

MBTA On Your Side

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) has investigated several cases of identity theft and have had some success in identifying and prosecuting suspects. The majority have involved pickpockets and purse snatchers who steal and then use or sell credit cards. MBTA's success has been due to cooperation among credit card companies, banks, retail stores, local police departments, and their own police department. MBTA Police Detective Sergeant Joseph Mastrorilli has a special talent for identifying suspects from photos and videotape. His skill is frequently sought by other law enforcement agencies.

The MBTA Police Department has instituted several programs to make the public aware of how to ride safer and make themselves less susceptible to crime in general and pickpockets in particular. The Department sponsors a half-hour show every Thursday evening on the Boston cable community access channel entitled "On Your Side." The show is hosted by Chief Thomas O'Loughlin or one of his deputies. Patrol officers, detectives, and other experts advise the public on how to avoid becoming victims of crime. The show includes a question and answer segment during which viewers can call in. MBTA also uses informative car cards on trains, trolleys, and buses.

MBTA feels the key to fighting all crime is by sharing information among law enforcement agencies and training. To this end, the MBTA Police Department plans to host a seminar on identity theft in the spring of 1999. For further information, call Deputy Chief William Fleming at 617, 222-1100.

MARTA Police Department Citizens' Police Academy

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) Police are aware that most citizens do not have a good understanding of police work, how officers are selected and trained, or the legal constraints and department policies that influence decisions made by officers. The MARTA Police have implemented a Citizens' Police Academy program to enhance the understanding of MARTA employees and customers regarding MARTA Police and law enforcement in general.

The first session of the Academy began on February 23, 1999, and was open only to employees. Interest was strong and 46 employees asked to attend, but only twelve could be accommodated. As the Academy evolves and the Police Department learns more about the expectations of attendees, larger groups will be admitted and the public will be included along with MARTA employees.

The Academy meets one evening a week for thirteen weeks and classes are held at the MARTA Police training facility. The curriculum includes organization of the Department and its key policies and procedures; the patrol function, including such specialized units as the Juvenile Crime Suppression Team, Bus Patrol, and Bicycle Patrol; orientation to the Special Operations Response and Bomb Assessment teams, including equipment demonstrations; the officer selection process and background and training investigations, academy, field, and in-service training, and internal affairs functions; orientation to statute enforcement and Criminal Investigations Unit functions; evidence collection and presentation and how evidence is used to solve a case; the role of MARTA employees in preventing crime; how the Department works with communities to build rapport, trust, and problem solving capability; when and how deadly force is authorized and use of less lethal techniques; and orientation to the Police Communications Center.

For further information on this program, call John Dankel at 404, 848-4916.

Community Policing in a Transit Community

In 1995, Buffalo's Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) Police Chief became aware of a change in reported incidents involving students from the public school system. In response, the Transit Police developed a partnership based on communication with security officers at Buffalo's fifteen high schools. The next step was to identify causes for the reported incidents and develop solutions. One problem that became evident almost immediately was violations of the conditions of school transit passes which allow students to ride to and from school within set hours and on the most direct route and oblige them to observe a code of conduct while doing so. Students found violating any of the conditions of the passes are instructed in their proper use while repeat offenders have their passes confiscated and must meet with school and security officials the following day to discuss the matter.

As the partnership between the Transit Police and school system became more successful, the police were approached by other groups for assistance with student-related matters. For instance, NFTA bus drivers had problems with the behavior of students while riding buses. A CCTV system was developed for the entire NFTA bus fleet. When problems are encountered, the videotapes from that bus are taken to the school in question and viewed in order to identify those involved. This had an immediate impact on reducing incidents on buses. The Transit Police and Board of Education are now committed to a continuation of this partnership.

For further information on this program, contact Officer Michael Garrity at 716, 885-7660)

Information Sharing

Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) Auto Thefts. The incidents of auto thefts and attempted auto thefts for the Chicago, Hammond, and Hegewisch station of the NICTD have been reduced dramatically over the past three years. In 1996, there were 83 thefts or attempted thefts at these three stations. This was reduced to 27 in 1997, with an even more dramatic reduction to 9 in 1998. Chief Byrd credits this to the 1997 arrests of several car thieves (*see Commendations* below). He also put mug shots of suspected auto thieves known to be operating in the area in his police cars. For further information, contact Chief Byrd at 219, 926-5744.

Commendations

Amtrak. Amtrak Police Chief Ron Frazier recently recognized two police officers by awarding the Department's highest honors.

Officer Doug Paige was selected as the Amtrak Police Department Officer of the Year for 1998. Officer Paige, who joined the Department in 1984, was chosen to receive this prestigious award for his overall performance and outstanding commitment to customer service and law enforcement. He demonstrated initiative in developing and enhancing partnerships, cooperation, liaison, and assistance to the public. In 1998 in connection with his duties as a Community Resource Office, Officer Paige shared his message on railroad safety and the new high speed rail service with over 29,000 school children and citizens. Numerous letters of appreciation were received from principals, teachers, and community groups in response to these presentations.

Officer Robert Eisman, a 9-year veteran of the Department, was the recipient of the Medal of Honor in recognition of an extraordinary act of courage involving the risk of imminent personal danger during an extremely hazardous condition when, on November 13, 1998, Officer Eisman saved the life of a man trapped in a burning truck.

Northern Indiana Commuter Transit District (NICTD). NICTD Chief of Police Robert Byrd recently commended two of his police officers. Officer Darryl Bliss, a 10-year law enforcement veteran with six years with the Gary Police prior to joining the NICTD Transit Police, observed a man stealing a license plate from a vehicle in the NICTD East Chicago Station parking lot. He recognized the man as one he arrested in August 1996 in Chicago. The offender escaped in a pick-up truck reported stolen earlier that day and fled with Officer Bliss in pursuit. After Officer Bliss terminated the chase as being too dangerous and the suspect abandoned the truck in

the front yard of a residence and escaped on foot. Earlier this year, Officer Bliss was honored for outstanding performance in thwarting a robbery at a Hammond bank when he apprehended two suspects. Officer Bliss had been cruising the Hammond Station parking lot when he received a call from a ticket agent who had seen two men with stockings over their heads behaving suspiciously in the vicinity of the bank. Officer Bliss followed the suspects on foot until they entered the bank, then positioned himself behind a storage shed. When the men, one of them carrying a gun, exited the bank a few minutes later, the officer stepped from behind the shed and ordered the man to drop his gun. When the man did not comply, Officer Bliss shot him and took both men into custody.

Officer Michael Huston, a 15-year law enforcement veteran who served five years with the Michigan City Police Department before joining NICTD, was cited for arresting a man and woman at the Hegewisch Station parking lot as they attempted to flee when he caught them in the process of stealing an automobile. Officer Huston also arrested two men in the process of stealing an automobile at the NICTD Hammond Station parking lot. One subject was later identified as a suspect in a Hammond homicide. A handgun seized during the arrest turned out to have been stolen during the daytime armed robbery of a Sioux City, Iowa, gun dealer. Officer Huston was also responsible for apprehension of the man Officer Huston had pursued the day before his arrest and who was a suspect in a number of auto thefts. The man later plead guilty to five previous auto thefts and received a 9-year prison sentence.

In Case You Didn't Know....

There is a provision in the Federal Transit Act which states that recipients of Section 5309 urbanized formula grants must certify that they will expend for transit security projects for each fiscal year not less than one percent (1%) of the funds received, or they must certify that such expenditures for security projects are not necessary. Projects that use operating assistance and capital assistance funds are counted as eligible to be used toward the one percent that must be spent on security. Examples of such transit security projects include, but are not limited to: (1) Better lighting within or adjacent to a transit system, at bus stops, subway stations, parking lots, and garages; (2) camera surveillance of an area within or adjacent to the transit system; (3) emergency telephone lines and radio communication links to contact law enforcement or security personnel in areas within or adjacent to transit systems; (4) contracts for security training; (5) security analysis studies; (6) staff salaries for personnel exclusively involved in security; (7) contracts for security services; and (8) any other project intended to enhance the security and safety of an existing or planned transit system.

New in the Neighborhood. We would like to welcome two new Chiefs of Police: John Battle of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority who took over recently from retired Chief Norman Birner, and Thomas Burke who replaced Chief Mancel Mitchell of the Minneapolis Transit Commission.

New Tools Update

Under the heading of "New Tools" in the March 1999 issue of the Newsletter was the description of a new program entitled Blast/FX™. If you any questions on this software, you may E-Mail them at blast.fx@trw.com or call 703, 345-8135. If you have received this software and given it to anyone else, please send the name and E-Mail address to the E-Mail address shown above.

Reports

Mitigation of Chemical Attacks in Enclosed Public Transportation Facilities, by William A. Swansiger and John E. Brockmann, reprinted from *Enforcement and Security Technologies*, Boston, MA, November 3-5, 1998. Copies are available from the Society of Photo-Optical Instrumentation Engineers, Box 10, Bellingham, WA 98227, 360, 676-3290.

Removal of Sarin Aerosol and Vapor by Water Sprays, by John E. Brockmann, September 1998. Copies are available from the National Technical Information Service, U. S. Department of Commerce, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161.

Meetings

5/4-7 IDET '99, International Fair of Defense Security Technology and Special Information Systems, Brno, Czech Republic, American Aerospace and Defense Industries (609, 987-9050; Fax: 987-0277)

5/2-6 American Public Transit Association Bus Conference, Cleveland, OH (202, 898-4000; Fax: 898-40229)

5/22-26 Canadian Urban Transit Association Annual Conference and National Bus Roadeo, Toronto, Ontario (416, 365-9800; Fax: 365-1295)

5/22-27 American Public Transit Association Commuter Rail and Rapid Transit Conference, Toronto, Ontario (202, 898-4000; Fax: 898-4029)

5/23-18 International Union of Public Transport 53rd Congress and City Transport '99, Toronto, Ontario (32 2 673 6105)

6/11 Conference of Minority Transportation Officials National Conference, Boston, MA (202, 289-0568)

6/28-30 The Urban Street Symposium, Dallas, TX, Transportation Research Board (202, 334-2934)

6/12-16 American Public Transit Association Risk Management Seminar, Providence, RI (202, 898-4057)

6/15-16 GPS Global Expo, San Jose, CA (800, 687-7469; Fax: 703, 836-4486)

9/20-23 1999 Environmental Protection Agency Region III Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Conference, Washington, DC (877, 804-DEPP)

10/10-14 American Public Transit Association Annual Meeting and Exposition, Orlando, FL (202, 898-4038; Fax: 898-4029)

Training

5/11-12 Fatigue Awareness Seminar, Columbus, OH, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

5/12 Threat Management and Emergency Response to Bus Hijackings Seminar, Boston, MA, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

5/13 Threat Management and Emergency Response to Bus Hijackings Seminar, Boston, MA, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

6/7-11 Intermediate Problems in Bus Accident Investigation, Oklahoma City, OK, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

6/22-23 Fatigue Awareness Seminar, Corpus Christi, TX, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

6/28-7/1 Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies, Washington, DC, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

7/19-23 Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies, Portland, OR, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

8/10-11 Fatigue Awareness Seminar, Denver, CO, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

9/8-9 Fatigue Awareness Seminar, Milwaukee, WI, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

9/20-24 Accident Investigation: Bus Collision Analysis (Pilot), Oklahoma City, OK, Federal Transit Administration/Transportation Safety Institute (405, 954-3682; Fax: 954-0367)

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 **Edith.Rodano@fta.dot.gov** no later than July 15, 1999.