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Exploring the Effectiveness of Transit Security Awareness Campaigns in the San Francisco Bay Area, Research Report 09-19

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Exploring the Effectiveness of Transit Security Awareness Campaigns in the San Francisco Bay Area



MTI Report 09-19



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EXPLORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRANSIT SECURITY AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

June 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public transit has been and will likely continue to be a target of terrorist attacks. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 against the Pentagon and the World Trade Center using airplanes highlighted the need for increased security in the United States transportation sector overall, and prompted additional security efforts for many public transit agencies across the U.S. The March 11, 2004 Madrid commuter train bombings, the July 7, 2005 London transit system bombings, and the March 29, 2010 Moscow metro attacks are more recent reminders of the need for vigilance. Due to its openness and accessibility, public transit is considerably more vulnerable than airports, seaports, and other transportation modes organized around limited access points that can institute widespread security screening measures. In addition to relatively open access points, transit systems often have large numbers of passengers during commute hours, accessible schedules and timetables, are in close proximity to other potential targets, and are critical pieces of infrastructure for urban areas.

Public involvement in alerting officials to suspicious and potentially harmful activity is critical to the overall security of a transit system. As part of an effort to get passengers and the public involved, many transit agencies have created security awareness campaigns. The objective of this research project was to (1) determine how transit agencies seek to make security awareness campaign effective, and (2) explore ways in which to measure the effectiveness of such campaigns.

This project focused on understanding the types of security awareness campaigns that a select group of transit agencies in the San Francisco, California Bay Area region have implemented, the goals of the campaigns, and whether the agencies are achieving those goals. Furthermore, have campaigns increased security awareness and passenger engagement? If so, how do agencies evaluate the effectiveness of the campaigns? The case study data are comprised of descriptions of the types of security awareness campaigns the agencies have implemented, the goals of the campaigns, and how they attempt to make their campaigns effective, as well as whether and how these agencies measure and determine the effectiveness of their campaigns.

A positive finding of this research is the consistency with which Bay Area transit organizations address the need for passenger awareness as part of their overall security program. However, none of the five agencies analyzed for this study measures the effectiveness of their campaigns. Whereas they all have a similar goal—to increase passenger awareness about security issues—little evidence therefore exists confirming whether they are achieving this goal.

In order to capture the public's response to the campaign and to understand whether they are achieving their campaign goals of increasing awareness, providing tools for action, and encouraging passenger involvement, agencies should implement a combination of output and outcome measurements. At a minimum, agencies should track the level of marketing activities and strive to capture at least one set of meaningful data that captures passenger behavior and comprehension by using internal tracking mechanisms or surveys.

BACKGROUND

There are a number of protective measures that transit agencies can implement to provide additional security for passengers. Such measures could include having security patrols on the transit system or having staff well-trained in terrorism detection and prevention.¹ Among the essential elements of an effective security program for a transit agency is implementing a public awareness and preparedness campaign.²

Security Awareness Campaigns as Part of Transit System Security

Transit security awareness is a key component of overall security initiatives for a transit system. In 2002, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) began a technical assistance program for the largest transit agencies, an initiative developed to analyze security gaps and provide products to assist agencies.³ Similar to transit system safety efforts, the primary goal of this program is to ensure that security is an integral component of all system operations.⁴

The TSA/FTA publication “Security and Emergency Management Action Items for Transit Agencies” emphasizes implementation and reinforcement of a public security and emergency awareness program. Key components highlighted in an updated version of this action item include: prominent display of the security awareness information throughout the system, incorporating the messages into public announcements in stations and on board vehicles, and posting information on the agency website. In addition, the components include ways to make the campaigns more effective by ensuring that information provided to the public emphasizes the importance of vigilance and gives clear direction on reporting suspicious activity with the suggestion to vary the content and appearance of messages to retain public interest.⁵ The list also states that the frequency of security awareness activities should increase as the Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS) threat level is raised.⁶ Of note is that the recent Homeland Security Advisory Council task force report findings recommend that the new HSAS baseline remain as “guarded” and that future threats be more narrowly targeted. As such, current transit agency protocol may be in flux.⁷

Furthermore, transit agency public awareness and preparedness campaigns were identified as one of the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) top selection criteria for the Fiscal Year 2007 Infrastructure Protection Program Transit Security Grant Program. The grant literature states that “effective awareness programs enlist the public in becoming an informal part of an agency security plan. They should explain specific actions the public can take to contribute to the strengthening of system security.”⁸

While the importance of transit security public awareness programs is clear, there are potential disadvantages to encouraging public involvement in security. One report states that repeated public warnings may frighten passengers, lead to false alarms, and even inspire hoaxes. It noted that in places where the terrorist threat is remote, the adverse consequences of repeated campaigns and warnings may outweigh the benefits of public awareness.⁹

Transit Watch Program

After the events of 9/11, the FTA prioritized transit passenger and employee participation in transit security measures and recognized the need to provide agencies with tools to administer transit security awareness campaigns. In a partnership with the DHS and the TSA, the FTA launched “Transit Watch” in 2003, a “nationwide public awareness outreach campaign that encourages the active participation of transit passengers and employees in maintaining a safe transit environment.”¹⁰ Its goal was to create a useful toolkit that enabled transit operators to customize campaign materials so as to maximize community interest and involvement.

The second Transit Watch initiative was conducted in 2005—2006 by the FTA, DHS/TSA and the then-DHS Office of Grants and Training. One of the purposes of the second initiative was to gauge the implementation of Transit Watch and its effectiveness.¹¹ Information gathered by the FTA/DHS Transit Watch Program Effectiveness Form includes how effective Transit Watch is in terms of usage, the degree to which certain transit agencies have applied the various programs included in the toolkit, as well as other security awareness measures.¹² Many agencies have used and continue to use the programs provided by Transit Watch such as the Unattended Items “Be Alert!” or “Is this yours?” campaigns to engage the public in security measures.¹³ Some agencies have created their own campaigns with additional messages, targeting specific audiences, and customizing the outreach to the passengers on their system.

The Transit Watch program effectiveness questionnaire was very extensive and included a number of sections related to transit agencies’ announcement systems and evacuation messages. The questionnaire asked transit agency respondents whether they noticed an increase in reports from passengers when the campaign was implemented.¹⁴ However, individual or aggregate agency responses from the questionnaire are not available to the public. The FTA has provided analysis of certain responses from the questionnaire pertaining to Emergency Announcements, Unattended Baggage, and Transit Evacuation.¹⁵ In the Emergency Announcements document, the analysis recommends that guidelines for correlating the frequency of emergency announcements with the DHS threat code advisory system be created. As previously mentioned, this guideline may not be applicable due to the recommended changes to the HSAS threat level baseline.¹⁶ The Unattended Baggage report contained supplemental detail about the use of cell phones near potentially explosive devices and provided alternative messages for transit agency use.¹⁷ Examples include “Is this yours? If not, don’t touch—but tell us.” or “Whose is that? Don’t touch. Tell us.” and “Be Alert! Don’t touch unattended items.”¹⁸

The Transit Watch program provides a means for transit agencies to educate their passengers on how to be observant and how to identify suspicious or unusual activity. In addition, the messages instruct passengers on how to communicate with transit officials in such events. The ready-to-use templates allow transit agencies to customize the outreach for their own system, while maintaining consistent messaging with the nationwide effort.

Comparative Examples

Distinctions ought to be drawn between transit agencies located in areas that have been targets of terrorist attacks in the past from those agencies where the threat of attack is remote. Transit agencies on the East Coast such as the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (NYMTA) are more sensitive when it comes to terrorism security concerns than those on the West Coast. Whether a security campaign is effective and the way in which it is measured may be completely different when comparing New York City and Washington DC with Bay Area transit agencies. International efforts also vary considerably from local counterparts, with the degree of what is considered effective stretching even further across the globe. In London, for example, the system goes far beyond campaigns to encourage public involvement by ensuring a support infrastructure that makes reporting suspicious activity easy.¹⁹ Their system requires a major investment and includes call boxes for public use throughout stations that are monitored by multiple cameras, resulting in high quality surveillance.²⁰ Since characteristics of these transit agencies are of a different nature from those in the Bay Area, they are not in the scope of this research.

Public information on measuring the effectiveness of security campaigns is scarce, though one article illustrates the impact of a campaign in New York. In 2003, New York's Metro North Railroad ran an awareness campaign—*"If You See Something, Say Something,"* that encouraged commuters to report suspicious packages and people. Shortly after the launch of the campaign, the NYMTA reported an increase in the number of calls it received about suspicious behavior.²¹ MTA spokesperson Tom Kelly said that the campaign was considered to be successful due to the increased interaction between customers and the system, and that "this has given people a reason to be more communicative because this is something that we as a railroad and overall transit system are encouraging them to do."²²

Program Effectiveness

Public awareness campaigns, which are defined as "social marketing," and commercial advertising campaigns, are quite different. The goal of public awareness campaigns is to generate an action by the public to support a social good, rather than to purchase a product or patronize a service. "Social marketing," according to Kotler and Lee, "is the use of marketing principles and techniques to influence a target audience to voluntarily accept, reject, modify, or abandon a *behavior* for the benefit of individuals, groups, or society as a whole. Its intent is to improve the quality of life."²³ While the intent or the desired call to action of public awareness campaigns is different from commercial ad campaigns, the basic principles to motivate people to take action may be very similar.²⁴

The authors provide principles to make these types of marketing efforts more successful. The first principle is to take advantage of prior and existing successful campaigns.²⁵ One of the benefits of the public sector is that organizations can borrow campaigns and use ideas that other agencies have spent time and money to develop. A second principle is to promote a single, simple, doable behavior, and to promote it one at a time. There is a wealth of 'advertising clutter' targeting the audience, so it is important to provide a simple,

clear, and action-oriented message to the target market.²⁶ A third principle is to identify and remove barriers to behavior change. This principle states the importance of ensuring that nothing is perceived to be ‘in the way’ of considering the desired behavior.²⁷

Simple and clear messages generally lead to a successful communication campaign, and transit security awareness campaigns are no exception. However, because the outcome is a social good that benefits a common community, effective transit security awareness campaigns also need to be educational.²⁸ This is because they are encouraging passengers to take some sort of action, whether it is being more alert on the transit system or contacting transit police when they see something suspicious. The campaign message must clearly explain exactly how to contact the appropriate employee or agency when the passenger “sees something.” Each message that goes out to the passengers, employees, and general public must be consistent.²⁹

Branding the message with the same logo or slogan can also help the audience recognize the main point of the message as well as the sender of the communication.³⁰ The use of the same logo or slogan throughout various communication tools helps link all system communications and thus improves their effectiveness.³¹

A recent Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) report suggests a good campaign may also differentiate the brand or message being communicated and invokes an emotional or physical response from the audience. As a result, the branding messages must use phrases that direct the audience to take action.³² For example, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s wording is simple and directs action, “If You See Something, Say Something.”³³ The report suggests that agencies should follow examples from other public advocacy groups or corporations to come up with original ideas for public transit security campaigns.³⁴ However, communication techniques that work for one transportation system may not be effective or even applicable to other systems. Images and slogans should be reflective of the individual agency because that is what the individual agency’s passengers are most familiar with.³⁵

Measuring Effectiveness

Measuring the performance of an awareness campaign is complex and challenging. Existing efforts often lack hard data to support conclusions, providing anecdotal evidence of success at best. Yet reporting the results of a campaign is often expected by public officials.³⁶ *Output measures*, the easiest data to obtain, quantify the volume or level of marketing activities. Examples include the number of materials distributed, the reach and frequency of the campaigns, and mentions in the news media. The number of total impressions, or number of people that see the ad, is commonly used as a marketing measurement.³⁷ The easiest way to measure outputs is by using internal records; however, output measures tell us little about program impact or success.

A second category of outputs reflects “how citizens responded (outcomes) to what [agencies] did.”³⁸ These are called *outcome measures*. Possible values include whether people noticed the effort, whether it changed their level of knowledge, or whether it influenced their action or behavior. Internal records and tracking mechanisms can be

used to measure outcomes by analyzing before and after effects.³⁹ Surveys can also be reliable ways to measure outcomes from campaign efforts. If goals and objectives of the campaign are clearly defined, then outcome measures may be made operational by means of survey items.

The third and perhaps most challenging category of measurement is *impact measures*. This measurement captures the actual effect that citizen actions had on social, economic, and/or environmental conditions.⁴⁰ For transit security awareness campaigns, an example of an impact measure is when terrorist activity is actually prevented by a passenger who knew to take action and alert transit personnel based on the messages included in the campaign. Obviously, these types of examples are rare and/or involve scientific or technical surveys. As such, this project will primarily focus on *outcome* measures.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research focuses on five agencies that provide rail or a combination of light rail, bus, and ferry transit service in the San Francisco Bay Area region. The five agencies are Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans), Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (Capitol Corridor), Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), and Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (Golden Gate Transit or the District). These agencies were selected for comparison due to the differences in the type of transit services they provide to passengers in the Bay Area, as well as their geographic range.

Specific case study information was primarily gathered through interviews with Bay Area transit agency representatives in charge of passenger communications, such as the Public Information Officer or marketing and communications manager. Interviews were conducted in person when possible and over the phone if an in-person meeting was not practical. Interviews were conducted using a set of pre-determined questions, yet remained flexible to accommodate a conversational dialogue and facilitate a useful information exchange. The interview questions focused on gathering information on the types of campaigns the transit agency conducts, with a series of questions that probed how they evaluate and measure the effectiveness of the campaign. Thus, questions were categorized in such a way as to understand output measures, such as types of media used and where they were placed, and outcome measures such as 'before and after' surveys or call volume increases. Agencies were asked whether they have data that demonstrate the effectiveness of their security campaign to allow for further analysis.

Data for this project were also gathered from various official documents, including publicly available documents from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI), transit agency websites and news articles. Security awareness campaigns of other transit agencies outside the Bay Area were examined to gain perspective. These sources provided the historical context of transit security awareness campaigns and their role in overall security, as well as recent best practices.

Supplemental interviews were conducted with additional staff members at BART to add perspective from an operations standpoint and provide input on possible measurements for security awareness campaigns. In addition, phone interviews were conducted with industry experts in the field of transit marketing for perspective on the Transit Watch program and transit awareness campaigns in general.

DATA SUMMARY

BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT⁴¹

Overview

The Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) has provided passenger rail service to the Bay Area since 1972. One of the few automated systems in the U.S., BART covers a total of 104 miles, including approximately 37 miles of track through subways and tunnels, a portion of which travels under the San Francisco Bay. The system moves approximately 375,000 people a day across four of the nine Bay Area counties. Voters recently approved an extension of the BART system to Santa Clara County, which will extend the system an additional 16 miles to Milpitas, San José, and Santa Clara.

Context and History

BART was one of the first agencies to implement a transit security awareness campaign after 9/11 and sought to enlist the aid of passengers while at the same time not scaring them off of the system. Furthermore, a fine balance was necessary to maintain awareness, yet not promote fear-mongering that was offensive to many residents.⁴²

BART hired a Bay Area communications agency to create an awareness campaign and to conduct focus group testing of messages for the campaign. One outcome of the focus group was to not to use the word “terrorism” in the messaging. Participants of the focus group also felt that it was fine to call upon passengers and employees to be involved in keeping the system secure, however, they did not like militaristic, commandeering messages such as “we are enlisting you.” BART’s first security awareness campaign in 2002 used inclusive messaging, “We’ve increased our alertness. Please join us.” as well as an action for passengers, “If you see an unattended package, please see one of us.”⁴³ As one of the first transit agencies to implement a passenger security awareness campaign, BART’s ad was featured on the front page of the September 9, 2002 issue of *Passenger Transport*.⁴⁴

In conjunction with messages geared toward passengers, BART conducted an internal employee awareness campaign that included brochures and wallet cards for employee use.⁴⁵ The wallet cards contained refresher material for employees after they have completed training sessions and were to be used as a quick reference. Instructions for employees included the A.C.T. principles; the acronym stands for “Aware/Approach,” “Call,” and “Tell.” BART worked with the London Underground, an agency experienced with terrorism attacks as well as passenger awareness communication, to leverage ideas used by the London Underground system and customize material for the BART system. One example is a DVD BART published in 2003 that instructed employees on how to identify suspicious activity and what tactics to use when approaching a suspicious person, and also encouraged employees to follow the A.C.T. principles.⁴⁶ BART views employees as a resource for passengers, and they are empowered to follow-up on reports from passengers.

In 2005, the BART internal security committee felt it was time for a stronger message and reproduced a London Underground-inspired ad. This simple ad titled “Bomb Detectors” featured a pair of eyes underneath the words “Bomb Detectors,” and included heavy emphasis on calling BART police and giving passengers a series of actions to take.⁴⁷ This awareness campaign inspired an editorial cartoon and a front page article in the San Francisco Chronicle.⁴⁸ The posters generated both positive and negative feedback from customers. BART wanted people to feel a little bit uncomfortable, yet not too uncomfortable.

As a supplement to this round of campaigns, BART used the Transit Watch program logo and messaging “Let’s count on each other for a safe ride” to create a flyer⁴⁹ that was distributed to passengers at stations. The flyer included a wallet cut-out card and FTA and Department of Transportation (DOT) logos. BART also sent a letter to area emergency response coordinators alerting them to BART’s emergency procedures, which include shutting down the system in some cases. People rely on BART as a means of transportation in emergencies, such as the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake that damaged the Bay Bridge. After 9/11, when area buildings were evacuated, people crowded towards the BART system causing the platforms to be dangerously overcrowded. BART included suggestions for emergency response coordinators to “tune into local news reports or visit www.bart.gov on the Web to receive the latest system status reports.”⁵⁰

BART’s 2006 campaign was also based on a London Underground graphic. It incorporated feedback from the previous campaign that the messages should provide more information on how and where to call for help. The “Whose bag?” poster included icons displaying methods for contacting BART authorities using the train car intercom, an in-station telephone, or to tell a BART employee.⁵¹ Use of the iconic images was also a way to address language barriers.

In 2008, BART refreshed the campaign again. The resulting ad was another London Underground-inspired message instructing passengers to report suspicious packages, warn others, and move away.⁵² The instructions are the same as the 2005 “Bomb Detectors” ad, but supplemented by a description of a suspicious package: “Is it hidden? Obviously suspicious? Not typical?”, giving passengers the means to determine what constitutes a suspicious package. A bright orange background was used so that the image was more visually striking.

In addition to posters, BART runs ongoing audio and visual announcements on station platforms that remind passengers to be vigilant and alert officials if they see something suspicious. The Operations Control Center and marketing staff have access to the messages and can control the frequency and content of broadcasts.⁵³

Goals of the Campaign

The goals of the campaigns are to give passengers tools for action, and more importantly, give them permission to make the call and notify a BART employee or police. BART officials feel that passengers’ eyes and ears are vital to keeping a system secure. The campaign ads show that BART appreciates that passengers pay attention. Employees

are encouraged to respond in a positive way. Terrorists are looking for an easy target, and a main deterrent is an alert public and an alert staff. Would-be terrorists will hesitate if people question suspicious activity.⁵⁴

There are challenges with reaching the goals of the campaign, as it is difficult to constantly keep both passengers and employees aware of their surroundings. For passengers, it is an important balance to keep them aware while not scaring them off the system. For employees, keeping their attention focused amidst the day-to-day activities is challenging. Furthermore, advertising space on the train is at a premium and must also be used for revenue-generating ads, organizational partnership campaigns, and courtesy messages.

Measuring Effectiveness

According to BART, when posters go up, the number of calls it receives from passengers increases. BART cites anecdotal evidence of calls to the customer service center and police dispatch increasing when the security awareness campaigns are running. The messages on the posters remove the barriers for passengers to take action, reminding people that BART wants to hear from them—tell BART and they'll deal with it. Because there is no “return-on-investment” pressure with awareness campaigns when compared with traditional, sales-driven marketing campaigns, systematic data collection is not built into the project.⁵⁵

BART police track the number of suspicious package-related calls, but data correlating the campaigns and call volume is not readily available. The customer service center has a list of categories for tracking calls, but adding a category for something as brief as a marketing campaign is difficult. A complicating factor is that awareness campaigns are not the only possible trigger for increased customer center calls regarding suspicious activity and items. Anecdotal evidence shows that increases in call volume also occur when there are transit-related terrorist attacks across the world.⁵⁶

The BART Operations Control Center Manager confirmed that BART does not have metrics that show that there is an increase in calls from customers reporting suspicious activity when the campaigns are running, but they do have anecdotal evidence that the campaigns as well as terrorist attacks overseas prompt an upswing in reports of suspicious activity. According to this agency representative, a feedback loop is needed to ensure that the public knows what BART is trying to do, and a way for BART to understand whether the public is getting the message.⁵⁷

The BART Transit Information Center Supervisor added that all calls that go through the main switchboard or the transit information center that relate to suspicious activity are transferred directly to BART police for immediate attention.⁵⁸ The Transit Information Center does not keep track of calls that are farmed out to other departments such as BART police. The calls about suspicious activity are few and far between, and if such activity is reported, riders in most cases use the station agents for immediate concerns. The station agents are the most visible and accessible employees at the BART stations and are heavily utilized by the public for questions and concerns.⁵⁹

Transit Security Working Group

BART is an active participant in the Bay Area Regional Transit Security Working Group (RTSWG). The Transit Security Grant Program requires establishment of a regional transit security strategy and a regional working group that includes representation from eligible transit systems.⁶⁰ A component of this working group's proposal is to implement a regional security awareness campaign. BART is leading the effort to conduct a regional campaign with input from other Bay Area transit agencies. Agencies will use an agreed upon template and affix individual agency logos and contact information on them. For their own system's version, BART will input the phone number for BART police as well as 911. The Transit Watch program was proposed for use since it is an already accepted campaign that agencies could easily buy into. The grant that funds the project is good through the end of 2010 and provides approximately \$250,000 for production of materials for the campaign. The campaign is a small part of the overall security measures included in the grant.

BART's marketing representative admits that it is difficult to obtain money for this type of activity since the outcomes are not tangible, and it is difficult to prove if a campaign has been effective. As part of the grant requirements, BART must show the TSA how the money was spent in terms of distribution, costs, and the number of agency participants. Campaign messages are focused toward passengers, so placement of the materials is on the interior of trains and buses and bus shelters. Brochures with instructions on what to do in an emergency are printed and distributed. This will be the first time for a multi-agency, multi-county security awareness campaign effort, so it was important to select a campaign that was recognized and recommended by federal agencies.

SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT

Overview

The San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) administers the public transit programs for San Mateo County, including the Caltrain commuter rail system and the SamTrans bus and paratransit service. Caltrain provides rail service from San Francisco to Gilroy, with limited-stop train service during peak commute hours. SamTrans provides bus service throughout San Mateo County and extends to parts of San Francisco and Palo Alto. Caltrain and SamTrans provided service for nearly 26 million riders in 2008.

Context and History⁶¹

In February of 2004, as part of the national Transit Watch program, SamTrans launched a promotional campaign to raise awareness of potential security problems on transit and at its facilities, seeking to inform passengers about how to react in emergency situations, and to train employees on how to recognize and respond appropriately to emergencies. Ad cards were produced for both trains and buses. In addition, the agency produced a "Take One" sheet for patrons and posted the information on its website.

The on-going campaign messages call upon passengers to “Look around. Be aware.” and explain that “When it comes to safety, we can always use an extra pair of eyes” and “If something doesn’t look right, let us know.” The agency’s major publication, the bus system map, includes instructions for passengers to inform a bus operator if they see a suspicious package or individual, as well as the telephone number for the transit police. The Transit Watch logo is also included next to the instructions on the guide.

Information about the Transit Watch program is included on the SamTrans website in the Rider Information section within the Transit Safety Tips section. The page provides a description of the Transit Watch program and instructs passengers to call the Transit Police for the fastest most direct response. Outreach efforts have not been extensive since they are trying to seek a balance between making people aware while also keeping them comfortable and not scaring them off the system.⁶²

Goals of the Campaign

Goals of the campaign are to raise awareness of potential security problems and inform passengers on how to react in an emergency situation. Transit police cannot be everywhere all the time. The agency and transit police have to rely on passengers since they often ride the same bus at the same time throughout the week. Passengers will be most aware of something that is a little bit different from the normal routine. Passengers are out there every day, and they do not need to be experts in security to notice and report something unusual. The transit security staff sees the campaign as a key part of keeping the system secure because they rely on the public to report unusual activity. As a transit agency, SamTrans is prepared to take action once they get a report from a passenger. Customer service center operators have direct contact with the transit police and are trained on how to respond when a passenger calls about a security issue. The security awareness messages and campaigns are critical in motivating the passengers to contact the agency.

The SamTrans representative shared that while the ad cards and decals are helpful, people still may not be aware of the number to call. However, passengers do not necessarily need to remember the phone number. It is sufficient if they remember to call in or that it is okay to call in, and they can figure out the rest. Outreach efforts have not been extensive since they are trying to seek a balance between making people aware while also keeping them comfortable and not scaring them off the system. The agency does not want to mislead people because it is a very safe system overall.

In response to what Bay Area agencies think of terrorism, the SamTrans representative added that transit has been a target in other places in the world, and the Bay Area has its share of targets such as the Golden Gate Bridge and the Transamerica Pyramid building. People in the Bay Area are not very nervous about terrorism; they feel relatively safe on transit. It has been nine years since 9/11, and the tendency is to become more complacent. This is the appropriate time to refresh the campaign to remind passengers to be aware.

Measuring Effectiveness of Campaigns

The Caltrain and SamTrans customer service center has a software program, “Transit

Safe,” that tracks customer calls. The original purpose of the program was to keep track of maintenance, but it includes tools to track reports from customers such as complaints or reports of hazards. Transit Safe tracks incidents that are reportable to the Federal Railroad Administration, including suspicious packages and bomb threats.

According to the SamTrans representative, awareness data are challenging to obtain, as transit agencies typically do not track this type of activity. While there are no numerical data at this time, there is anecdotal evidence of increased interaction between customers and employees when the messages are up. The consensus is that these campaigns are important to have, but determining how much effort is worth putting into the campaigns is not possible because there are no measurements.⁶³

In general, measuring awareness is a challenge for SamTrans. One example of a campaign that SamTrans measures is their effort to increase ridership. In this case the agency sends out tickets or coupons to residents and tracks how many people use them. They also measure if the ridership is continued or if the increase is only for the duration in which the coupon or ticket was valid.

Regional Transit Security Campaign

Caltrain and SamTrans will participate in the regional transit security awareness campaign led by BART. The San Mateo County Transit District does not have a budget to produce more campaign material on their own, but will keep their current campaign as well as use the regional initiative to refresh the images and messages. The SamTrans representative added that, ideally, Caltrain and SamTrans will do a video and news release at the same time to leverage exposure.

CAPITOL CORRIDOR

Overview

The Capitol Corridor is an intercity passenger train system that runs from Auburn to San Jose and covers a 170-mile rail corridor. The service goes through Sacramento and Oakland, and provides 32 trips per day for 1.7 million passengers annually. Riders typically use the train as an alternative to driving for both work and leisure travel. The Capitol Corridor is managed by the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA), a joint partnership among six local transportation agencies. The CCJPA manages the service through an operating agreement with Amtrak.

Context and History⁶⁴

Capitol Corridor is an open system, meaning that anyone can get on board a train without going through fare gates like the BART system. The line travels through urban areas as well as remote locations, stressing the need for riders to be aware throughout the system.

Capitol Corridor implemented its security awareness campaign over five years ago, during

a time when many transit agencies were stepping up security awareness efforts. They recognized the challenge of conveying suspicion through a photo while at the same time trying to tell people what to do. On their website describing investments in passenger safety and security, Capitol Corridor emphasizes that “Ultimately, it takes everyone’s cooperation in working together to make these measures effective”.⁶⁵ Capitol Corridor staff wanted passengers to think about their own instincts and about what does not seem right to them, and if something does not seem right, to call the authorities.⁶⁶

Capitol Corridor’s poster includes two photos, one of a station platform with a suspicious-looking bag, and one inside a train car with a passenger pointing out a suspicious bag to the train conductor. Between the two photos is the main message of the poster “Don’t Just Sit There. Trust Your Instincts.” with further instructions to “Be aware. Be involved. Be safe.” The poster, which is seen throughout the system, contains the telephone number for Amtrak police, which goes to the national number and is then dispatched to local Amtrak officers.

The posters have not changed since they were first created and serve as a reminder to passengers to be vigilant and aware of their surroundings. The poster ads have been up since their inception, have retained their color, and still provide the core message that can be applied to security concerns other than terrorism including personal safety and security.

Like other transit agencies, Capitol Corridor’s employee training includes security awareness, how to identify suspicious activity, and how to respond if approached by a passenger about a security concern.

Goals of the Campaign

Capitol Corridor’s goals are “to educate our passengers to be aware of potential security threats.”⁶⁷ Capitol Corridor wants passengers to be aware of other kinds of crime (other than terrorism) and includes safety messages in their E-news Rail Mail newsletters such as not to leave valuables in your car and to walk in well-lit spaces. Capitol Corridor’s passengers travel at all different times of the day, and they have a number of extreme commuters that travel early in the morning and late at night, thus emphasizing the need to have messages encompass personal security precautions that apply to those walking late at night in parking lots, for example. The core message of the poster incorporates all of these considerations. There has been an increase in crime in general due to the recent economic downturn and people need to be vigilant overall. Although Capitol Corridor cannot ignore the terrorism threat, the attempt is to make the message all-encompassing so it is not only about unattended packages and bombs. Capitol Corridor’s passengers are more likely to be involved with smaller-scale crimes that still require increased awareness.

Measuring Effectiveness of Campaigns

In addition to its security awareness campaign, Capitol Corridor train stations and cars include other advertisements for partnership promotion activities. For both types of campaigns, measuring the impact of the campaign without a specific tracking mechanism,

such as a specific code for customers to enter when using the service or product, is problematic. Measuring awareness campaigns, and any before and after effects, is even more difficult. Capitol Corridor conducts passenger surveys twice a year to gauge customer satisfaction and demographics. While the survey instrument does not seek specifics about the security awareness campaigns, it asks passengers about their sense of personal security while on the train, and at the station where a trip begins.⁶⁸

Regional Transit Security Campaign

Capitol Corridor plans to participate in the regional security campaign effort led by BART.⁶⁹

SANTA CLARA VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Overview

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) provides bus and rail service throughout Santa Clara County to approximately 140,000 passengers a day. The light rail system covers 42.2 miles with 62 stations, and bus service includes 75 routes with over 3,800 stops. As an independent special district, VTA is responsible for congestion management, specific highway improvement projects, and countywide transportation planning, in addition to providing transit service.

Context and History⁷⁰

One element of the VTA safety and security program is safety and security-specific marketing campaigns and community outreach programs. VTA keeps safety and security messages up all the time on a consistent basis and takes a holistic approach to generating security awareness. The VTA “Transit Watch” program, first launched in 2003, emphasizes the fact that everyone is involved and has a role in keeping the community safe, not just VTA employees/contractors and security personnel.

One of VTA’s security awareness posters tells passengers “If You See Something Unusual, Say Something,” and beneath the phrase there are three pictures that portray different ways one can “Say Something.” The messaging in the middle of the poster says “Trust Your Instincts. Report Unattended Items,” and is supported by a picture of a VTA protective services badge and a VTA customer service center employee taking a call. A final message about making sure to take personal belongings when exiting is included.⁷¹ Communications to passengers on this subject are ongoing. In 2005, VTA began using audio and visual announcements in the stations and in bus and light rail vehicles, reminding passengers to take their belongings with them. The announcements scroll across the visual message boards regularly, and audio and visual announcements in the vehicles are made approximately every 40 minutes.

There are signs throughout the system for the security campaign, with posters and car cards in light rail vehicles and buses. VTA has dedicated approximately 10 to 15 percent of the advertising space for awareness campaigns, safety messages, and meeting

notices.⁷²

In the past, VTA has also included safety and security tips in their “Take-One Newsletter” available in vehicles and at the Customer Service Center. The Take-One is a monthly publication “designed to provide customers with VTA news, rider tips and a schedule of community events.”⁷³ Instructions in the guide encouraged riders to be alert, notify an operator or call security if they see something suspicious. In 2007, VTA refreshed the Transit Watch message using the Transit Watch “Be Alert” template for a campaign that instructed passengers not to touch unattended items and to instead tell a uniformed officer or VTA employee.⁷⁴ VTA customized the template to include their customer service telephone number. In conjunction with the posters, VTA sent out press releases to keep the idea fresh in the minds of the public.

VTA also has an ongoing Security Awareness training program. According to VTA’s Protective Services representative, “all employees/contractors receive a security overview as part of new hire orientation and all front line employees (bus and light rail operators, mechanics, and so on.) must complete four hours of Security Awareness training. Bus Operators receive refresher Security Awareness training as part of their annual Verification of Transit Training (VTT), Light Rail Operators receive refresher training as part of the annual Light Rail Recertification Program, and maintenance employees receive refresher security awareness training at their ‘tailgate’ sessions.”⁷⁵ Earlier in 2004, VTA distributed security awareness guides for internal use only, which included specific instructions on conducting visual inspections and evaluating suspicious items and substances. The instructions in the guide differed by role (For instance, Bus Operator, Maintenance, Administrative Employee).⁷⁶ In 2006, VTA also made a laminated pocket guide version for quick reference,⁷⁷ and in 2008 distributed the “Employee Guide to System Security”⁷⁸ published by the National Transit Institute. This guide was made available to employees, again by job classification, and includes a supplemental sticker on the back with the telephone number for reporting security threats to the Operations Control Center at VTA. Safety is an everyday concern for VTA, and the agency recently posted evacuation messages in each light rail vehicle to ensure that they had the best possible instructions for passengers. The specific instructions highlight the different evacuation methods for evacuating elevated areas and tunnels. Messages are also translated into Spanish and Vietnamese due to local demographics.

VTA has dedicated deputies on staff for law enforcement services through a contract with the Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office. Due to the large service area, approximately 326 square miles, VTA may rely on local jurisdictions for assistance. The local support is complemented by contract security staff that serve as the eyes and ears on the system. As is the case with all transit agencies, VTA is steadily conducting efforts to make their system as safe and secure as possible while working within budget constraints. Selected VTA staff recently went through National Incident Management System (NIMS) training, which includes how to respond to various types of incidents such as terrorism attacks and natural disasters. Transportation plays a vital role in an emergency, and VTA strives to continuously learn from experience to improve communications and response capabilities to serve the community in emergencies.

Goals of the Campaign

The primary goal of the VTA campaign is passenger awareness. The agency needs people to be aware of their surroundings whether they are at a light rail platform, a transit center, in a park and ride lot or riding a bus or train. For example, with 100 passengers on a bus, there are 200 eyes that can be on the lookout for suspicious activity. People act differently when they know that others are watching. When people are alert, it may discourage others from engaging in inappropriate behavior or committing a crime.

Measuring Effectiveness

The VTA Protective Services Department has a security incident report database that tracks the details of incidents on the system. Not all incidents recorded are necessarily unlawful, yet the data can provide an indicator of activities that may discourage people from riding the system. The database helps to identify trends of when and where certain types of problems arise, and as a result VTA can try to address potential problems with a law enforcement or security presence, or implement other strategies such as the installation of CCTV to discourage certain behaviors. Outcomes and trends of the security database have not been used to track the effectiveness of security awareness campaign messages since the database is primarily used as a tool for tracking activity and identifying operating issues.⁷⁹

VTA also uses a comment tracking system called CARE (“Customers Are Resources to Excellence”) that tracks and categorizes comments and concerns from the public as well as VTA staff. This system is used in the customer service center, and there is also an online form for customer use on the VTA website. The categories include Compliment, Concern, Suggestion, and Other Issues, which are then sub-divided by topics including Public Safety. Public Safety includes topics related to fare inspectors and security concerns such as threats and violent acts.⁸⁰ VTA uses information from the CARE system to make improvements. For example, VTA operations staff had said that there needs to be additional awareness and education about safety on the system. As a result, VTA developed the Rider Safety & Convenience Tips poster to help increase safety awareness.⁸¹

Regional Transit Security Campaign

Utilizing FY 2007 Transit Security Grant Program funds, VTA is participating in the regional security campaign effort that BART is leading. The region sees the importance of looking to the community as a source of information and appreciates the uniformed approach that the regional campaign will bring. The Regional Transit Security Working Group provides opportunities for agencies to share their ideas and experiences. For example, VTA is considering developing its own version of a pocket card developed by the TSA and produced by Altamont Commuter Express (ACE). The “Not On My Shift” card describes in detail the components of vigilance, observation, and reporting.⁸²

GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

Overview

Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (Golden Gate Transit) operates the Golden Gate Bridge, Golden Gate Transit buses, and the Golden Gate Ferry service. Golden Gate Transit has over 50 bus routes that provide daily service within four counties, with primary service in Marin County. Golden Gate Ferry provides daily service between Marin County and San Francisco. In FY 2008, bus ridership was over seven million and ferry ridership was nearly two million. Recognized as a national icon, the Golden Gate Bridge brings in millions of visitors from around the world each year.

Context and History⁸³

In October of 2005, the District launched an awareness campaign to bring riders and visitors into the process of keeping the bridge, buses, and ferries secure. There are three different versions of the campaign posters—one for each transportation mode. Though the primary “See Something? Say Something!” message is the same for all three divisions, the method of reporting the suspicious activity differs by division. For the bridge, visitors are instructed to report to Bridge Security or a sergeant, bus passengers are instructed to notify a bus driver or call 911, and ferry passengers are to report to the nearest ferry employee. The program was put in place as added enhancement to existing security measures, and according to District General Manager Celia G. Kupersmith, “The See Something? Say Something! program is a great reminder to all of us to continue to be observant, alert, watchful, and aware and to report something if it doesn’t look right.”⁸⁴

The District typically includes messaging about Transit Watch in the transit guide that includes bus and ferry information, and it invites passengers to be the ‘eyes and ears’ of the system. Its awareness program is ongoing. Posters are rotated in and out of buses and ferries since they use the space for other activities. The bus ads run in English and Spanish because they have a high Spanish speaking demographic. The security posters are up anywhere from four to ten weeks at a time, but when there are major service changes, those messages get top priority. The posters at the bridge are displayed on a more permanent basis.⁸⁵

Operators are trained on how to respond when approached by a passenger about security concerns. Posters are in the drivers’ rooms and employee work rooms. The nature of the job for most District employees is service and customer interaction. The employees are given the means to take action when approached by a customer about suspicious activity. Collateral material and briefings detailing what constitutes suspicious activity have been provided to all employees.⁸⁶

The District received a great deal of media attention in August 2005 when the TSA did a 30-day security screening demonstration project at the ferry terminal.⁸⁷ Due to the nature of the bridge being an icon and potential target,⁸⁸ the District also received a lot of media

attention when they initiated the security awareness campaigns.

Goals of the Campaign

The District seeks to create an environment for customers and employees to feel safe. If anyone sees something that makes them uncomfortable, the District provides them with an action they can take. The District tells passengers and visitors what they can do so they feel involved in the process. The District representative reiterated that for transit agencies, communicating with customers more often than you need and more often than you think is important. They purposely have not changed the look and wording of their campaign in order to reinforce the message. The intent and purpose of the program is to give people options and to provide an environment in which if they saw something, they would feel more comfortable reporting it.

Measuring Effectiveness of Campaigns

According to the District representative, the ultimate way to know whether the campaign is effective is if a suspicious package or activity is reported and eliminated as a result of someone having seen the message and reporting it. As with the other transit organizations surveyed, a return-on-investment analysis for awareness campaigns is not conducted. If the District measured effectiveness, focus groups would be one method of measurement, with questions targeting awareness before and after the campaigns. Traditional marketing analysis of the campaign is possible, but that was not the intent of the program.⁸⁹

Regional Transit Security Campaign

The District is preparing for the regional transit security awareness campaign soon to be implemented by BART and will be using the new material on buses and ferries. They will most likely not use the campaign for the bridge since the regional effort is focused on transit. The District will still keep their “See Something? Say Something!” posters running and will continue rotating them in and out so the message does not fade. The expectation is that the District will get synergy from the regional campaign since passengers traveling around the Bay and transferring between agencies will see it multiple times.

FINDINGS

This section provides highlights of the findings from interviews with the five Bay Area transit agencies within the context of the literature review research. It includes best practices for structuring security awareness campaigns to make them effective and recommendations for measuring the effectiveness of campaigns.

MAKING CAMPAIGNS EFFECTIVE

Table 1 on page 24 provides a brief overview of each agency's campaign, including the goals of the program, the types of media used, and example messages of the campaign.

Best Practice: Emulate Existing Campaigns

Research has shown that emulating existing campaigns is an effective use of agency resources.⁹⁰ BART was the frontrunner of security awareness campaigns for the Bay Area, yet received much inspiration from London's experience. SamTrans used images of eyes reminiscent of one of BART's ads. Golden Gate Transit chose the common "See Something? Say Something!" phrase used by many other agencies. Borrowing successful concepts from other campaigns is a smart way to save resources and avoid starting from scratch. Though all agencies added their own creative touches to the elements, the core messages are remarkably similar. Four of the agencies interviewed—BART, Golden Gate Transit, Capitol Corridor, and VTA, chose to include images of their own system since that is what their customers are most familiar with.

Best Practice: Use Multiple Forms of Media

All agencies provided messages in more than one form of media including websites, train or bus card posters, pamphlets, and published media such as bus system route maps or schedule books. Several systems provided the messages in multiple languages. Multiple forms of media and multiple languages allow for reaching a broader audience.

In addition to the traditional forms of outreach, some agencies have been using instructional videos to convey information to passengers. Videos are easy to make in-house and inexpensive to produce, and when posted on a website may be easily tracked for number of views. SamTrans found a video useful for conveying a concept (their 8-ride ticket) that was difficult for people to grasp. A video could include a demonstration of a passenger noticing a suspicious package and then taking the appropriate steps to notify authorities.⁹¹ Capitol Corridor mentioned that conveying suspicion in a photo was difficult. A video could make it easier to convey suspicion and educate passengers.

Furthermore, awareness campaigns included employee-specific messaging and materials such as pamphlets and guides for supplementing security training exercises. All agencies interviewed confirmed that employees play a key role in taking the necessary steps after a customer reports a security concern.

Table 1 Summary Data for Transit Agency Security Campaigns

Agency	Campaign Goals	Types of Media	Example Messages
BART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase Awareness ✓ Provide Tools for Action ✓ Give Permission to Contact (Make them feel comfortable about reporting.) ✓ Don't Scare Passengers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train car cards/posters • Audio and visual announcements on station platforms • Flyers • Security/safety-specific section on website 	<p>"We've increased our alertness. Please join us."</p> <p>"Bomb Detectors. If you see something unusual, warn others, move away, and report it."</p> <p>"Whose bag? If you see something unusual, say something. Trust your instincts. Report unattended items."</p>
SamTrans/ Caltrain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase Awareness ✓ Provide Tools for Action ✓ Encourage People to Notify Authorities ✓ Don't Scare Passengers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train and bus cards/posters • Take One sheet/flyer • Bus System Map (includes security instructions) • Security/safety-specific section on website 	<p>"When it comes to safety, we can always use an extra pair of eyes. Look around. Be aware. If something doesn't look right, let us know."</p>
Capitol Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase Awareness ✓ Provide Tools for Action ✓ Encourage Involvement/ Discourage Complacency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train car cards and station posters • Visual announcements on station platforms • Safety/security-specific section on website 	<p>"Don't just sit there. Trust your instincts. Be aware. Be involved. Be safe."</p>

VTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase Awareness ✓ Provide Tools for Action ✓ Encourage Involvement and Alertness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LRV and bus cards/posters • Audio and visual announcements in stations and in vehicles • Take One Newsletter • Transit Watch program launch news on website 	<p>“If you see something unusual, say something. Trust your instincts. Report unattended items.</p> <p>“Be Alert! Don’t touch unattended items.”</p>
Golden Gate Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase Awareness ✓ Provide Tools for Action ✓ Encourage Involvement ✓ Give Permission to Contact (Make them feel comfortable about reporting.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ferry, bridge, and bus cards/posters • Transit system guide (includes security instructions) • Security Awareness program launch news on website 	<p>“See something? Say something! Report suspicious packages, people, & activities to the nearest ferry employee.”</p>

Best Practice: Use Consistent Branding and Messaging

Effective awareness campaigns have consistent messaging branded with the same logo or slogan to help the audience recognize the main point of the message as well as the sender of the communication.⁹² The use of the same logo or slogan throughout various communication tools helps link all system communications and thus improves their effectiveness.⁹³ Agency messages to passengers emphasize awareness and involvement on a consistent basis. SamTrans, VTA and BART have used the Transit Watch logo on many of their materials, with VTA even using one of the templates provided by the FTA, thus providing a common link between the messages. The regional security awareness campaign will use the Transit Watch brand, helping to link messages for Bay Area travelers even further, thus making the messages more effective.

The TSA suggests varying the content and appearance of the messages to retain public interest. Officials interviewed from three of the agencies—Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans, and Capitol Corridor said that campaigns and images were not changed since the inception of their security awareness campaigns. Golden Gate Transit specifically called out the fact that keeping the same content reinforces the message. VTA and BART on the other hand chose to refresh campaigns to improve clarity of the messages or catch the public's eye.

Best Practice: Use Simple, Actionable Messages (But Do Not Scare Passengers)

All agencies selected messages that are simple and to the point, either instructing passengers to report unattended packages, trust their instincts, or be aware in general. Capitol Corridor targeted the behavior of passengers by telling them “Don’t Just Sit There.” The message invokes an emotional response, encouraging passengers not to be complacent. Others focused on directing their passengers to take action—“See Something? Say Something!” or “Be Alert!” and provided them with the means to take that action. BART’s “Bomb Detectors” ad arguably invoked the greatest emotional response, due to the fact that it specifically called out bombs as a threat and indicated that passengers’ eyes were the means to detect them. The ad generated negative responses from the public but the fact the public noticed and responded to it provided evidence that it was effective in raising awareness of security threats.⁹⁴

Public transportation systems need to balance the desire to have their passengers be alert and report suspicious behavior, while also not scaring them off the system. Though the two agencies have very different levels of security awareness efforts, both BART and SamTrans stressed the need for such a balance. For Bay Area agencies whose communities have not experienced acts of terrorism, reminders to be vigilant and to report issues to authorities may serve as sufficient messages for keeping awareness of security threats in the minds of passengers.

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Perhaps the most striking finding from this study is the revelation that none of the agencies in the study actively seek to measure the effectiveness of their security awareness efforts.

Yet agencies must have clearly defined goals for campaigns so that measurements that show progress can be created. If agencies want to increase security awareness, they should select specific indicators that can be linked to this type of awareness. For transit agencies with limited resources, finding data points that serve as cost-effective indicators that are easily tracked is important.

Table 2 on page 28 summarizes the primary goals for the campaigns discussed, possible indicators of whether the agencies are reaching these goals, and possible ways to measure the indicators.

Recommended Practice: Calculate the Level of Marketing Effort (Output Measure)

Tracking the level of distribution, types of media used, and where the media was placed are the easiest ways to quantify the level of activities related to the awareness campaign. Most agencies have this information and can use traditional marketing/advertising tools to estimate the breadth and depth of their campaign. This practice, however, does not provide an indication of the effect on passengers or any behavior change, and should therefore be used in conjunction with one or more of the outcome measures listed.

As a requirement of the transit security grant, BART will provide output measures to the federal authorities, including the number of agencies participating in the campaign and the amount of materials produced. These measurements will be straightforward and the least burdensome for transit agencies to report.

Table 2 Outcome Indicators and Possible Measurements for Security Campaigns

Goals	Goal Achieved if/Campaign is Effective if...	Ways to Measure
1. Increase Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Passengers Have Seen the Messages ✓ Passengers Understand the Messages 	<p><i>Output Measure:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level and Types of Media: • Number and Distribution of Posters, Car Cards • Frequency of Audio Announcements • Website Information • Educational Video <p><i>Outcome Measure:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passenger Survey • Track website page counts and videos viewed • Add a security reporting category to dispatch center data collection
2. Provide Tools for Action: Contact Agency Staff “Don’t Touch, Move Away”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increased Reports of Security Issues to Security Staff, Station Agents, or Other Transit Employees ✓ Passengers Follow the Directions Correctly 	<p><i>Outcome Measure:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track Number of Security Reports • Analyze Security Reports
3. Encourage Involvement & Alertness: Give Them Permission to Report. Make Them Feel Comfortable About Reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increased Passenger Engagement/Involvement in the System. ✓ Increased Interaction Between Passengers and Transit Personnel. 	<p><i>Outcome Measure:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track Number of customer calls, comments, feedback about any issue in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Customer Service ○ Dispatch Center ○ Police Field Interview cards

Recommended Practice: Use Easy to Track Indicators (Outcome Measure)

Counting page hits on the security information website pages is an easy way to track how many people have seen the messages. For the posters on buses and trains, there is no reasonable way to track how many people saw the ads. Instructional videos, when posted on a website, may be easily tracked for number of views. However, both the webpage and video view counts only capture a portion of the intended audience since it is available online and not directly on the transit system. Furthermore, this method of tracking would only capture whether people viewed the information, not whether they understood the message or whether they are reporting suspicious activity when they see it.

Recommended Practice: Survey Passengers (Outcome Measure)

Passenger surveys can provide an indication of how many passengers saw the campaign, remember the messages, and understand the messages. The data collected could provide information on whether the security awareness campaign is having the desired effect. Most agencies have some kind of passenger survey for gathering ridership information or customer satisfaction. Adding a question to understand whether customers would know what to do if they saw a suspicious package could be an indication of whether the security message is getting to passengers. Surveys and focus groups are useful, but they can be resource intensive, and are not hard measurements of how many people actually saw the ads and how they responded.

Recommended Practice: Use Tracking Methods Already in Place and Analyze Indicators (Outcome Measure)

Using tracking mechanisms already in place at the agencies may be the most convenient and cost-effective solution for tracking expected effects of the campaigns. Most agency security departments, customer service centers, or dispatch centers already categorize comments and concerns received by the public for tracking purposes. For example, VTA has its CARE system as well as a security incident report database. By analyzing the data for the period before a campaign starts and then for the first few weeks of a new campaign some useful outcome data could be developed longitudinally, comparing several campaigns over a year or longer.

Agencies could prepare additional categories for tracking in advance of the campaign to measure any effects. The SamTrans representative stated that using customer service center data would be one of the best methods since it entails actual results versus measuring awareness with a survey.⁹⁵ Measuring before and after effects may be difficult for agencies that have the posters up on an on-going basis.

Another method is to look for indicators within data already tracked by the agency. For example, if certain types of crime decreased when the campaign posters went up, one could make an assumption that the campaign messages may have served as a deterrent. Checking records of complaints from the customer service databases may highlight trends or patterns during a campaign. Alternately, the agency could conduct a policy experiment by putting posters on one route line and not on another to see if there is a difference in any

outcomes related to customers' actions.⁹⁶

One component found in many transit security awareness campaigns is instruction to the passenger to make contact and communicate with transit personnel, security or otherwise. Effectiveness of this component can be measured by tracking the number of calls to the security department and/or the number of times passengers have alerted station agents, operators, and other transit employees of potential security threats. A comparison can then be made of the number of calls about security threats made by passengers to transit authorities when a campaign is running versus when it is not running. This is one way of confirming whether the messages are reaching the targeted audience, and falls into what is considered an outcome measure. However, agency representatives report that these calls are few and far between, and thus may not be a good indicator.

On the other hand, if goals of the campaign are to make passengers feel more comfortable approaching transit staff about security issues, then increased interaction between passengers and transit personnel could be one way to gauge passenger interest and engagement in the system. Golden Gate shared that the intent of their program is to give people options and provide an environment for passengers to feel more comfortable reporting suspicious activity. With this as their goal, it may be reasonable to expect increased interaction overall when the posters are up since they are welcoming passenger input. The idea behind this theory being that if an agency is perceived as being open and approachable about security issues, they will be perceived as being open to responding to other issues. Tracking the number of times passengers have contacted transit personnel regarding any type of issue, during a campaign versus not during a campaign could help determine whether the campaign is having an impact. BART representatives recognize that many reports of suspicious activity will go through a station agent or train operator first, who will then contact BART police. Though challenging to measure and track personal interactions, this could provide a useful data point on the outcomes of an awareness campaign.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Transit agencies should work towards making the most of their campaign by using messaging that is simple yet actionable and by branding the campaign so that it is consistent and easily recognizable by passengers. The subject matter demands it. Furthermore, transit agencies should use multiple forms of media to reach a broader audience and use successful strategies of other agencies to save time and energy. These recommendations are derived from industry best practices,⁹⁷ so implementing actual measurements to prove whether the campaigns are truly effective is necessary. In this regard, a positive finding in this study is the consistency of awareness efforts across agencies.

In order to capture the public's response to the campaign and to understand whether they are achieving their campaign goals of increasing awareness, providing tools for action, and encouraging passenger involvement, agencies should implement a combination of output and outcome measurements. At a minimum, agencies should track the level of marketing activities and strive to capture at least one set of meaningful data that captures passenger behavior and comprehension by using internal tracking mechanisms or surveys.

Due to the management methods applied by the transit agencies, no data are collected that permit the measurement of the effectiveness of the awareness campaigns. However, this research has value because it demonstrates the consistency with which Bay Area transit organizations address the need for passenger awareness as part of their overall security program. Future research could be conducted using randomized passenger surveys during a period of no awareness campaign and a later time where there was an awareness campaign, to demonstrate the effectiveness of the messages in raising awareness of potential security threats. In addition, further data collection from agencies that already measure effectiveness of awareness campaigns should be conducted to assess what they use as measurements and their lessons learned.

CONCLUSION

Campaigns are Worth Having, But Are They Worth Measuring?

This final discussion poses the question of whether there is a real need to measure the effectiveness of the campaigns. The general consensus among agencies interviewed is that transit security awareness campaigns are important to have, yet none of the agencies currently measure the effectiveness of their campaigns. It is understandable why they are not tracking results—available mechanisms may be either resource intensive, require careful planning in advance, or provide only a mediocre indication of effectiveness. It is challenging to find good indicators of whether a campaign is effective and further exploration and testing of indicators is required.

The general lack of exploration of tracking mechanisms for security awareness campaigns begs the question of whether it is necessary to understand whether the campaign working or not. Perhaps these efforts to ensure that the message is out there and available for passengers when they need it are sufficient. If that is the case, measuring the breadth and depth (outputs only) of the campaign effort could provide a “good enough” indication of how agencies are doing in terms of getting the word out to passengers.

APPENDIX A: TRANSIT WATCH PROGRAM TEMPLATES



Transit Watch “Be Alert!” Template, Source: Enhanced Transit Watch Toolkit English, Art and Graphics 2006 CD



Transit Watch “Unattended Items” Template, Source: Enhanced Transit Watch Toolkit

English, Art and Graphics 2006 CD



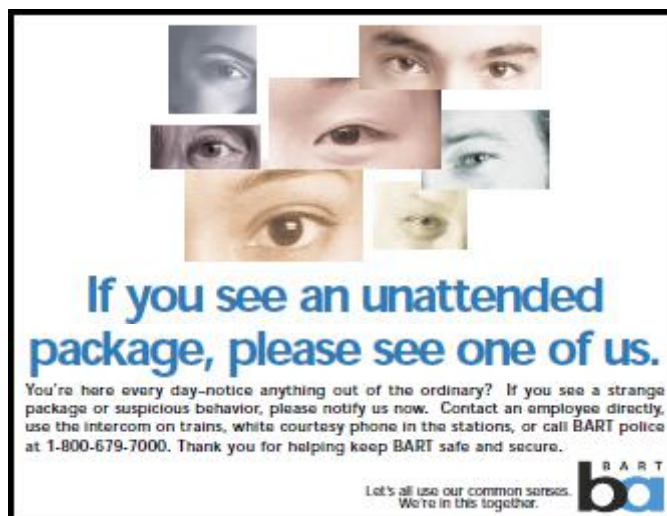
Transit Watch “Look. Listen. Leave.” Template, Source: Enhanced Transit Watch Toolkit English, Art and Graphics 2006 CD



Transit Watch Logo, Source: Enhanced Transit Watch Toolkit English, Art and Graphics 2006 CD

APPENDIX B: TRANSIT AGENCY SECURITY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

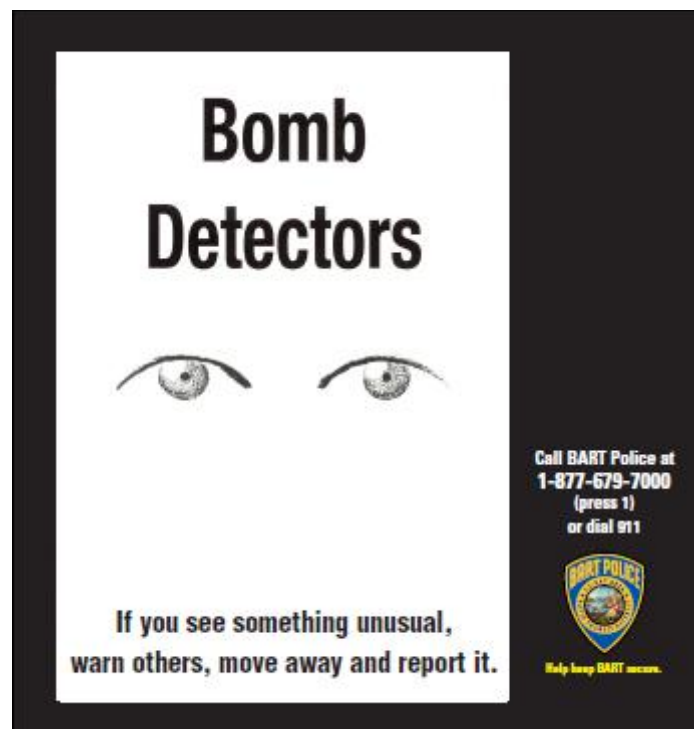
BART



BART Poster From 2002, Source: Melissa Miller, Email to Author, May 20, 2009.



BART Poster From 2002, Source: Melissa Miller, Email to Author, May 20, 2009.



BART Poster From 2005, Source: Melissa Miller, Email to Author, May 20, 2009.



BART Poster From 2006, Source: Melissa Miller, Email to Author, May 20, 2009.



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SAMTRANS



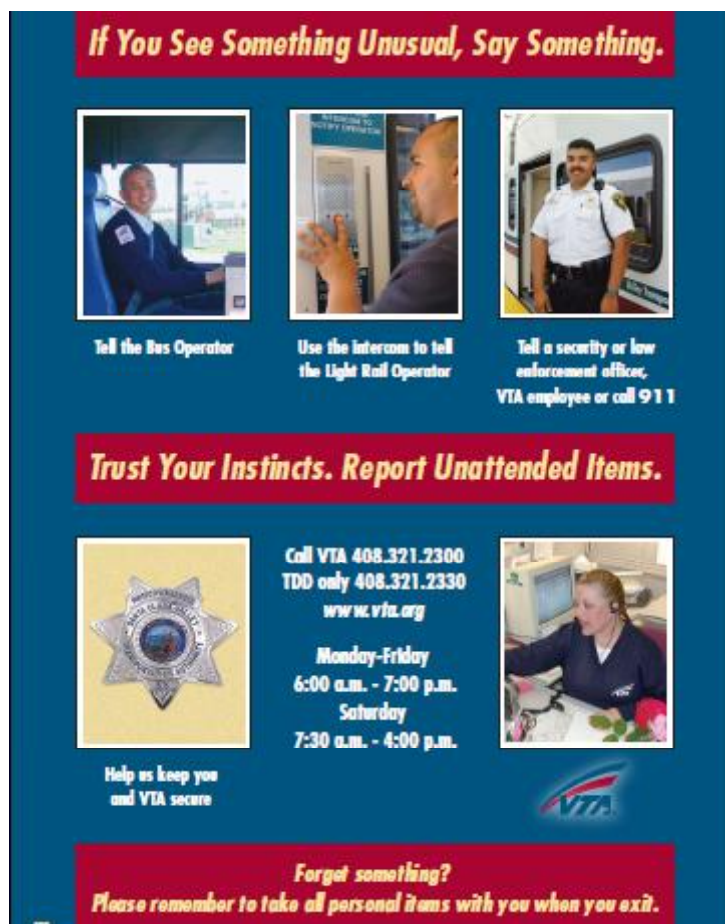
Caltrain Poster, Source: Christine Dunn, Email to Author, May 19, 2009.

CAPITOL CORRIDOR



Capitol Corridor Poster, Source: Capitol Corridor Website, http://www.capitolcorridor.org/aboard_the_train/guest_security.php, accessed April 10, 2009.

VTA



VTA Poster, Source: Helen Bellitto, Email to Author, April 9, 2009.



VTA Safety Poster Source, Source: Helen Bellitto, Email to Author, April 9, 2009.



VTA Poster, Source: Helen Bellitto, Email to Author, April 9, 2009.

GOLDEN GATE TRANSIT



Golden Gate Poster, Source: Golden Gate Transit Website, <http://goldengate.org/news/SecurityProgram.php/>, accessed April 10, 2009.

APPENDIX C: COMPLETE LIST OF TRANSIT AGENCY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What kinds of security awareness campaigns are you currently using? If not currently, then in past?
2. What types of media do you use to generate public involvement/awareness?
3. Do you differentiate the message by mode (rail, bus, ferry, light rail)?
4. Do you run the messages in multiple languages? What languages?
5. Please describe a typical campaign duration and frequency.
6. What is the desired effect or goal of these campaigns? E.g. increasing awareness, passenger engagement, and increased communication between transit passengers and employees?
7. Do you think they are achieving that goal?
8. How do you prevent it from becoming like “wallpaper”? What methods do you use to keep the message “fresh”?
9. Do you use the FTA’s Transit Watch? If so, how have you changed it to suit your system?
10. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign? In other words, how has the campaign performed to encourage the active participation of transit passengers? How do you know if it is reaching your intended audience? How do you know if it has the desired effect?
11. In your opinion, what makes a transit security awareness campaign effective?
12. How do you measure the effectiveness of campaigns? Are there other ways to measure the effectiveness that you have considered?
13. What kinds of data points do you track? Do you track reports of security-related issues (suspicious packages/activity) from the public? How? Can you share available data?
14. What are the best ways to generate public awareness and involvement in keeping the transit system secure?
15. Has the security awareness campaign influenced the role of transit employees? How?
16. What do Bay Area transit agencies think about terrorism?

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACE	Altamont Commuter Express
A.C.T.	Aware/Approach, Call, and Tell
BART	Bay Area Rapid Transit
CCJPA, Capitol Corridor	Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOT	Department of Transportation
DVD	Digital Video Disc
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
Golden Gate Transit	Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District
HSAS	Homeland Security Advisory System
MTI	Mineta Transportation Institute
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NYMTA	State of New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority
RTSWG	[Bay Area] Regional Transit Security Working Group
SamTrans	San Mateo County Transit District
TSA	Transportation Security Administration
VTA	Valley Transit Authority (Santa Clara County)
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

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Dr. Edwards' recent publications include *Emergency Management Training and Exercises for State Level Transportation Agencies*, *Handbook of Emergency Management for State-Level Transportation Agencies*, *The Role of Transportation in Campus Emergency Planning*, "Supply Chain Security and the Need for Continuous Assessment" in *Supply Chain Security: International Practices and Innovations in Moving Goods Safely and Efficiently*, all with Dan Goodrich; and two chapters in *Minority Resilience and the Legacy of Disaster*. She also co-authored "Organizing for Emergency Management" with Goodrich in the ICMA "Green Book" Emergency Management published in 2007. Other Homeland Security publications include *Saving Community Lifelines* with Brian Jenkins, *Implementation and Development of Vehicle Tracking and Immobilization Technologies*, with Jenkins and Butterworth, and chapters in five other text and reference books. She is also the co-author of FEMA's course on "Homeland Security and Emergency Management" with Bill Waugh and Bill Nicholson.

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PEER REVIEW

San José State University, of the California State University system, and the MTI Board of Trustees have agreed upon a peer review process required for all research published by MTI. The purpose of the review process is to ensure that the results presented are based upon a professionally acceptable research protocol.

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