



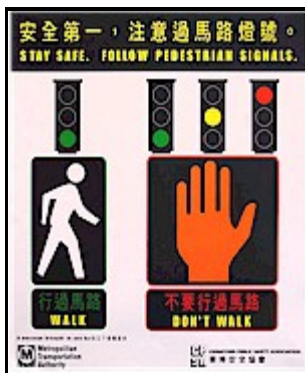
Bus Transportation DEO John Roberts and Chinatown Public Safety Association director Andy Lam review safety poster that illustrates traffic signals. PHOTO BY BILL HEARD

Task Force Targets Pedestrian Safety in Chinatown

By GAYLE ANDERSON

When it comes to safety in the heavily congested streets of Chinatown, 10,000 posters can't be wrong. Spelling out traffic signals in bold wording and bright graphics, the posters showing up all over Chinatown are there to teach pedestrians, many of them elderly, how to cross the street safely.

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"These are great posters that will help teach the elderly how to use the traffic signals to cross the street," said Andy Lam of the Chinatown Public Safety Association. Many are confused by the traffic signal system, he explained, which is often hidden from view by the common use of shade umbrellas that not only block the sun but obscure the traffic signals as well.

The posters were produced by MTA for a public safety task force assembled to address growing concerns brought to the forefront by Division 3 bus operators who regularly traverse the crowded Chinatown corridors.

The task force brought the Chinatown Public Safety Association, MTA and LAPD into a unique partnership that focused on solutions to safety issues wrought by traffic congestion and a puzzling disregard of traffic rules by pedestrians who were racking up jaywalking tickets faster than the LAPD could write them.

"We have the Division 3 bus operators to thank for raising the issue and their resolve to find a way to improve safety for pedestrians in the community," said Paul Lennon, Managing Director of Systems Safety and Security. "Who knows how many lives are going to be saved -- and injuries and accidents prevented -- as a result of their concern."

"There has been a tremendous response," said deputy executive officer of Bus Transportation, John Roberts, an active member of the task force. "The partnership with city agencies and the citizens of Chinatown produced different ways to share and reinforce public safety so that we can safely provide service in the communities we serve."

It's a formula that seems to be working, said Helen Ortiz, Bus

Operations communications officer. Jaywalking incidents that were piling up citations have decreased significantly. Additionally, Line 81 was rerouted to reduce bus trips in the most congested areas and the 10,000 safety posters are beginning to appear in the community's most visible line of sight: store windows and community centers.

ON THE JOB

Task Force Members: Bus Transportation DEO **John Roberts**, Managing Director of Systems Safety and Security **Paul Lennon**, Director of Operations Safety **Robert Torres**, Senior Safety Specialist **Henry Ho**, Operations Control Superintendent **Tom Jasmin**, Communications Manager **Lynda Bybee**, Transportation Planning Manager **Russ Wilson**, Division 3 Transportation Manager **Dan Frawley**, Senior Communications Officer **Helen Ortiz**, Chinatown Public Safety Association member **Andy Lam** and LAPD Capt. **Brad Merritt**.

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