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Sheriff's deputies patrol the Metro Gold Line platform at Union Station.



Photo by Gayle Anderson

Los Angeles Region Could Receive up to \$7 Million in Homeland Security Funds to Increase Transit Security

By DAVE SOTERO

(Jan. 12, 2007) The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has announced that the greater Los Angeles area is eligible to receive up to \$7 million to enhance security measures for the region's public transportation infrastructure.

Under the Department's FY 2007 Infrastructure Protection Program, funding would become available for a wide range of transit security measures, including strengthening the bus and rail system against explosive attacks, preparedness training, equipment purchase, training exercises, security management and administration costs.

Metro will soon present a complete application for the funding. Grants are scheduled to be awarded this Spring.

The funding represents a 14 percent increase over Homeland Security's previous year allocation of \$6.2 million for the region.

"Additional Homeland Security funds are critically needed for our region, and will enable us to harden our security to deter terrorist threats against our expanding transportation system," said Gloria Molina, Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board Chair. "We are heartened to see an increased percentage of allocated funding this year as we work to

make our system the best and safest transit system possible.”

Los Angeles has "Tier 1" status

Homeland Security has listed the greater Los Angeles region as one of eight “Tier 1” major urban areas nationwide eligible for the funding. Funding levels are based on analysis of risk and effectiveness of the proposed investment.

More than \$171 million has been made available this year under Homeland Security’s Transit Security Grant Program. Also new this year, The program has been expanded to ferry systems, which will generate an additional \$122,581 in ferry security funds for the greater L.A. area. Other departmental grant allocations, such as intercity bus security, have not yet been announced.

Metro has received previous funding from Homeland Security. In 2005, Metro and two regional transit agencies received \$6.9 million for transit security programs. And in 2004, Metro received \$5.4 million in transit security grants, bringing the two-year total to \$12.3 million.

Metro currently contracts with the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD) to provide transit security on all Metro Buses and Metro Rail trains.