



Report No:
Meeting Date:

18-203
July 25, 2018

Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District

STAFF REPORT

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Update on Operator Safety Campaign

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving a report on the District's activities to mitigate operator assaults and increase operator safety.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no budget impact.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

There has been an increase in operator complaints of physical altercation and assault while performing the duties of bus operation. Operator assaults are not isolated to AC Transit. In fact, increases are being experienced on transit systems nationwide. District staff have reached out to similarly sized operations throughout the Nation, as well as the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), to learn about their best practices. The District takes operator safety very seriously and to ensure safety remains a priority, staff reviewed each reported incident and identified the routes that represent a need for mitigation.

On February 20, 2018, District staff and ATU Local 192 leadership visited the Gillig bus manufacturing plant in Livermore, California to review and assess models for two operator compartment protective shields. Staff and ATU agreed to test both models at AC Transit and solicit operator feedback. Both models are under order with expected receipt and installation by late September 2018. Upon installation, staff will initiate real-time testing of both shields. Testing will include collaborating with the Safety Committee to operate both buses at each Division, collect feedback from operators and assess if the shields are a viable option for incident mitigation.

District staff worked with ATU to develop an onboard Ad Card campaign with the slogan "We Work, We Play, We Ride. Let's get home safely together". The Safety Campaign team selected the final Ad Card design, with images of Operators, and were installed on April 25, 2018.

Onboard recorded announcements are under development with a message to passengers that attacks upon an operator are a crime and that AC Transit will prosecute. Announcements are expected to go live once the new Computer Aided Dispatch/Automated Vehicle Locator (CADAVL) system is in place later in 2018.

All District buses are equipped with video surveillance as an additional layer of crime prevention. The District has newly added a video monitor, displaying passengers as they board the bus, on two demonstration buses. The video monitors are installed directly above the operator compartment and face the coach's front entrance door. Passengers will see a live high-definition image of themselves boarding the bus. The video monitors are intended to deter passengers from engaging in violent or aggressive behavior towards the operator. This has proven to be successful at other agencies.

Recruitment for a Conflict Resolution Program Administrator is underway. The successful candidate will further develop a formal conflict resolution training program for all staff. During the recruitment process, existing staff with law enforcement training will continue to conduct this training. To date, 47 new bus operators and nearly all of the Transportation Field Supervisory Staff have been trained.

District staff continues to work closely with both contracted law enforcement, as well as all local law enforcement to insure proper coverage during the most vulnerable hours of operation. Changes to staffing locations have been implemented and the feedback to date is positive.

District Staff and Management continue to work closely with ATU, the ATU Drivers Committee and the AC Transit/ATU Joint Safety Committee to evaluate both the incidents that are occurring and the mitigation techniques as they are implemented.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

This report is being provided to inform the Board about operator safety efforts.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

This report does not recommend an action requiring analysis.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

ATTACHMENTS:

None

Approved by: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
Reviewed by: Denise Standridge, General Counsel
Salvador Llamas, Chief Operating Officer
Robert Lyles, Media Affairs Manager

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