

Our File/N/Réf. 14-8-2000  
 Your File/V/Réf.

DATE: 18 May 2000

TO/DEST: Co-ordinator, Transit Services Committee

FROM/EXP. General Manager

SUBJECT/OBJET: **INSTALLATION OF DEDICATED EXHAUST SYSTEM  
 MERIVALE GARAGE – BODY SHOP\*\*\*\***

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### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Transit Services Committee recommend the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Transit Commission approve the installation of a Dedicated Exhaust System at Merivale Body Shop, at an estimated cost of \$325,000 as follows:**

<b>Installation</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>
<b>Engineering Design</b>	<b><u>25,000</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$325,000</b>

### **BACKGROUND**

In 1997 & 1998, severe problems were experienced due to inadequate ventilation and exhaust in the Body Shop at St. Laurent. At one point, Labour Canada was called in to assess the situation. With Staff and a local engineering consultant (Antares Engineering), a design was prototyped and tested. The problem arose due to the type of welding that was needed for the hollow frame articulated buses, the coatings installed for corrosion protection and the accumulations that are inherent in operation of the buses.

### **Additional Item 7**

**Transit Services Agenda, 24 May 2000**

**\*\*\*NOTE: TRANSITION BOARD APPROVAL WILL BE REQUIRED FOLLOWING THE COMMISSION'S CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM.**

Exhaust system upgrades, consisting of a custom-designed local extraction system, a smoke detection and general purge exhaust, and improvements to the general ventilation system were installed in the 3 bays of the Body Shop in the St. Laurent North Garage. The cost of the work was approximately \$290,000 for installation and \$20,000 for Engineering.

In 1999, similar welding operations were moved to Merivale Garage, without any improvements to the ventilation system. (In addition to the articulated buses, the 1998-series and 4000-series buses have similar hollow frame construction.) There have been a number of serious employee complaints about the environmental conditions in the Merivale Body Shop. A number of very temporary measures have been implemented, including provision of portable breathing apparatus to employees and acquisition of portable fume extractors, but these do not provide the required flexibility and safety for the increasing operations at this location. Operations will be restructured to limit this work to 3 of the 5 bays, upgrading to this improved ventilation system.

An increase in required maintenance on aging buses (articulated buses and Series-4000 & 9800 buses) has required use of additional facilities at Merivale Garage for welding of coated hollow frame bus frames. A similar project was installed at St. Laurent North Garage in 1998, with the intervention of Labour Canada. This process uses MIG welding and generates large volumes of smoke and fumes, affecting employee health. A number of serious complaints from employees have resulted from the ongoing welding in process.

Not proceeding with this project is likely to result in refusal of employees to work in this area and Labour Canada intervention. The existing St. Laurent Body Shop cannot adequately respond to the volume of work required, and expansion of service areas is required. Continued lack of facilities would result in the inability to provide sufficient buses to meet service to the City of Ottawa. In summary, the Dedicated Exhaust System is critical to OC Transpo's operation and authorization to proceed is requested. Prompt approval means work could proceed immediately, and the system could be in service by December 2000.

#### SOLE SOURCING OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

Staff is recommending a sole source award to Antares up to \$25,000. The company was instrumental in the development of the identical system at St. Laurent. Due to the specialized nature of the design, there is a steep learning curve associated with this project. Use of another consultant would likely involve substantially higher fees, in the range of \$50,000, and a significant delay in implementing this employee safety issue. Hence continuation of the project with Antares has an expected lower cost of some \$25,000.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

This project was not part of the approved 2000 Capital Budget. Funding will be provided within the limits of the approved Capital spending between Plant and Equipment allocations by deferring or under-spending on projects that are less critical. Pursuant to Motion No. 17 of the Ottawa Transition Board approved on 28 Feb 00, this item will require Board approval.

*Approved by  
Gordon Diamond*