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## Some big paychecks are well-earned

**T**he knee-jerk reaction in these days of high unemployment is to react negatively to any public agency that proposes paying more money to its executives.

Such is the case with Shirley DeLibero, executive director of NJ Transit, who is eligible for a merit bonus of as much as 7 percent of her base salary of \$150,000, retroactively to the fiscal year beginning July 1991. The merit bonus would be paid in a lump sum and would not increase her base salary.

Under her contract with NJ Transit, she was to have received periodic performance reviews, but they were delayed because, the Transit board said, the board was too busy with more pressing matters. Meanwhile, DeLibero's staffers went through their reviews and received merit pay.

NJ Transit has had its share of bad publicity. It was guilty of mismanagement in allowing a private bus company to skim off hundreds of thousands in state subsidies. It rightfully has been targeted as having a bloated administration.

But DiLibero inherited most of the problems and the excesses, and she deserves a lot of credit for improving service on NJ Transit's buses and trains. Based on the performance that only riders can evaluate, she deserves the bonus.