



## Board Report

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### OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

**SUBJECT: MONTHLY UPDATE ON PUBLIC SAFETY**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE Public Safety Report.

#### **ISSUE**

Metro is committed to providing outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system. In furtherance of the Vision 2028 Plan, Metro is implementing a multi-faceted plan to improve safety and the perceptions of safety for both riders and employees. The following summarizes current initiatives aimed at accomplishing this objective and recent public safety trends.

#### **BACKGROUND**

At its February 2022 meeting, the Board received and filed a Reimagining Public Safety Framework (Framework) which outlines a human-centered approach to public safety guided by the principle that everyone is entitled to a safe, dignified, and human experience. This Framework reflects Metro's Public Safety Mission and Values statements which were adopted by the Board in December 2021. In March 2023, the Board adopted a revised Code of Conduct, a Bias-Free Policing Policy, and a Public Safety Analytics Policy.

These actions align with numerous initiatives to improve safety and the perception of safety on the system, including the increased, strategic, and layered deployment of personnel (comprised of customer-centered ambassadors and community intervention specialists, as well as transit security and law enforcement officers) and the piloting of safety and security interventions to address specific concerns (e.g., drug use and crime) on the system.

#### **DISCUSSION**

System Security & Law Enforcement (SSLE) is responsible for overseeing safety initiatives on the Metro system and works in coordination with other departments, including Operations and Customer Experience, to implement strategies to advance this objective. The following is a snapshot of June and July activities which are the most recent months for which systemwide law enforcement data is

available.

## DRUG-FREE CAMPAIGN UPDATE

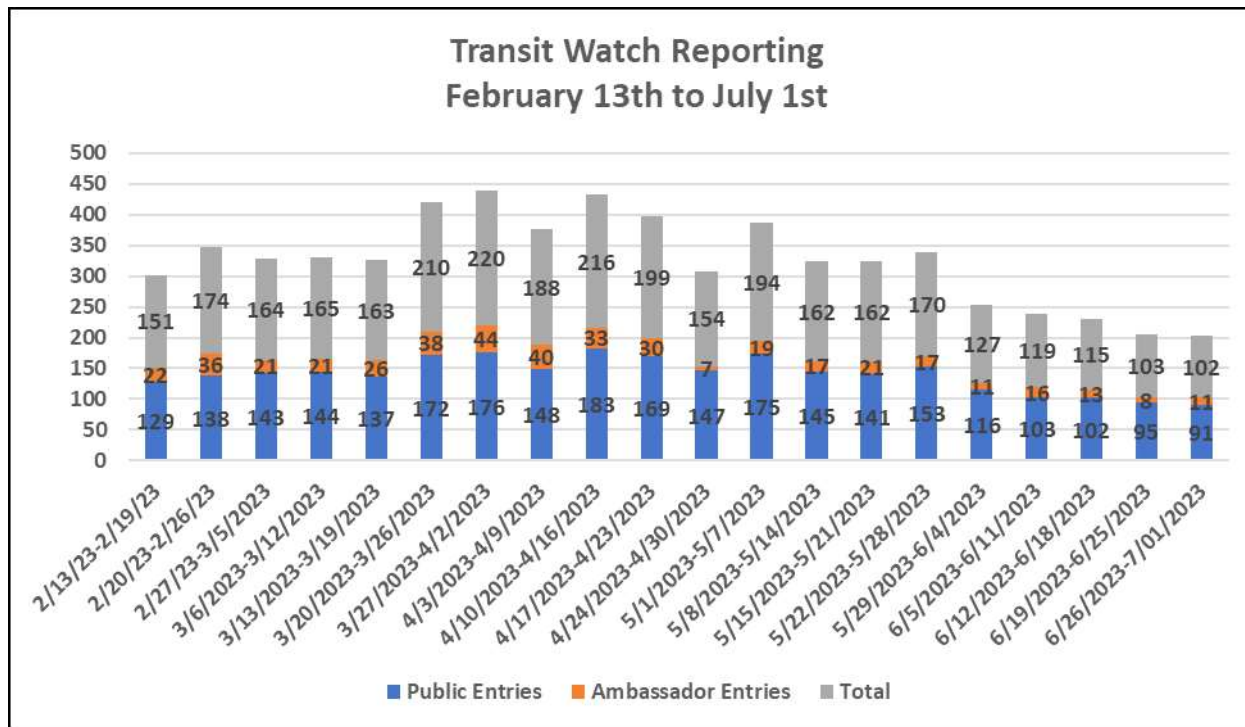
On February 13, 2023, staff launched the Drug-Free Campaign to curb open drug use on the system and drug overdoses attributed to the regional fentanyl epidemic.

The goals of the campaign were the following:

- Remove individuals arrested for committing crimes on our system, with a particular focus on drug crimes.
- Significantly decrease drug sales, usage, and overdoses on trains, platforms, and in stations.
- Remove individuals who are not using the system for the purpose of transportation.
- Increase the feeling of safety for our riders and employees.
- Increase cleanliness and the overall customer experience on targeted lines.
- Decrease crime while taking a holistic approach by offering eligible offenders a drug diversion program and necessary mental health/social services for people experiencing homelessness and suffering from drug addiction.

The campaign concluded on July 1<sup>st</sup> and successfully achieved the majority of the stated goals, resulting in a significant decrease in drug usage/sales on the stations. . The critical lessons learned were the importance of a coordinated multi-layered public safety approach to address the safety and security environment with a blend of care-based services, customer service, and security/law enforcement resources. These lessons learned from the pilot are implemented in the new multi-layered deployment of public safety ecosystem staff. The following is an overview of the results of the Drug-Free Campaign:

- 552 citations and 437 warnings issued by Metro Transit Security Officers. Of those numbers, 40 were issued for Eating/Drinking/Smoking. The increased deployment resulted in fewer issued citations and warnings systemwide. Citations and warnings issued for Eating/Drinking were reduced to zero by July.
- 336 drug-related arrests by law enforcement. The month of June saw an 85% decline as only six drug-related arrests occurred when compared to the 42 in May.
- 95 complaints were received by the Customer Call Center about drugs on the Red/Purple (B/D) Lines throughout the campaign. Only 13 complaints about drugs on the Red/Purple lines were submitted during the month of June. At its conclusion, the Drug-Free Campaign resulted in a 35% reduction in customer complaints related to drug activity on the system.
- Metro received 3,258 Transit Watch submissions since February 13 regarding drug-related issues on the system. At the height of the Drug-Free Campaign, Metro received 757 submissions in April and 787 in May. The month of June saw a reduction in Transit Watch submissions of 44% (439 vs 787 in May).



**B/D (RED/PURPLE) LINE SUPPLEMENTAL DEPLOYMENT**

On April 24, Metro began a supplemental deployment of LASD and LAPD on the Red/Purple (B/D) Lines to improve visible presence, reduce crime, and advance the perception of safety among customers and employees.

During the entire duration of the deployment, April through July, LAPD and LASD deployed their multi-disciplinary engagement teams to connect those experiencing homelessness with resources and providers. Combined, LASD and LAPD offered services to 1,650 individuals, with 680 or 41% accepted services. For LAPD and LASD, examples of accepted services include referrals to shelters, rehabs, emergency medical services, and connecting a PEH to LAHSA or PATH.

The below statistics reflect the results of the entire Supplemental Deployment, from April 24<sup>th</sup> until its 1 July conclusion.

- Citations: 628\*
- Warnings: 2,005\*
- Arrests: 425
- Ejections: 17,731

\*Note that the citations and warnings are for trespassing and loitering violations.

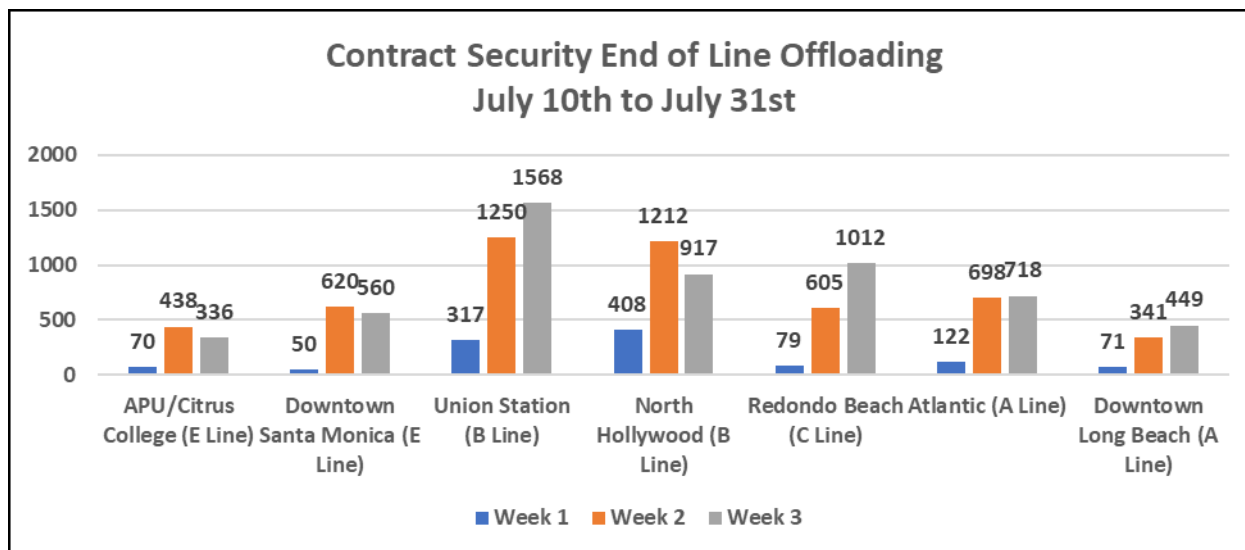
**NEW MULTI-LAYERED DEPLOYMENT**

On July 10, Metro established a multi-layered deployment utilizing all resources from the public safety ecosystem with applied lessons learned from the Drug-Free Campaign and Supplement Deployment. This strategic, proactive security model will have a significant impact across the entire rail system including end-of-line stations and mid-point (Focus) stations, decreasing the number of non-destination travelers that are required to leave the rail system at the end of the night when the system closes. The deployment was created by representatives and executives from all the Metro safety layers including Metro Transit Security, Metro Ambassadors, Homeless Outreach, Contract Security and Law Enforcement, as well as deployment consultants, with equity, customer experience, and accountability in mind.

The below reflects the first three weeks of the deployment, which covered the period of July 10 to July 31.

*End-of-Line Offloading*

Contract Security is conducting offloading operations at the seven end-of-line stations, clearing the trains, and ensuring customers exit the stations. The offloading operation starts in the early morning and goes throughout the day and into the evening hours. If a customer intends to continue utilizing the system, they will need to re-tap at the turnstiles, which are staffed by Transit Security Officers at key stations. Furthermore, Metro’s homeless outreach teams are positioned at end-of-line locations to offer resources to individuals in need and are willing to accept services. Contract Security conducted a total of 11,841 offloads as of July 31.



\*The offloading numbers represent patrons that remain in the trains and require contract security interaction to get them off or escort them off the station.

As seen on the offloading chart above, the total offloads increased in weeks 2 and 3, due to the greater number of safety resources supporting offloading at end-of-line stations. As the operation continues, staff anticipates offloading numbers to decrease as we break the pattern of non-destination riders using the system. A similar pattern was identified with the Drug-Free Campaign where a high number of arrests were conducted at the beginning of the campaign and decreased over time.

To assist in decreasing the number of non-destination travelers and PEH disembarking at end-of-line stations, Metro is employing a care-based approach by having TMET, HOPE, and Homeless Outreach augment fare compliance operations. The fare compliance ensures all patrons are utilizing the system for the purposes of transit while identifying opportunities to connect those in need with outreach and mental health services. Metro regularly adjusts the deployment based on observations and data to ensure alignment with internal and external partners. Lastly, Metro staff has briefed the Chiefs of Police from several cities at end-of-line stations about the new deployment, particularly the offloading operation, to seek their collaboration.

*Law Enforcement Stats*

LAPD, LASD, and LBPB enforce the penal code on the system, including conducting trespass investigations. Ejections represent law enforcement engagements during trespass investigations in which an individual is removed after it's determined they did not pay fare to access the rail or bus system. The below charts depict the totality of law enforcement efforts in support of the multi-layered deployment, including homeless outreach.

<b>Multi-Layered Deployment: Law Enforcement Efforts</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Ejections	3,875
Arrests	144
Citations*	308
Warnings*	700

\*Law enforcement citations and warnings are not related to fare, but for trespassing, loitering, and moving violations.

<b>Law Enforcement Homeless Outreach</b>	<b>Totals as of July 31</b>
LAPD HOPE Team Outreach Services Offered and Accepted*	Offered: 99 Accepted: 11
LASD MET Team Outreach Services Contacts and Accepted*	Contacts: 455 Accepted: 9
Long Beach PD Quality of Life (QOL)Team*	Contacts: 66 Accepted: 14

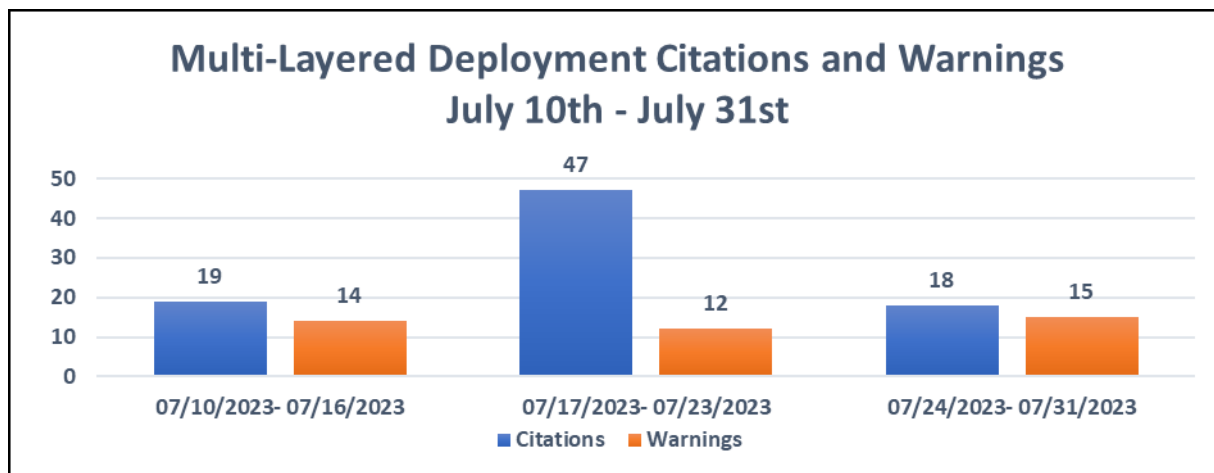
\*LAPD's HOPE team defines accepting services as when the individual agrees to accept, or requests assistance. This includes placing them in direct contact with a service provider, physically transporting an individual to a shelter that has services available, obtaining emergency medical services, or placing the individual on a mental health hold.

\*LASD MET team defines accepted services when a person accepts referrals to shelters, rehabs, or is connected to LAHSA or PATH.

\*Long Beach Quality of Life (QOL) leads a “Shelter the Unsheltered” initiative with PATH assisting in the morning hours. QOL works with PATH to coordinate services for those experiencing homelessness.

### *Transit Security*

Transit Security’s primary role in the multi-layered deployment is to conduct code of conduct enforcement. The following chart depicts the citations and warnings issued over the first three weeks of the deployment (through July 31). The three weeks of data is not sufficient to determine the overarching impact of the deployment on code of conduct issues across the system, however it is noted that week 3 saw a significant decrease in citations when compared to week 2. An overall reduction of citations and warnings issued systemwide will demonstrate the effectiveness of Transit Security in encouraging code of conduct compliance.



### *Positive Feedback*

Metro’s Customer Call Center received positive feedback from a customer regarding the multi-layered deployment. The customer wrote “Thank you for the Ambassadors and extra police.” We also received a social media post stating “Congratulations to those who hired and trained the ambassadors. They have been proactive in reaching out to riders. The system feels safe when I ride.” Staff will continue to monitor for customer and employee feedback about the new deployment as the operation continues.

### **METRO TRANSIT SECURITY BODY WORN CAMERAS**

In support of the Public Safety Advisory Committee’s recommendations about increasing the accountability of our front-line security officers, SSLE has been working over the last year to equip Transit Security Officers with body worn cameras. Currently, a sample of officers are testing the cameras out on the system, and their feedback will be utilized to refine the department’s Body Worn Cameras policy. Staff will continue to test the cameras to ensure they are operable across the system and are ready for a complete roll-out to all Transit Security Officers by late fall 2023.

### CRIME / ARRESTS STATISTICS AND TRENDS

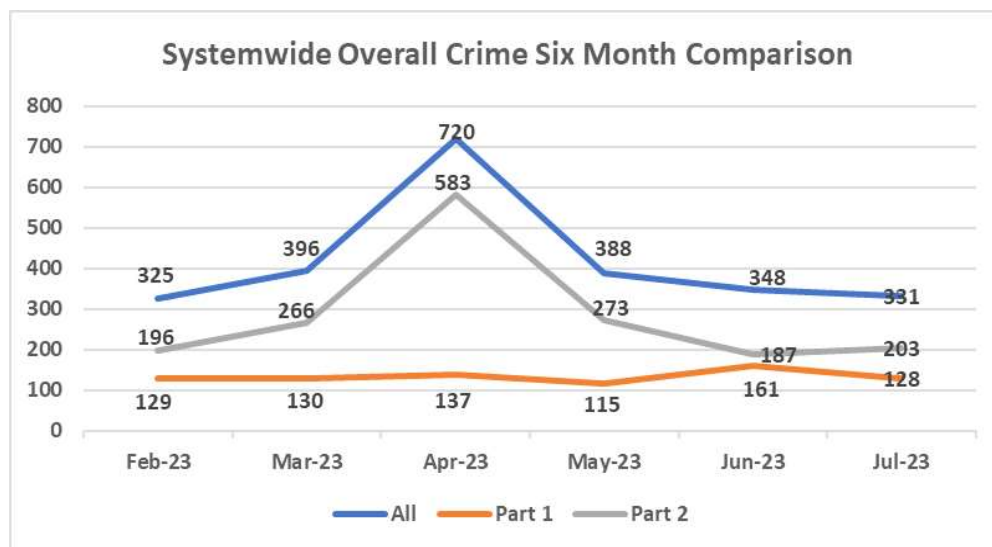
Throughout June and July, Metro maintained an increased law enforcement presence systemwide, consistent with Metro’s goal of maintaining increased visibility and promoting rider compliance with Metro’s Code of Conduct.

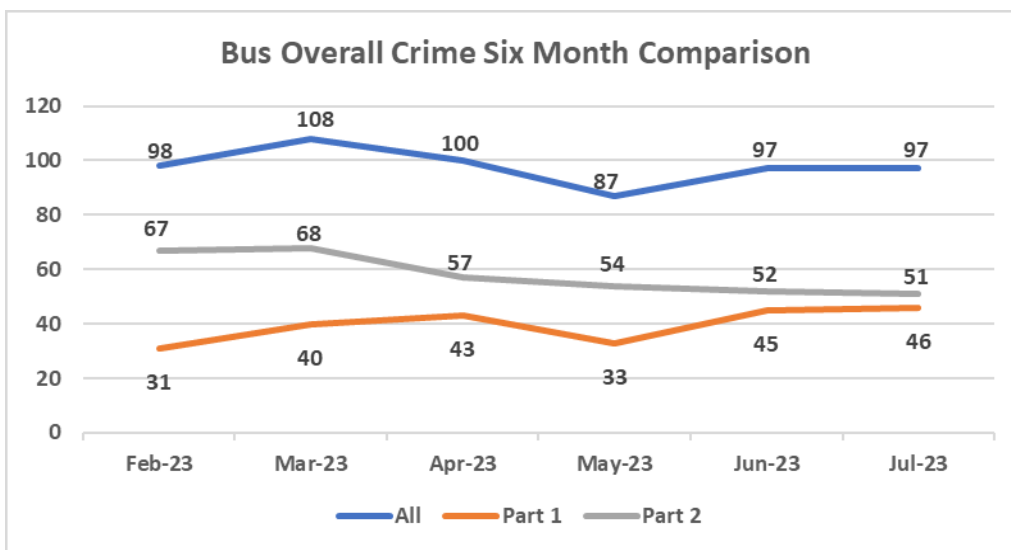
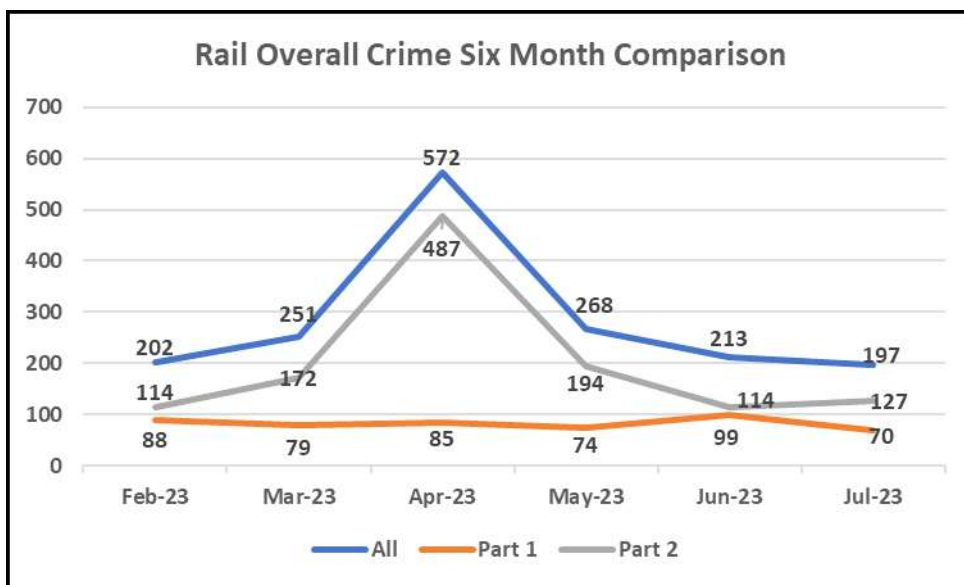
Overall, crime on the system decreased 54% by the end of July when compared with April 2023, the month which recorded the highest number of crimes year-to-date for 2023, (331 vs 720). The following highlights were noted for June and July:

In June 2023, overall crime systemwide decreased by 10% (348 vs 388) compared to May 2023. By mode, crime on rail decreased by 21% (213 vs 268) and crime on bus increased by 12% (97 vs 87). The notable trends in bus crime were in larceny (14 vs 10), specifically cellphone theft, and bus operator assaults (15 vs 8).

In July 2023, overall crime systemwide decreased by 5% (331 vs 348) compared to June 2023. By mode, crime on rail decreased by 8% (197 vs 213) and crime on bus remained the same (97 vs 97). The notable declining trends were in aggravated assault (-18%), battery (-10%), robbery (-28%), larceny (-21%), and motor vehicle theft (-73%).

There were significant increases in arrest for drug violations (68%) and possession of weapons (400%) from June to July. However, these increases are attributed to the continued enforcement of Metro’s Code of Conduct, the Drug-Free Campaign, which began on February 13, and the recently initiated multi-layered public safety deployment which began on July 10





## OPERATOR SAFETY

SSLE continues to work with the Chief People Office to hire Transit Security Officers to expand the dedicated bus riding teams created to enhance the safety of our bus operators and riders. From March to July, 37 Transit Security Officer I positions have been filled, which is inclusive of the 22 positions that were approved by the Board in March, and 12 Transit Security Officer II positions have been filled. An analysis of TAP data from June and July shows that LAPD, LASD, and Transit Security bus riding and boarding teams have addressed over 80 lines by varying their deployments to ensure that they cover all five service areas of Metro’s extensive bus system. Staff have focused much of the resources on the lines with the highest incidence of bus operator assaults, which is evaluated on a monthly basis based on data and operator feedback.

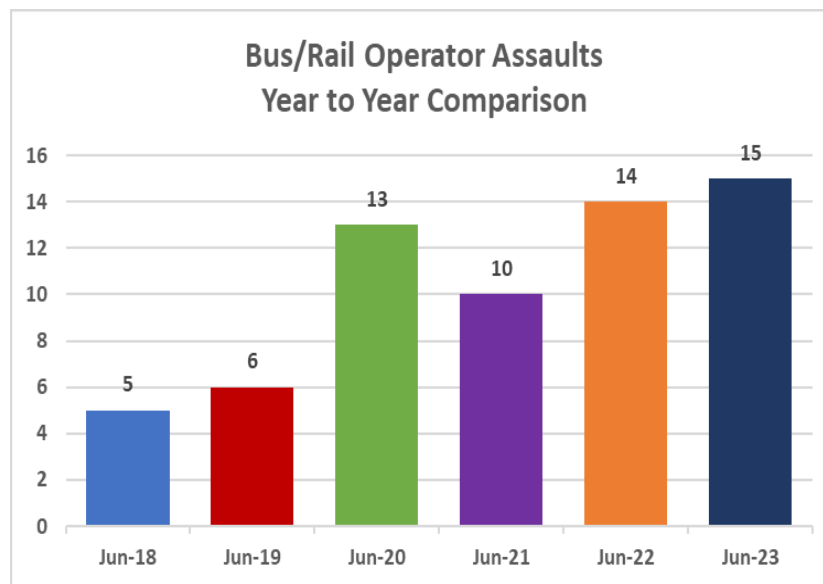


In June 2023, operator assaults increased by 88% compared to May 2023 (15 vs 8). Spitting and brandishing of a knife were the top two methods of assault. In July 2023, operator assaults increased by 7% compared to June 2023 (16 vs 15). Spitting and the use of hands were the top two methods of assault.

While we strive to decrease the number of operator assaults, the rate of assaults in June and July is consistent with historical averages as shown in Figure A. The type of assaults that occurred in June and July are summarized in Figure B.

Overall, spitting and the use of hands remain the primary methods of operator assault. Metro intends to implement new bus barriers to mitigate the accessibility of bus operators from physical attacks. On April 28, ten buses were retrofitted with one of two new barrier prototypes, which are designed to minimize involuntary physical interaction between riders and operators. Corporate Safety and Operations continue to assess the barrier prototypes through survey feedback from Operators. Additionally, a live on-the-road field review was conducted to assess suggested improvements based on on-the-road evaluations. This review is intended to provide insight into the effectiveness of the bus barrier and suggest necessary adjustments for its successful implementation. Staff will continue to provide future updates on the bus barrier retrofit.

In addition, SSLE continues to deploy Bus Riding Teams on the top 10 bus lines with reported incidents of operator assaults, to enforce Code of Conduct violations. Staff will continue to review crime stats to identify potential trends and patterns to inform deployment strategies that will help prevent and decrease operator assaults.



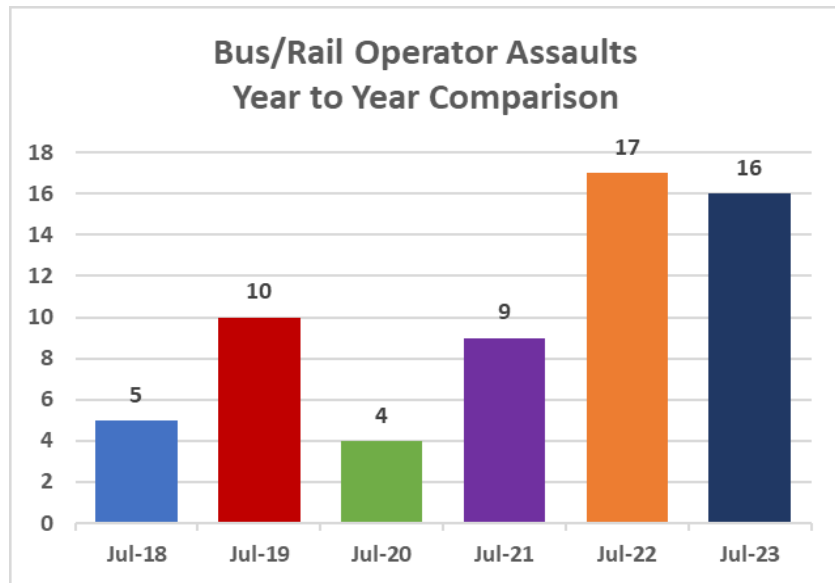
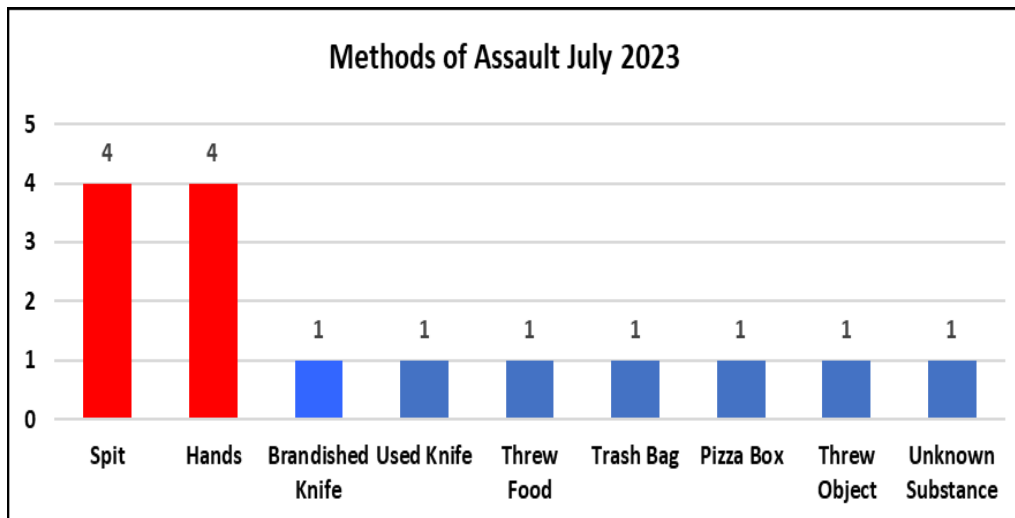
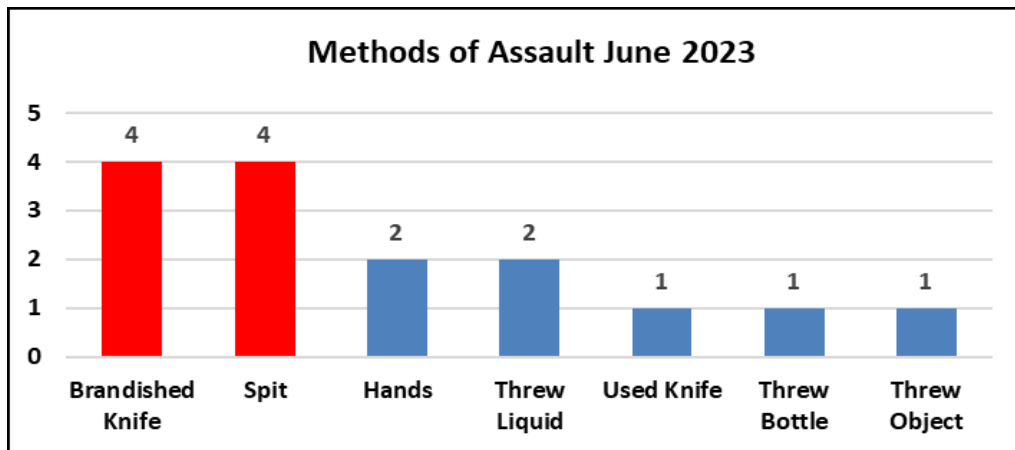


Figure A: Bus/Rail Operator Assaults Year to Year Comparison



**Figure B: Methods of Assault**

**METRO AMBASSADOR PROGRAM UPDATE**

Metro Ambassadors' job is to support our riders, connect riders to resources, and report incidents or maintenance needs. Metro Ambassadors were deployed on the A Line, B Line, C Line, D Line, K Line, the former L Line, and J Line (Silver), as well as bus lines 210, 40, 20, and 720.

New deployment: Since Friday, 6/16/2023, we have scheduled 46 Metro Ambassadors a day, to provide customer support at the new Regional Connector stations to include coverage at station platforms and elevator concourse areas.

WLMP Faregate Pilot: As of 5/19/2023, there are three Metro Ambassador teams per shift deployed at the Westlake MacArthur Park Station supporting customers as part of the 30-day faregate compliance pilot plan. This is in addition to the 3 riding teams assigned to the B (Red line). Metro Ambassadors will remain there until further notice.

Ambassadors were certified and equipped to carry and administer Narcan in April 2023. Metro Ambassadors have reported 18 Narcan incidents for the month of June and July 2023 combined:

June 2023 - 8 Narcan incidents

- (2) at Westlake MacArthur Park Station
- (2) at Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station
- (1) at 7<sup>th</sup> St. Metro Ctr.
- (1) Union Station
- (1) at Atlantic Station
- (1) offsite near Bus Line 20

July 2023 - 9 Narcan incidents

- (3) at Westlake MacArthur Park
- (1) at Union Station
- (1) 7<sup>th</sup> St. Metro Center
- (1) South Pasadena Station
- (1) Historic Broadway Station
- (1) at Hyde Parks Station
- (1) at North Hollywood Station

**By the numbers**

For the month of June 2023, Metro Ambassadors conducted 54,998 customer interactions and

reported the following:

- 739 Cleanliness Issues
- 245 Elevator and Escalator Problems
- 305 Graffiti Incidents
- 152 Safety Issues

For the month of July 2023, Metro Ambassadors conducted 56,389 customer interactions and reported the following:

- 1,002 Cleanliness Issues
- 282 Elevator and Escalator Problems
- 416 Graffiti Incidents
- 158 Safety Issues

## **EQUITY PLATFORM**

Metro continues to implement a multi-layered public safety model which takes a cross-disciplinary approach to addressing the various safety needs of the system with the involvement of transit security, law enforcement, ambassadors, and homeless outreach teams. The most recent example of this cross-disciplinary collaboration is through the new multi-layered deployment that was launched on July 10. A key component of this effort is end-of-line offloading which consists of all patrons exiting the trains so maintenance staff can clean the trains and get them ready for service. To complement this operation, homeless outreach teams are deployed in the event patrons offboarding need and would like to accept services. Through this multi-layered approach, Metro can secure its infrastructure while providing solutions to issues facing the county and that are visible on the system. Furthermore, another component of the multi-layered deployment is to have officers present on the station platforms and trains to deter fare evasion, instead of focusing solely on punitive responses, and seek compliance with the Customer Code of Conduct..

## **NEXT STEPS**

SSLE continues to monitor our law enforcement partners, private security, and Transit Security Officer performance, monitor crime stats, and consider information from surveys, customer complaints, and physical security assessments, amongst other sources, to analyze safety-related issues, adjust deployment strategies, and formulate new interventions.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Total Crime Summary June & July 2023

Attachment B - Systemwide Law Enforcement Overview June & July 2023

Attachment C - MTA Supporting Data June & July 2023

Attachment D - Bus & Rail Operator Assaults June & July 2023

Attachment E - Sexual Harassment Crimes June & July 2023

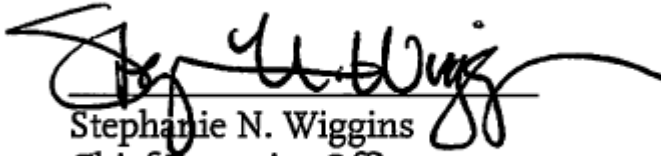
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