Security essential to regional transit system

Building and operating a safe and secure transit system is essential to the success of our region. Each weekday, TriMet provides more than 320,000 trips on buses, MAX light rail trains and WES Commuter Rail trains. In 2012, the agency provided nearly 102 million trips.

We have a safe system. There are on average less than three reported crimes a day. Most involve property, such as vandalism, not crimes against people. For MAX, there were nearly 41 million trips and 574 reported crimes on the system during 2012.

A comprehensive security approach
TriMet takes a comprehensive and regional approach to maintain the safety and security of its system. TriMet has:

- A dedicated Transit Police Division
- Partnerships with local police agencies
- Contracted security personnel
- Security cameras
- A detailed code of conduct
- Anti-crime design standards

As the system expands, TriMet also expands its investment in security.

Transit Police Division
The Transit Police Division (TPD) is a division of the Portland Police Bureau and is led by a Portland Police commander. TPD has 62 sworn law enforcement officers from all three counties and 14 other jurisdictions. The division includes uniform and plainclothes officers, and K-9 teams.

All incidents on the transit system are coordinated through the regional 9-1-1 system, allowing the closest available unit, whether with TPD or the local police agency, to serve as the first responder. Transit police track issues and trends on the system and collaborate with local jurisdictions on community-wide solutions.

TPD officers spend at least 70 percent of their time patrolling, conducting missions and investigations, responding to TriMet calls for service and making arrests. They also coordinate security efforts with local and regional law enforcement agencies. The officers work out of four precincts: East Precinct in Gresham, West Precinct in Hillsboro, South Precinct at Clackamas Town Center and Central Precinct in Downtown Portland.

From these precincts, officers patrol dedicated segments of the MAX lines and bus routes.

Presence on the system
TriMet’s TPD officers, contracted security, fare enforcers and supervisors provide presence on the system. They respond to incidents as well as requests by TriMet staff.

Dedicated prosecution
TriMet has a dedicated Deputy District Attorney focused on prosecuting incidents—even minor ones—against riders, employees and property. TriMet contracts with the Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office for this position.
Partnering with TSA
TriMet works in partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Transportation Security Administration (TSA), enhancing the security of the transit system through joint missions and training:
- TSA teams conduct random, unannounced patrols with TPD officers on MAX and buses.
- TSA grants have enabled TriMet to increase the number of transit police officers and K-9 teams.
- TSA has funded most retrofitting of MAX platforms with closed circuit security cameras.

Fare enforcement
TriMet has expanded its team of fare enforcers. Riders without a valid fare face a $175 citation or exclusion from the system. Exclusions can extend up to 90 days.

With the elimination of the Free Rail Zone in September 2012, fare enforcement expanded, resulting in increased security and presence on the system. In addition to dedicated fare enforcers and TPD officers, officers from other police agencies check fares on trains and buses.

Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) have been upgraded and real-time reports are used to track service issues, speeding up repairs.

Tools for enforcement
The TriMet Code establishes the rules for riders and includes restrictions on disruptive behavior, excessive noise and any interference with safe operations. TriMet has an Interdiction Command tool to allow rowdy or intimidating riders to be immediately removed from the transit system for up to six hours. Riders can be cited and/or excluded for up to 90 days for violations of the TriMet Code.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) helps prevent crime by designing a physical environment that positively influences behavior. People who use the area regularly perceive it as safe and would-be criminals are deterred.

TriMet works with security and law enforcement to incorporate crime prevention principles, such as:
- Open sight lines, so benches, signage and shelters do not create hiding places
- Well-lit stations, walkways and Park & Rides
- Landscaping and other treatments to define station boundaries
- Fare-required platforms when feasible

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