

White Paper: Transportation Security - The Moving Target



The Necessity of Security for the Transportation Industry

The transportation industry plays an integral role in modern society. The activities of traveling and transporting goods are daily events that affect just about everyone. Daily commutes, the shipment of packages, and elaborate business or leisure trips are so commonplace that it's easy to take transportation for granted. The average person rarely takes the time to consider the crucial role security plays in helping critical infrastructure run smoothly.

Complex and Dynamic Agencies

Modern transportation companies often involve facilities made up of multiple buildings and vehicle lots. Government transit agencies, in particular, are dynamic in scope, magnitude, and complexity. These public agencies must be flexible enough to adapt to the needs of their respective constituencies and strong enough to implement and uphold major policies that can affect hundreds of thousands of people.

General Needs Addressed by Security

Many transportation agencies benefit from working with a private security firm. Security officers patrol busy transit stations and deter disruptive behavior. Camera monitoring and access control are two other important duties that help maintain order. In addition, security officers can also perform fare inspection and revenue escort. Certain transportation stations may require properly trained officers to operate metal detection units. Security companies support their clients with all of these critical duties while remaining as unobtrusive as possible from a rider's perspective.

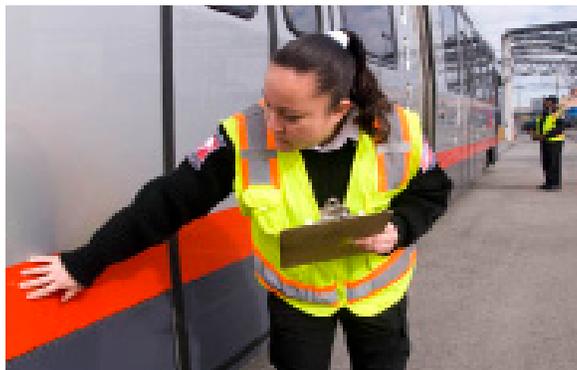
Indeed, patrons tend to notice security when it intrudes upon their personal space or convenience – such as getting screened at an airport.

How Terrorism Affected Transit

However, potential dangers do lurk, making security a necessary part of any transportation experience. While occasionally inconvenient, security measures exist to safeguard the public.

Since 9/11, as terrorism has become more ingrained into the public consciousness due to brazen attacks, transportation agencies have placed a greater emphasis on heightening security. The London attacks in 2005, in which terrorists detonated explosives across subway trains and a double-decker bus during the morning commute, also intensified the awareness of possible dangers.

The security industry is responsible for safeguarding people, facilities, services, and infrastructure. With local law enforcement stretched thin for a variety of reasons, airports, ferries, subways, buses, and other transportation authorities have come to rely on the private security industry. Decision makers at transportation authorities need to partner with a reliable security company that can support local law enforcement and build up public confidence in their agency. An effective security company serves the community to promote safety, and contributes to general financial, environmental, and social well-being.



Security responsibilities for any transportation agency require modern workforce management systems, cutting edge technology, and leadership that can adapt to the needs of the industry. In the wake of the 2005 London attacks, officials began formulating robust strategies designed to prevent similar acts. However, extending the role of police officers, reengineering the structure of facilities, and installing new technologies are heavily dependent on the amount of funding available.

According to Federal Transit Administration-sponsored research, the most effective and affordable strategy is the presence and performance of well-trained uniformed security officers. Thus, finding a qualified private security company should be a high priority for any transit authority.



The Impact of Loss Prevention

However, public transit is only one aspect of the transportation industry. The transport of goods and materials is another essential function of society.

Logistics is a critical business for our economy. According to a November 2010 FBI report, cargo theft has been a rising threat for the better part of the past decade. Perpetrators of this crime have grown more organized and ambitious. As a result, the price tag associated with thefts has been increasing as well.

Cargo theft, defined as any stolen commercial shipment while in transit from its point of origin to its destination, is a major problem. Industry experts estimate that cargo thefts in the U.S. cause as much as \$30 billion in losses per year. The crime affects a wide scope of people. Victims include employees, retailers, consumers, insurance companies, and manufacturers.

Loss prevention, both internal and external, needs to be properly addressed before it is too late. Therefore, a security provider must be able to implement effective electronic surveillance measures, access control systems, roving patrols, and comprehensive documentation practices.

Generally, it makes more financial and strategic sense for a transportation company to outsource security services from a professional contractor.

What to Do

When seeking out a security provider, there are certain things you can look for to ensure that you partner with a company that is experienced and qualified to handle the scope of serving a dynamic critical transportation agency.

1. Training

A security company is only as good as its officers. Seek out a company that emphasizes training and certifications beyond the bare minimum required for the job. An ongoing commitment to training is a commitment to excellence.



2. Emergency Response

Find out how the security company responds to emergencies. What protocols and contingency plans do they have in place? How are they trained to handle emergencies? Is the firm prepared to handle the scope of your company's capabilities?

3. Accountability

The Logical Conclusion

A quality security provider is a necessity for any major transportation company. Statistics and recent history simply prove that transportation is an attractive target for criminal behavior. It simply makes sense to be serious about planning countermeasures. A professional security firm can be the difference maker. Every decision maker at a transportation company must self-analyze the company's requirements regarding their specific professional security needs. Evaluate individual private security firms based on how well they can customize their security program to safeguard transportation services, whether that involves transporting goods or people. Partner with the firm that aligns with your company values and has the proven and tested management practices to provide security to your company and your customers. With the proper tactics, you can minimize the likelihood of crime at your transportation company.

Can you rely on the company? Do they have a proven track record of delivering above and beyond expectations? Work with a company committed to transparency in its processes.

4. Detail-oriented Attitude

This goes for reporting and documentation protocols as well as patrols. Officers need to be able to notice details – including suspicious unattended packages or internal theft suspects – and be able to accurately report their findings, in writing as well as verbally, in a comprehensive, clear, and honest manner.

5. Technology

Technology should be a tool, not a crutch, used to bolster security strategies already in place. Officers should be able to operate CCTV monitoring systems, metal detection units, access control panels, and anything else the job requires.

