



# NEWS

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## LASD AND LAPD CALL MTA METRO BUS AND RAIL SYSTEM SAFE AND VIRTUALLY CRIME-FREE

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Captain Marc Klugman told members of MTA Board's Operation Committee this week that the MTA bus and rail transit system is safe and "virtually crime-free."

In making his remarks before the committee meeting on Wednesday, September 15, Klugman noted, "when you look at the number of passengers using the system and you look at the number of reported crimes it's such a small number that you're not able to register it."

The LASD, under contract to the MTA for transit security on the Metro Blue and Green Lines and Metro bus service in the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, reported to the committee that only 175 bus related crimes have been reported to the LASD Transit Services Bureau this year.

Los Angeles Police Department Captain Vance Proctor, in charge of the LAPD's Transit Group, affirmed the Sheriff's numbers. LAPD statistics for such crimes as robbery and assault show a ratio of only .38 per 100,000 passengers - far below the 5,500 crimes per 100,000 population of Los Angeles. The LAPD, under contract with MTA, provides security service on the Metro Red Line subway system and Metro buses operating in the City of Los Angeles.

"Any crime on the transit system is one crime too many," said Proctor. "However, when you look at the reality of the crime picture, transit within Los Angeles is a very safe conveyance to ride."

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Sheriff's deputies make approximately 1,700 bus boardings each month in an effort to make an impact on crime in those areas where analysis shows most transit crimes occur.

LAPD undercover and uniformed officers have made over 32,000 bus boardings this year, a 143 percent increase over last year. The LAPD Transit Group also has worked to ensure that the entire LAPD force is alert to incidents involving Metro Buses.

The LAPD Transit Group also has a Graffiti Habitual Offender Suppression Team (GHOST) comprised of undercover police officers to combat graffiti and vandalism. The LAPD undercover officers routinely board buses and train to catch vandals in the act and make arrests. From January through August 1999, the LAPD's GHOST unit has made 549 arrests or citations for graffiti vandalism.

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