

Montgomery County, Maryland, Fire Department Dedicates New Bomb Squad

On Monday, January 12, 1998, the Montgomery County, Maryland, Department of Fire and Rescue dedicated a new bomb squad. Montgomery County is located immediately west and north of the District of Columbia. The unit, which became fully operational on January 1, is the primary response team for handling incidents when suspected explosive devices are reported in the county. Designated as Special Unit 91, the team will respond to incidents of confirmed, suspected, or suspicious packages or devices. When requested, it will also respond to large fires, dignitary protection details, and explosive-related incidents in other local jurisdictions.

The 6-member team includes specially trained fire investigators and bomb technicians with the Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue Services. Members are Maryland law enforcement officers with police powers who are trained in explosives handling by the FBI and the U. S. Army at the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. Bomb technicians receive 160 hours of basic training in the 4-week course that includes explosive handling and demolition. In addition, members of the team must receive 16 hours of additional training monthly and complete a 2-week refresher course every two years.

A converted ambulance is used by the team to carry the basic equipment required by the FBI to safely handle explosives incidents. Among the materials are four full protective bomb suits, two X-ray systems, tool kits, demolition kits, one robotic arm, one protective blast shield, three explosive disrupter systems, and one containment vessel/trailer.

Prior to the unit's creation, all bomb-related incidents in Montgomery County were handled by the Office of the State Fire Marshal. During the past two years, there have been more than 200 such incidents in the county. Much of the equipment was purchased through public donations and departmental support.

For further information, call Captain Sam Hsu at 301, 421-5425, Fax: 301, 421-5439.

Noteworthy Events

Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District Auto Thefts Decrease

The recent capture and arrest of Larry Hunter, a man charged with 24 auto-related crimes since 1977 and convicted of eight has made Chief Robert Byrd of the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District optimistic that the NICTD's auto theft rate will continue to decline. Hunter's arrests were often preceded by high-speed chases. His lack of resistance, unwillingness

to use a weapon, and absence of confrontation kept his bonds low. Subsequent to his most recent arrest in June of 1997, Hunter pled guilty to six cases pending against him and was given a 9-year sentence. According to Chief Byrd, the NICTD case was the strongest of the six cases pending against Hunter.

For further information, contact NICTD Police Chief Robert Byrd at 219, 926-5744.

Announcements

MTA Metro-North and Long Island Rail Road Police Forces Merge

In a merger which went into effect the first of this year, the police departments of MTA Metro-North and the Long Island Rail Road merged to become the MTA Police Department. This merger resulted in the former Metro North Police becoming the Western Region and the former Long Island Rail Road Police becoming the Eastern Region of the MTA. The Acting Chief of the MTA Police Department is Thomas J. Savage, former Chief Security Officer for MTA New York City Transit, the Acting Chief for the Western Region is George J. Copolla and the Acting Chief of the Eastern Region is Peter Loverso. The former Chief of the MTA Metro-North Railroad, Dean Esserman, is now Chief of Police for Stamford, Connecticut, and former MTA Long Island Rail Road Chief of Police John O'Connor has retired.

For further information, contact the office of Acting Chief Savage at 212, 878-1084.

Reports

Emergency Preparedness for Transit Terrorism, A Synthesis of Transit Practice, TCRP Synthesis 27, by Annabelle Boyd and John P. Sullivan, 1997. Available at \$21 from the Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20418, and can be ordered through the Internet at <http://www.nas.edu/trb/index.html>.

Improving Transit Security, A Synthesis of Transit Practice, TCRP Synthesis 21, by Jerome A. Needle and Renee M. Cobb, 1997. Available at \$15 from the Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20418, and can be ordered through the Internet at <http://www.nas.edu/trb/index.html>.

Protecting Surface Transportation Systems and Patrons from Terrorist Activities: Case Studies of Best Security Practices and a Chronology of Attacks, IISTPS Report 97-4, by Brian Michael Jenkins, December 1997. Available from the Norman Y.

Mineta International Institute for Surface Transportation Policy Studies, College of Business, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192-0219, Telephone: 408, 924-7560/Fax: 408, 924-7565.

Meetings

3/3-6 '98 Security Show, Tokyo Japan, (81 3 3263 6881)

3/23-25 International Security Conference and Exposition, Las Vegas, NV (203, 840-5405)

4/7-9 International Land Transportation Security Technology Conference, Atlanta, GA, National Institute of Justice/ Department of Transportation (202, 305-4638)

5/5-7 ID Expo Trade Show and Conference, Philadelphia, PA (800, 331-5706)

5/17-21 National Fire Protection Association Annual Meeting and Fire Safety Exhibit, Cincinnati, OH (617, 770-3000)

5/31-6/1 International Security Conference and Exposition, Chicago, IL (203, 840-5405)

6/7-11 American Public Transit Association Rapid Transit Conference, San Diego, CA (202, 898-4085)

6/26-28 Search and Rescue Disaster Response '98 World Conference and Expo, Nashville, TN (847, 458-0420)

9/1-3 International Security Conference and Exposition, New York, NY (203, 840-5405)

9/14-17 American Society for Industrial Security Seminar and Exhibit, Dallas, TX (703, 522-5800)

10/4-8 American Public Transit Association Annual Conference, New York, NY (202, 898-4038/49)

Training

3/9-13 Intermediate Information Operations/Warfare (Secret Clearance), Washington, DC, National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies (202, 685-2209)

3/23-27 Transit System Security, Pompano Beach, FL, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682)

4/20-24 Transit System Security, Sacramento, CA, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682)

5/11-15 Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies, Denver, CO, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682)

6/2-3 The Changing National Security Environment: Discussions with Key Players and Policymakers, Washington, DC, The Brookings Institution (202, 797-6299)

7/13-17 Intermediate Information Operations/Warfare (Secret Clearance), Washington, DC, National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies (202, 685-2209)

10/17-22 International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference and Exhibition, Salt Lake City, UT (703, 836-6767)

10/19-23 Intermediate Information Operations/Warfare (Secret Clearance), Washington, DC, National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies (202, 685-2209)

Other

Let Us Hear From You. If you have any activities that would be of interest regarding transit security, a staff member whom you want to commend for some outstanding or heroic action, or just about anything dealing with transit security, please let us hear from you. Simply fax your material to the number given below--we will find a place for it in the newsletter.

Address Corrections. If you note any inaccuracies on the address label, please fax corrections to the number below along with your phone and FAX numbers.

Note: Information for inclusion in the next issue of this newsletter should be sent to Edith Rodano, Office of Safety and Security, Federal Transit Administration, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D. C. 20590 (202, 366-0191; FAX: 366-7951) or by E-Mail to rodanoe@fta.dot.gov no later than April 15, 1998.