

**Massachusetts Bay
Transportation Authority**

Summer 2023 Bus Service Strategy

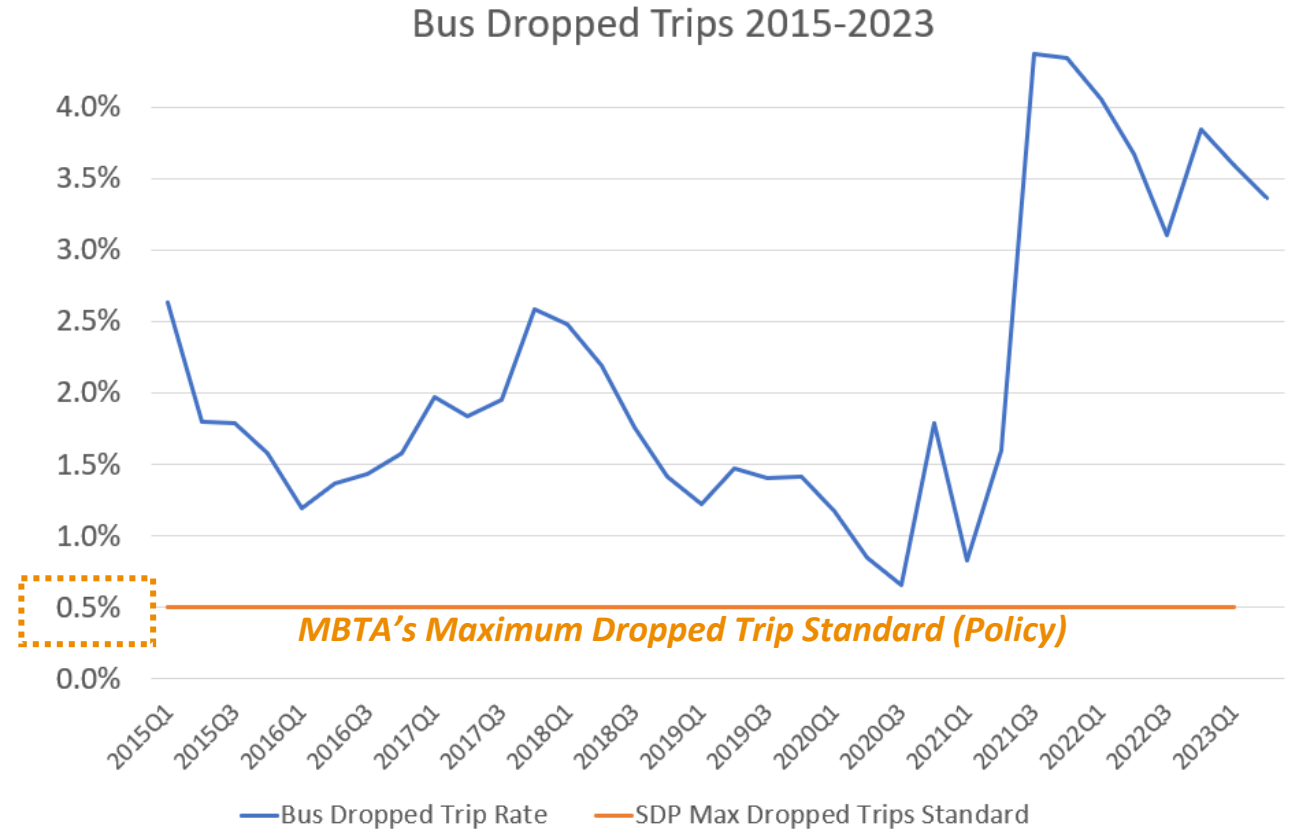
Executive Summary

- **MBTA bus service does not currently meet our own Service Delivery Policy standards, but our customers need reliable service in order to plan their lives.**
 - On a daily basis, the MBTA drops 1 in 25-30 trips. Dropped trips (i.e. bus trips that don't run) occur when there are **not enough operators to run the schedule.**
- This summer, the MBTA will publish schedules that customers can rely on more, by **matching the schedules to operators available for the summer schedules** (effective July 2nd)
 - This change will not impact service provided on daily basis, but will **significantly improve reliability** and can positively impact crowding
- In addition, the MBTA must improve Bus Operator hiring and retention (a national issue), and while multiple initiatives already implemented, actively developing new initiatives to **reshape and improve attractiveness of role**
- Planning for **Bus Network Redesign** continues, including design for transit priority and related infrastructure, but route changes are on pause until Bus Operator hiring increases



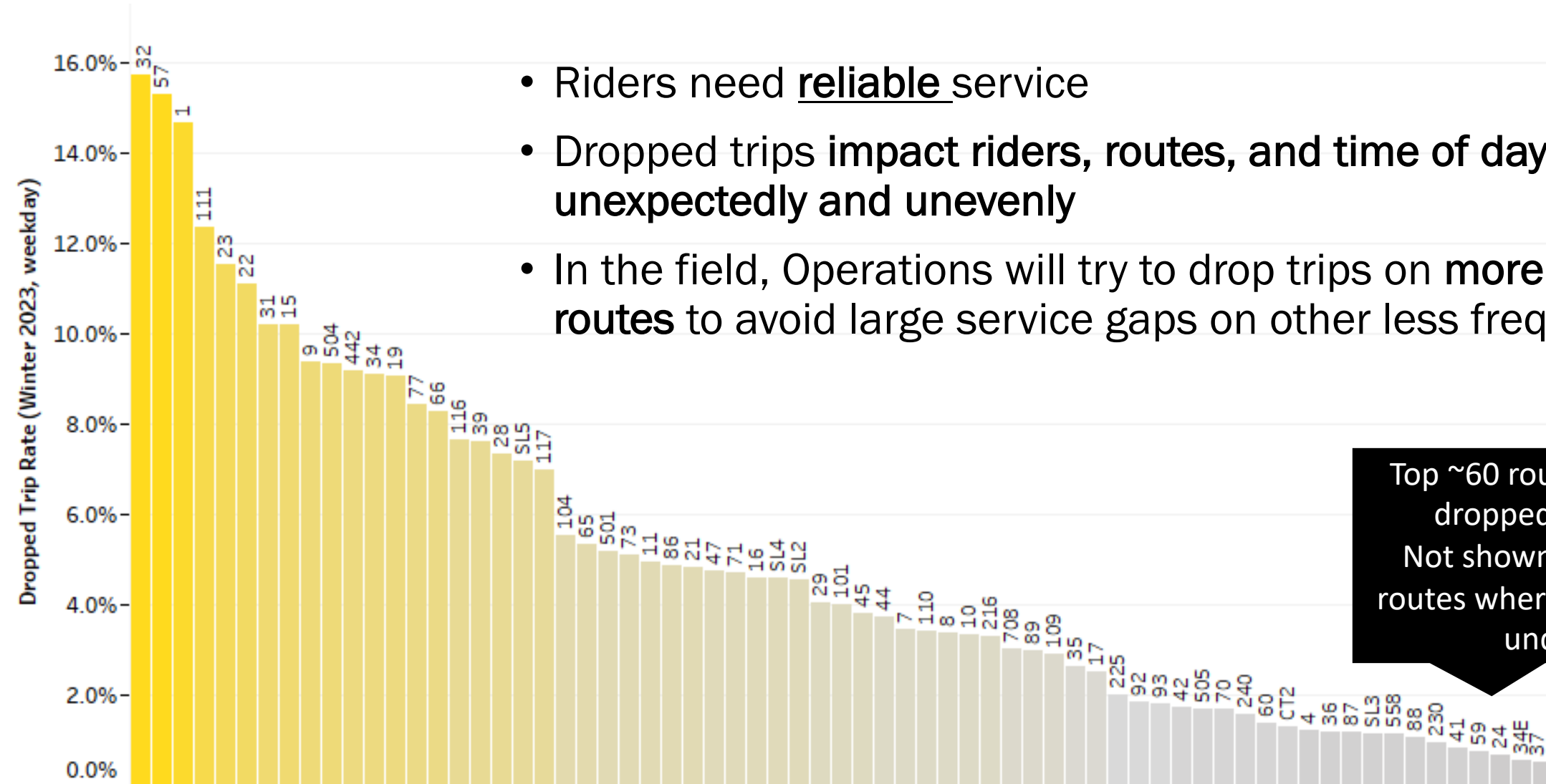
Current and historical dropped trips

- On a daily basis, there are **not enough operators to run the schedule**, resulting in "dropped trips" (i.e. bus trips on the schedule that don't actually run)
- Service disruptions, disabled vehicles, and other factors can cause dropped trips, but operator availability is major driver



Dropped Trips Result in uneven, unreliable service

- Riders need reliable service
- Dropped trips impact riders, routes, and time of day unexpectedly and unevenly
- In the field, Operations will try to drop trips on **more frequent routes** to avoid large service gaps on other less frequent routes



Top ~60 routes with highest dropped trips shown.
 Not shown: additional ~90 routes where dropped trips is under 0.5%



Why is there a mismatch between schedules and operators?

- Operator **availability** is driven by:
 - Hiring
 - Separations & promotions
 - Absence rates
- Since 2023, MBTA down ~ **200 operators** vs. pre-COVID
- In past 12 months, MBTA has **hired more than 200 operators**, but not all complete training and MBTA experienced increased attrition
- MBTA is not alone and is facing **national shortage**



Reliability Changes for Summer Schedule (July 2nd to Aug 26th)

- **Goal is to reduce concentration of dropped trips that occur on high ridership routes, and schedule the impact across a broad cross-section of routes in a planned way**
- **Overall actual daily service will not change, but reliability and crowding should improve**
 - Key Bus Routes should see ~2% more actual trips—which serve the busiest bus corridors
- From a “published schedules” perspective, on paper this will reduce scheduled service from 89% to 86% of pre-COVID service hours

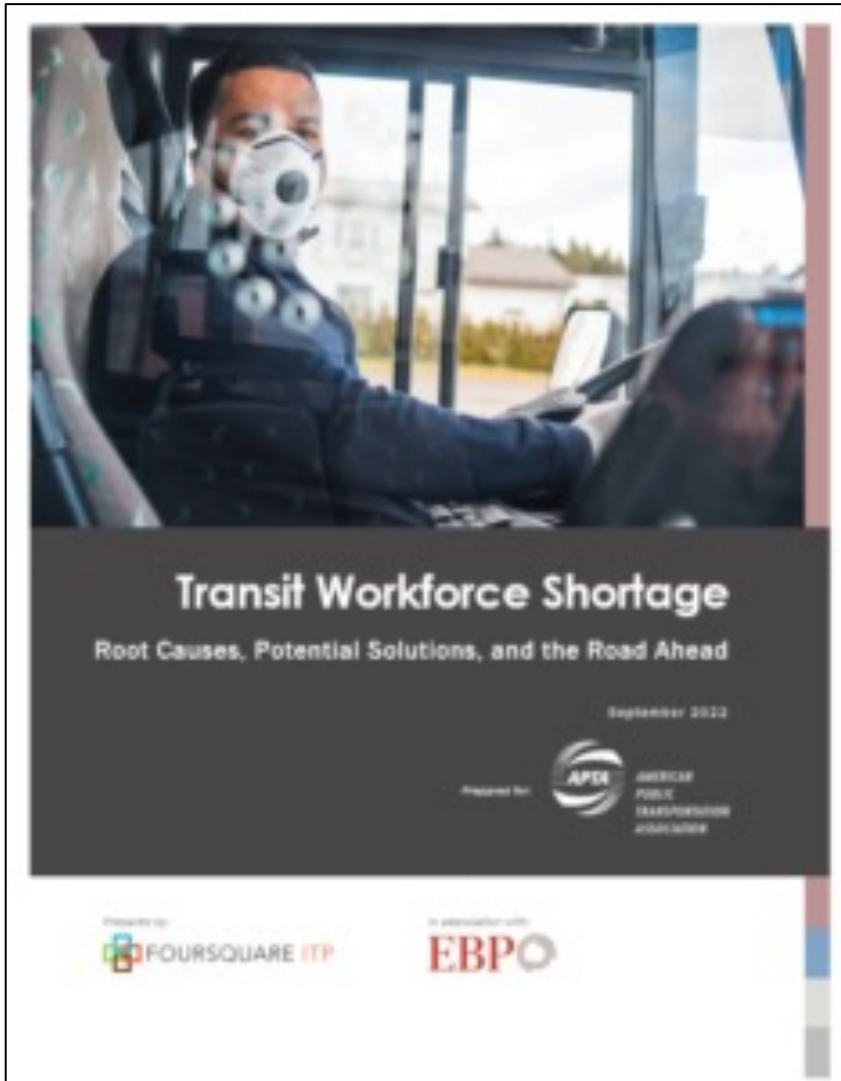


Example reliability changes for summer schedule (July 2nd to Aug 26th)

- Scheduled frequency reduced on 62 routes mostly on weekdays especially during peak hours
- Schedules targeted to be published on MBTA.com in **early June**

Route	Example weekday scheduled frequency changes
1*	Every 10-15 min. (from 8-12 min.) all day
23*	Every 8-13 min. (from 6-11 min.) peaks and evening
57*	Every 8-14 min. (vs. 6-11 min.) all day
66*	Every 10-12 min. (vs. 8-10 min.) all day
77*	Every 10-11 min. (vs. 9 min.) PM peak
80	Every 45 min. (vs. 30 min.) peaks
83	Every 30 min. (vs. 20-23 min) peaks
109	Every 25-30 min. (vs. 20 min.) midday and evening
111*	Every 6-8 min. (vs. 5-7 min.) all day
240	Every 45 min. (vs. 30-35 min.) midday
350	Every 60 min. (vs. 39 min.) midday
450	Every 40-50 min. (vs. 30-37 min.) midday

Efforts to solve hiring and retention come from best practices and industry knowledge



- ✓ Conducted **APTA peer review** on best practices in operator hiring and training
- ✓ Led **state-wide bus operator attraction, hiring, and retention research** with RTAs
- ✓ Surveyed and interviewed **Bus Operator applicants** who did not complete hiring process
- ✓ Surveyed and interviewed **Bus Operators who resigned early in tenure**
- ✓ Leveraged **industry studies**
- ✓ **Brainstorming** from employees
- ✓ Multiple efforts to expedite **internal processes**

Bus Operator-focused recruitment and retention initiatives already underway

- **Expand pool of potential hires:**
 - ✓ Offer Commercial Drivers Permit training (no longer require CDL permit to be hired)
 - ✓ Rehire of former employees policy revision
 - ✓ Targeted marketing campaign
 - ✓ Driving record policy revision (more in line with other agencies)
- **Improve utilization of workforce:**
 - ✓ Promote majority of PT to FT employees
 - ✓ Scheduling practice changes
- **Improve job desirability:**
 - ✓ Offer referral bonus
 - ✓ Training wage increase
 - ✓ Offer sign-on bonus (increased to \$7,500)
 - ✓ Relaunch Safe Driver Award Program



Now hiring Bus Operators

- ▶ Up to \$7,500 sign-on bonus
- ▶ New hires start at \$22/hour
- ▶ Paid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training
- ▶ Health insurance
- ▶ Paid vacation and sick time
- ▶ \$10,000 annual tuition reimbursement
- ▶ Retirement plan



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New Bus Operator hiring initiatives underway to reshape attractiveness of role

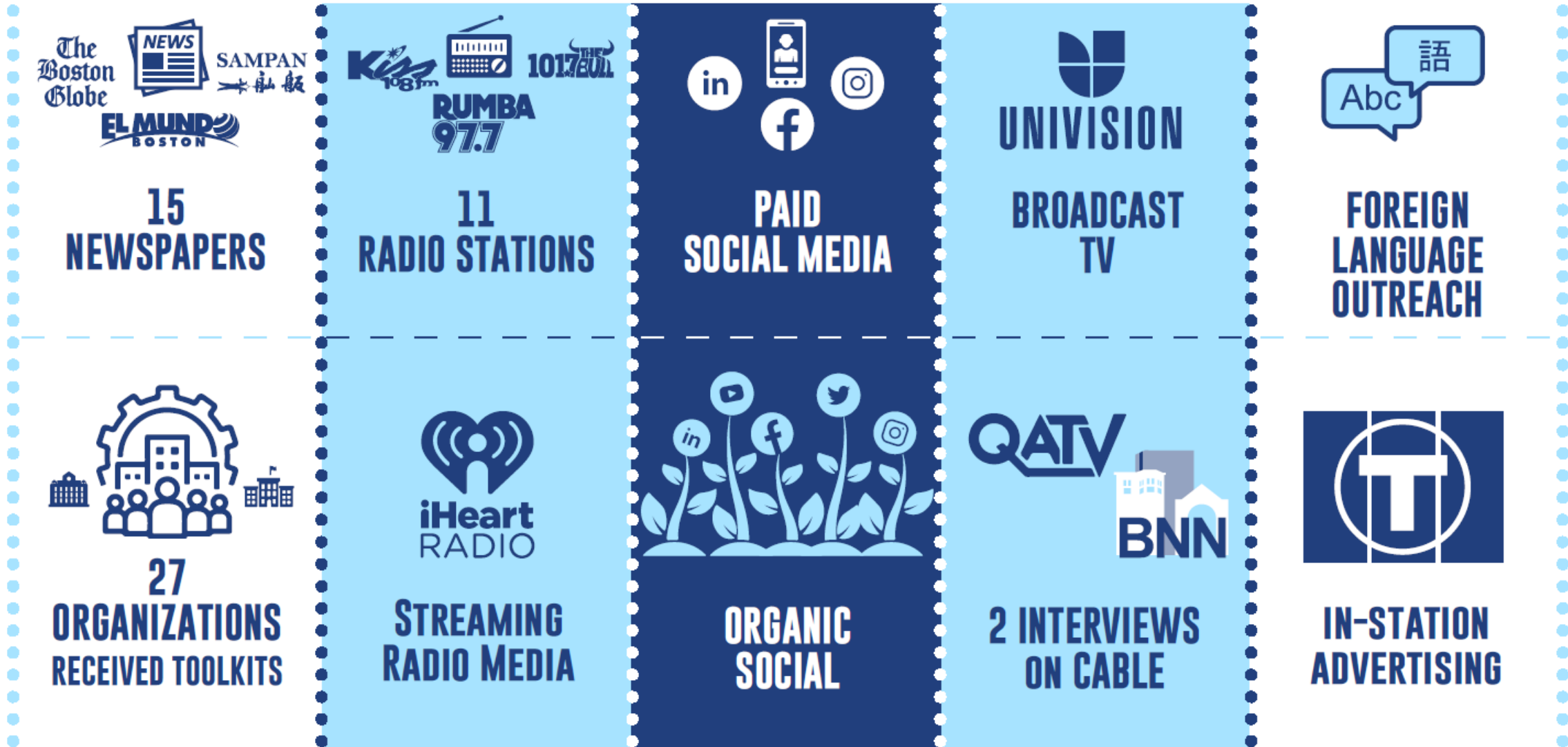
The MBTA needs to go where the people are, and offer jobs that meet their needs

What we've heard...	...what we're doing to address
Communities unaware of programs and hiring opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched HR on the GO!
Starting wages were not attractive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased starting wages for training period from \$16.66 to \$22.21 / hours; other bus operator wage changes under CBA discussion
Unwilling to commit to 25 years in order to receive full pension benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New pension agreement allows for vesting starting at 10 years for new hires • Increases maximum retirement benefit to 80% to make staying longer more attractive
Entry-level part-time work not attractive for those who want / need to work full-time OR need to balance with other obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New direct to full-time role (under CBA discussion) • New part-time role that allows for caretaking responsibilities, education, etc. and does not require split shifts (under CBA discussion)
Employees and potential candidates unaware of \$10,000 annual tuition reimbursement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing publicity and communication around program and recent expansions

Appendix



HR on the Go initiative Outreach



Human Resources focusing on 3 Priority Areas

To maximize resources and achieve the FY 2023 hiring plan, HR continues to evaluate and analyze key workforce data trends and has identified three priority areas – Hiring, Retention and HR Development.

Human Resources Priority Areas



- **Hiring:** The MBTA has established a strategic hiring plan for FY 2023 to fill ~2,000 positions
- **Retention:** The MBTA is experiencing significant attrition, and a large cohort of technical and supervisory personnel now eligible for retirement.



- Capital and Operating attrition rate:
 - FY23 attrition rate is 11% (699 separations) as of 4/25/2023
 - FY22 attrition rate was 8% (523 separations)
 - FY21 attrition rate was 5% (344 separations)



- **HR Development:** MBTA initiatives underway to create a best-in-class employee experience and achieve its five-year hiring strategy while retaining its talent. Currently 17 initiatives underway to directly support bus operator hiring & retention



Example recruitment campaigns

Bus Operator

Now hiring bus operators.



Put yourself in the driver's seat.



The MBTA is hiring. Your next job could be the start of a lifelong career.



Career

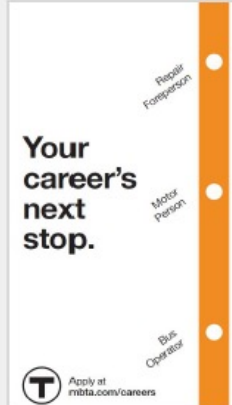
Map Out Your Career




Learn more and apply now at mbta.com/careers



Your career's next stop.



Apply at mbta.com/careers



Job Fair

MBTA Employment Fair

Build a better T with us today.


Boston City Hall Plaza


Thursday, October 13
from 10am-2pm





You've got ambition.







CDL

Put your career in motion

CDL training included + a \$4,500 sign-on bonus



We'll pay for your commercial driver's license, an over \$10,000 value.

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