

New contract would expand security guard presence on Metro system

BY STEVE HYMON , SEPTEMBER 22, 2016



Metro

Board Report

File #:2016-0565, File Type:Contract

SYSTEM SAFETY, SECURITY AND OF

SUBJECT: SECURITY GUARD SERVICES

ACTION: APPROVE CONTRACT AWARD

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to award and execute a five-year Contract No. PS560810024798, to **RMI International, Inc. for security guard** amount not-to-exceed \$81,944,840 effective October 1, 2016 through Sept

ISSUE

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An \$82-million contract to double the number of private security guards to patrol the Metro system and facilities was approved by the Metro Board of Directors on Thursday.

As the above Metro staff report notes, one of the issues that we hear the most about from riders is safety and security. According to an upcoming customer survey, 15 percent of riders said they want to see more systemwide security and 29 percent of former riders said they wanted more security.

Metro officials said that the security guards are also expected to serve as the eyes and ears for law enforcement. Guards are instructed to notify law enforcement when appropriate and they are authorized to intervene whenever they personally witness an alleged crime.

A contract for law enforcement will be considered separately by the Board at a later date. The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) currently holds the law enforcement contract.

Metro has three types of security: its own security guards, private security guards (RMI has the current contract) and full-blown law enforcement officers (the LASD). The majority of the current RMI security guards are stationed at Metro maintenance facilities and are not customer facing. Metro plans to also use the private security guards at 34 different key bus hubs, rail stations and parking facilities.

Metro CEO Phil Washington said that the agency also plans to add to its own security staff.

Here's the most recent crime report on the Metro system from the LASD:

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
TRANSIT POLICING DIVISION
RONENE M. THOMAS, CHIEF



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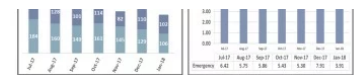
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(pdf file of Board report is here) After a three month delay, a new policing contract that splits the work of patrolling the Metro system
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For the month of January 2016, Part 1 crime activity is down by 27% from the same period last year. In a monthly comparison, there were 23 less Part 1 crimes in January than in December, resulting in a 23.0% decrease.



[Crime on Metro system down in 2017 compared to previous year](#)

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How will this address the 2-4 officers frequently standing just 10 feet beyond the ticket turnstiles at the Norwalk Station in the morning? Do they NOT trust the pass reader on the turnstile to unlock ONLY for legitimate passes? And how does this address the occasional homeless person sleeping on the train after I pass through this gauntlet of deputies?

A fault in the TAP system allows one to buy a senior fare and pass the turnstile. That is why you get checked.

But they're NOT checking IDs, they just scan the pass. Often while they're talking on their phone, or gabbing with one of the 3 or 4 other officers standing nearby. How does that trap for the fault in the TAP system?

Does any of the security involve actually riding the trains? That would be where it is needed most.

That's more the job of law enforcement officers — i.e. the LASD at this time.

Steve Hymon
Editor, The Source

Yeah, i'd hate to break it to you guys but they're not doing this.

Good to hear. My female co-workers, who use the Gold Line, have been complaining about an increase in unwanted “attention” from a subset of the male riders. This also appears to have coincided with a greatly reduced Sheriff presence on the trains and in the stations. Although, this week there has been an increased presence at the stations.

LASD deputies are almost NEVER visible anywhere after dark, especially on the Blue Line trains and stations. After dark (and especially later at night) is the scariest time on the Blue Line. Like Mr. Medina, I am dumbfounded as to why deputies so often set up their card check just INSIDE the fare gates. All they would have to do is stand by the gates and watch passengers TAP to enter—rather than waste our time RECHECKING the fare payment that JUST HAS TAKEN PLACE in full view of the deputies.

Also, I frequently see deputies checking card ON trains, but I cannot remember the last time I saw a deputy issue a ticket when they discovered a nonpaying passenger—or even make the person get off the train at the next station.

Frankly, LASD deputies are NOT worth the money Metro pays for their “services.”

Will all these new security guards be checking and enforcing fare evasion and be out on the entire rail system during operating hours especially after dark?

Spell it right. “FARE, NOT FAIR” You need to learn how to spell the word correctly

The deputies were on the expo line last week, asked an older black woman to get off because she couldn't produce proof of fare – she couldn't even provide a tap card! They instructed her to get off the train, purchase a card, pay the fare and get on the next train. She got off the train alright, some of the officers got off to go to the next carriage, while others remained where they were (there were about 8 officers on this train). She took three steps on the platform, then promptly returned to train, walking right passed the guy who had asked her to get off! The only time I've ever seen the officers issue tickets is when the passenger is a young male, either adolescent or youth. My biggest frustration is having 6 officers hanging around one side of the stairs at Culver City, while there's none on the other side. The fare dodgers just go down the other stairs. Why not have three officers at each of the stairways? They are a colossal waste of money.

Really, I was surprised when you said these security folks will not be riding the train. I don't care so much about fare evasion because its probably become a diminishing point of return catching those folks. But its problematic with the ghetto line(blue line) that it really has become a rolling trash dump. How about getting those guys with their uniform and a louisville slugger in hand to patrol for litterbugs.

I have also seen LASD deputies wasting rider's time and Metro's money by standing 10 ft beyond the TAP turnstiles. They should be checking people who just got off the train

for fare! The fact that they are already at the station will stop 99.9% of fare evaders who are to get on the trains.

I would also like to see more security at night and during big events- Rams, UCLA, USC games, concerts, etc.

I have never seen any security at stations from South Pasadena to Chinatown along the Gold Line. Why? I have seen LASD deputies on the train between those stations, but that is a different than seeing security at stations! \

I have also never seen security patrol the parking lots at East LA, Sierra Madre, Azusa & APU on the Gold Line! Why??

Next question would be: Metro is PAYING for the Sheriff's Department services. How much are they paying? It does not sound like Metro is getting their money's worth. And since Metro is paying, can't they direct the activities? Sheriffs on trains. More Sheriffs on trains after events? Sheriffs writing tickets (i.e., earning their fees).

A lot of these issues result from the honor system. Riding other systems you don't see homeless using the train as a mobile home. You don't have crazies wondering the train or gangsters hassling passengers.

Metro needs real fare control.

It would make for a better commuter experience if you check for fare evaders, sleepers and general nuisances OUTSIDE of peak hours. I ride Expo line 5a-7a and 6p-8p and sometimes find trains filled with sleepers and the

contents of their former 2 bedroom apartment. Last week, I was held hostage by a wanna be singer/rapper and homeless sidekick, both on their way to Santa Monica.

Also, I was not surprised by the crime stats at Westwood/Rancho Park. The LASD presence is somewhat high (although I saw kids playing on the tracks one day), but I'm sure that's NIMBYism at work. I've noticed that the volume on the PA system has been turned down to barely audible levels. Was it making someone's pet nervous?

Unfortunately many of the above will buy a day pass and still do the same. However most of the not so nice and unwashed riders are fare evaders and fare inspectors with football player like ticket writer will help a lot in making the trains safer and even more impotent perceived as safe to ride. I know many people who would happily ride the Metro rail lines, but are genuinely afraid to ride and drive instead. With consistent fare inspection and people who will write tickets and put the evaders and above off the cars the trains will be safer and there will be many more riders by choice.

Wow, I think we've touched a nerve. And I am glad to see that I'm not the only one who has noticed the Severe Lack Of Presence of LASD and in the appropriate place to discourage fare evaders.

Earth to Metro: LASD needs to be AUDITED NOW before their contract is renewed!

