 21 and employees in the EPP salary plan need TSO and Governor/DBM approval, respectively. Salaries for CBA-covered employees must be negotiated with the union. Incentive/bonus programs for police require MDOT approval, with discussions with MDTA due to the impact on their police force.
Expand Non-Policing Safety Tools	Empower riders to report issues and encourage self-policing.	Improves safety while reducing reliance on law enforcement.	MTA Police	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	MTA Police	Community organizations and safety program providers	The police, not HR, would take an active role in this initiative.
Leverage Data for Better Outcomes	Analyze recruitment and retention data while monitoring officer well-being.	Develops effective strategies and enhances support programs.	HR, MTA Police, Analytics	High feasibility, Moderate effort	6-12 months	HR, MTA Police, and Analytics Team	Data analytics providers	MTA has the authority to create programs within their budget.

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