

Metro Board Approved Policy

Cleanliness Policy

Adopted: January 15, 2004

Historical Perspective

The Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) adopted its first anti-graffiti and vandalism abatement program in 1974 as Operation Teamwork, a youth outreach program that targeted junior high and high school students. The SCRTD redoubled its efforts to combat the growing problem during the 1980's and commissioned some of the first studies of attitudes and underlying causes of graffiti vandalism on transit. The agency enlisted the district attorney's office in high profile convictions of not just graffiti vandals, but their parents as well if the perpetrator was a minor and began working with the Los Angeles County Probation Department in 1989 to obtain the services of adult and youth work crews to remove graffiti from buses. SCRTD was spending ever increasing amounts on clean up, as well as graffiti and vandalism resistant surface, seat, and window replacements.

At about the same time, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) Board enlisted the assistance of the Community Youth Gang Services organization to remove graffiti on the newly constructed station foundations and other structures of the Metro Blue Line project.

The Joint LACTC/SCRTD Board continued to discuss the worsening graffiti problem and examined successful programs at other transit agencies. At the urging of Director Villaraigosa, the SCRTD Board adopted a zero tolerance for graffiti pilot project in January 1993 utilizing \$1 million of Prop C Security funds. Known as the Enhanced Graffiti Abatement program, the objective of this program was to provide graffiti-free service utilizing a three-pronged approach: Graffiti Mitigation and Prevention, Community Outreach and Education, and Law Enforcement. The goal was to achieve and maintain a zero-tolerance standard for graffiti on Line 30/31 out of Division 1. This program included graffiti-free rollout, mobilization of cleaning crews, equipment and material modifications, establishment of measurable tasks and standards, establishment of a Division Advisory Committee,

Transit Police Outreach Activity, LAPD involvement, and the Transit Mediation and Restitution Program.

The experience gained from the Enhanced Graffiti Abatement program allowed the organization to develop a more extensive program. In July 1995, staff implemented a comprehensive zero tolerance graffiti abatement program for the bus system that included specific programs aimed at graffiti mitigation, new technology applications for equipment and materials, operating procedure modifications, graffiti prevention programs, community outreach efforts, and stronger partnerships with law enforcement. The Zero Tolerance program proposed to maintain the buses free of painted graffiti and included increased emphasis on cleaning the interiors of buses.

In April 1997, the Board expanded the zero-tolerance policy for graffiti to all owned or controlled property. Throughout its history, components of the anti-graffiti policy have had various names: Graffiti Abatement, Vandalism Abatement, Zero Tolerance, Quality Integration Program, Juvenile Alternative Work Service (JAWS), Mediation and Restitution Services (MARS), and most recently, Cleanliness.

The agency owns approximately 2,700 buses (including contractor operated buses), 225 rail cars, 65 rail stations, 19 facilities and 18,000 bus stops. Maintaining the cleanliness of the revenue equipment, stations, bus stops, and owned facilities has been a difficult challenge for staff due to ever-increasing amounts of graffiti and the evolving forms of vandalism that so far have included typical spray can graffiti, acid/dye solutions, sharp instrument etching, and slap tags. It has forced the organization to replace the vandalized equipment, costing the agency money that could be spent on improving overall mobility.

In September 2003, Director Antonio Villaraigosa urged the formation of a taskforce to make recommendations to improve the cleanliness of bus



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and rail vehicles, rail stations, bus stops, and owned facilities. At the direction of Deputy Chief Executive Officer, a taskforce consisting of three-subcommittees (Bus, Rail and Facilities and Stops) was formed.

The organization continues to demonstrate regional leadership by aggressively removing all forms of graffiti and vandalism and maintaining the cleanliness of our bus and rail vehicles, rail stations, bus stops and facilities. Various components of the foregoing programs have been consolidated into the Cleanliness Policy that will serve to guide cleanliness, graffiti, and vandalism abatement programs into the future.

CLEANLINESS POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of MTA's Cleanliness policy is to improve our customers' quality of life on the transit system by augmenting current processes to further reduce and more expeditiously remove the effects of vandalism on bus and rail vehicles, rail stations, bus stops and other MTA owned facilities. MTA's customers have a right to enjoy a relatively graffiti-free system.

This Cleanliness policy seeks to prevent vandalism and to expedite its eradication as vandalism adversely and negatively affects public and private property. Studies have shown that the expeditious removal of vandalism can reduce the frequency of the next act of vandalism.

The Cleanliness policy, implemented through the Metro Clean Program, places a high priority on the cleanliness of bus and rail vehicles, rail stations, bus stops and MTA owned facilities. The Metro Clean Program includes graffiti removal programs, vandalism repair and replacement, new capital expenditures, educational outreach, community involvement and aggressive law enforcement.

The MTA Board of Directors is responsible for approving the agency-wide Cleanliness Policy. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that the policy is converted to an action plan, budgeted for and implemented by staff.

Policy

1. It is the policy of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to maintain a high, measurable level of cleanliness for the bus and rail vehicles, bus stops, rail stations and MTA owned facilities.
2. The MTA shall create programs that target utilization of new equipment that is revolutionary; results oriented; and shall be clearly measurable and offer the greatest opportunity for sustaining improvement.
3. The MTA will develop a comprehensive set of operating/cleanliness procedures, processes and measurement criteria to ensure compliance with the cleanliness policy.
4. The MTA will establish a stringent vehicle inspection rating for the bus and rail fleet. Similar inspection ratings will also be developed for facilities, stations and stops.
5. MTA encourages a cooperative working relationship with its law enforcement partner, community, schools, business owners and other public entities to help prevent and remove graffiti as quickly as possible.
6. The MTA shall manage, coordinate, measure, document and report to the Board semi-annually on the progress of the Metro Clean program.
7. Community Relations will implement strategies to educate Los Angeles area neighborhoods and secure their support for the cleanliness campaign. Media will provide publicity for the various activities of the cleanliness campaign and Internal Communications will seek ways to engage MTA employees and create a cleanliness culture.