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## **Cuba: Summary Of Austerity Measures**

*by Barbara Khol*

*Category/Department: General*

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Oct. 26: Daily newspaper Granma reported that the government will impose new austerity measures to reduce fuel consumption, result of drastic cutbacks in oil shipments from the Soviet Union. The first cutbacks in fuel consumption were implemented last year when Soviet oil shipments were reduced from 13 million to 10 million metric tons per year. Delivery of the 10 million MT Moscow agreed to supply in 1991 was irregular in the first nine months of the year, creating a 400,000 MT deficit. Nov. 4: The Labor and Social Security Ministry announced the elimination of most workplace cafeterias, a series of options to reduce the workday, and salary cuts of up to 30%. Workers earning less than the equivalent of US\$100 per month are exempt from the austerity measures. The Transportation Ministry released a statement announcing several measures to cut fuel consumption. The daily rail service to the eastern provinces of Santiago de Cuba, Bayamo and Manzanillo will be changed to every other day. Several inter-province bus routes are to be eliminated or reduced in frequency. In Havana, daily bus service routes have already been reduced by 10%. Taxi services are scheduled for cutbacks as well, and transportation to hospitals is to be prioritized. Next, ferry services between the Isla de la Juventud (160 km. south of Havana) and the Batabano port area are to be cut. Nov. 6: Granma reported that bus routes in Havana will be cut from 169 to 88 beginning in January. Bus routes for the most part will be limited to major avenues of the capital city. In addition to fuel shortages, public transportation in Cuba has deteriorated due to inadequate supplies of spare parts and tires for its Hungarian-made buses. (Basic data from Inter Press Service, 10/26/91; EFE, 11/04/91; Agence France-Presse, 11/06/91)

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