



LAPD Cmdr. Robert Hansohn, left, and Sheriff's Capt. Sylvia Fort lead discussion of graffiti prevention methods at Brown Bag Lunch hosted by Chief Operating Officer Allan Lipsky, right. PHOTO BY BILL HEARD

Cops Will Add High-Tech Tools to Anti-Graffiti Effort

(Feb. 2) The MTA's two law enforcement agencies will be turning to high-tech methods more often in the future to catch graffiti vandals. Graffiti and other vandalism costs the MTA an estimated \$15 million annually.

LAPD Cmdr. Robert Hansohn and Sheriff's Capt. Sylvia Fort, who spoke at Chief Operating Officer Allan

Lipsky's Brown Bag Lunch, Thursday, described sensors and tiny cameras that can be placed in graffiti-prone areas to scare away vandals or photograph them in the act.

Hansohn noted that the LA City Council has called for an enhanced citywide effort to fight graffiti. He indicated success in that fight will require the cooperation of the City Attorney in regularly prosecuting vandals.

Both the LAPD's Transit Group and the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau have graffiti experts on staff. The LAPD's GHOST anti-vandalism team has made a number of high-profile arrests in the past.

Many Metro Bus coaches already are equipped with video cameras and police have used the images to identify vandals and other criminals. The MTA also conducts an on-going anti-graffiti campaign that includes efforts by operating division personnel who make presentations and lead activities at local schools.

"It seems to us that this is a solvable problem," said Lipsky, "although it will take an enormous effort."

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