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When members of the International Association of Public Transport visited Metro on Oct.3, Dan Cowden, director of security, showed them the emergency equipment stored on Metro's new HiRail Emergency Response Vehicle. He also demonstrated one of Metro's mobile command posts.

International Transit Authorities Make Metro a Must-See Stop on United States Fact-Finding Tour

By NED RACINE, Editor

(Oct. 14, 2008) Approximately one dozen members of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) toured Metro on Oct. 3, looking to find new ideas for meeting challenges transit systems face worldwide.

"Of course they all liked the K-9s, but they were impressed with the [Emergency Hi-Rail Vehicle](#) and just the diversification of equipment we have for a transit agency," said Jack Eckles, DEO System Safety & Security, who hosted the transit system officials.

Eckles explained that the UITP group chose Metro as the major West Coast multimodal transit agency it wanted to tour.

Lindsey Barr, UITP's manager of security waterborne transport, accompanied the group during its West Coast trip. According to her,



Henry Solis, senior security officer, explains to members of the International Association of Public Transport, how Metro trains its canines. The collection of luggage in the foreground recreates a cluster search, when a canine and handler team search multiple pieces of luggage at a time. Solis' partner Nakita looks ready for more work.

three topics generated particular interest from the group during its Metro tour: dealing with natural disasters, preventing suicides on transit facilities and explosive detection.

"Due to its experience with natural disasters . . . California is a leader in this field," said Barr. "The group was very impressed with the planning [required] so that everyone knows what his or her

role is in whatever [the] type of incident, from a local incident on a public transit network to a full-scale county emergency."

The group, composed of transit system operators, policy-makers and officials, found Metro's suicide-prevention measures particularly valuable. According to Barr, suicide prevention remains a challenge for all public transit operators.

Barr also said the group found Metro's explosive detection techniques valuable, especially California's wide-spread practice of training canine units in explosive detection.



These two jacks—the black shape is a toe jack and the red shape is a bottle jack—are stored on the HiRail Emergency Response Vehicle. The bottle jack can lift up to 50 tons.

"In keeping with their desire to understand how Metro manages its security program with limited resources, I wanted to show them the capabilities Metro has developed through investments in security and emergency response," Eckles added.

Eckles remembers his conversation with the security manager for Wiener Linien (the Austrian heavy- and light-rail system) in Berlin.

"He was interested in Metro's relationship with our contracted law enforcement providers," Eckles explained. "He has a similar situation in Berlin between the City Police and the National Police."

"Additionally, he was interested in how many of our platform cameras view the public streets around our stations, particularly their zoom capabilities," Eckles said. "In Germany, he is not allowed to use cameras on the public streets in and around the train stations—only inside stations and subway platforms. Even then, no camera can be above ground."

UITP describes itself as "the international organisation for public transport authorities and operators, policy decision-makers, scientific institutes and the public transport supply and service industry." The organization's website states it has 3,100 members from 90 countries.