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Bus Station Security: Crime at Intercity Bus Stations

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ABSTRACT

The issue of crime at California's intercity bus stations is examined through a review of records maintained by public and private carriers and by law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. None of these sources provides complete information on crime at intercity bus stations. Intercity carrier records of station crime are generally inaccurate and incomplete, in part because of confusion over definitions of crimes and discretionary reporting practices. National crime statistics, and the police agency records from which they are compiled, do not identify crimes on the basis of a specific location. Newspapers were used as a supplementary source of information but proved to be of limited value because of inconsistencies in their coverage of these crimes. Crimes reported during 1983 at California bus stations are reviewed, and the legal implications of crime for bus station operators and specific countermeasures to station crime are also discussed. To overcome the current deficiencies in transportation security, a uniform transportation crime-reporting (UTCR) system is proposed.

Crime in the transportation environment (statutory offenses committed within the vehicles, facilities, property, or other domain of a public or private transportation system) has a documented negative impact on public transportation (1). This study examines the issue of crime at intercity bus stations, those places defined as "service points where tickets for transportation services are sold and facilities for passenger comfort may be provided" (2) and where, according to experts in the field of transportation security, most transportation-related crimes occur (3).

This study is focused on the state of California, where there are approximately 270 bus stations (4). Nearly 70 percent of these stations, however, are

locations with fewer than 100 bus departures per week; many are places where the sale of tickets for transportation service is incidental to some principal activity or interest such as the sale of groceries, pharmaceuticals, or automobile parts. Such stations do not come within the scope of this review because criminal acts committed there may not necessarily reflect or typify transportation-related crime.

Information was sought for 30 of the remaining 85 stations, including the largest 25 statewide (based on number of departures per week). It is here that the greatest volumes of passengers are served and where one would expect to find the greatest crime problem.

Crime is an unacceptable element in public transportation. To combat the problem at intercity bus stations, public and private operators have at their disposal a variety of methods of deterrence. However, because no single countermeasure is equally effective against all crimes, the selection of appropriate countermeasures must be based on complete and accurate information describing the nature and extent of crime at a given station. Such information may be best obtained through the uniform transportation crime-reporting (UTCR) procedures discussed in this paper.

Many different methods are currently used to report and record transportation-related crimes. The use of disparate reporting methods, however, promotes confusion and makes comparative analyses difficult. Inadequate reporting by operators may hinder the development of effective security programs.

State and local governments, regulatory agencies, and individual carriers have a vested interest in reducing the occurrence of crimes, as well as an obligation to provide protection for those who use public transportation. The failure to provide adequate protection to the traveling public may lead to a decline in bus ridership, loss of revenues, and, as this study shows, legal proceedings as victims of crime seek compensation through the courts. In the conclusion of this paper, recommendations are made that will serve to correct deficiencies in transportation security and provide a sound basis for the development of station security programs.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

National Statistics

Transportation-related crime is not distinguished from other crime in national crime statistics (5). The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and local police agencies do not, as a general rule, track crimes by specific location.

Police Agencies

Among police agencies it is customary to track crimes according to the type of offense rather than the location. Most agencies can, with the aid of computers, generate lists of crimes within a given section (typically four square blocks) of a large city, but these lists are often of insufficient detail to permit a statistical review of crimes at a specific street address. In smaller cities, however, it is often possible to obtain location-specific information from local police.

Carriers

Attempts to gather crime data directly from bus operators met with failure as often as success. Although the nation's two major bus carriers maintain records of their crime experience, only one cooperated fully with requests for crime data. The other declined to provide any information.

Newspapers

Some, but not all, bus station crimes are covered in the newspapers. A 1983 "shooting" by a bus station security guard was reported in the Fresno Bee; however, a "murder" reported by the same carrier at its Los Angeles terminal received no mention in the Los

Angeles Times. Although this research method proved laborious and of limited value, it did provide a challenge to the claim by another major carrier that no "significant" problems occurred in any of its California stations during 1983. The Richmond Independent and Gazette, for example, reported that on Tuesday, October 5, 1983, a bus terminal clerk was shot in the chest as "stunned patrons stared in disbelief" (6), and that on Wednesday, December 29, 1983, the pregnant wife of the man who was shot during the October robbery was robbed at gunpoint at the same bus station (7).

Although these combined data-collection strategies provided an indication of the nature and extent of bus station crimes, no single source or combination of sources provided a complete picture of crime in California's intercity bus stations. Only those few operators with a dedicated police force (and therefore adequate reporting procedures) had any indication of the full extent of problems within their stations.

UNIFORM CRIME REPORTING

Nearly all crimes in the United States are defined by statutes that contain definitions of offenses and set legal limits on punishments that can be imposed on convicted defendants. These definitions and penalties may vary from state to state. The manner in which crimes are reported also may vary.

Background

In the 1920s, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) envisioned the need for uniform statistics on crime in the United States, and its committee on Uniform Crime Records developed and initiated a voluntary national data-collection effort in 1930 to overcome the difficulties of comparative analyses. Today, the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program is administered by the FBI and encompasses more than 15,000 law enforcement agencies nationwide that contribute crime statistics directly or through appointed state agencies. These data are collected on a monthly basis and are assembled, published, and distributed annually by the FBI to contributing agencies, state UCR programs, and others interested in the nation's crime problem (8).

Basis for Data Collection

The collection of crime data on a systematic scale is based on the need to compile certain basic data for local administrative and operational purposes. Local law enforcement officials need to know the number and kinds of criminal acts that occur, the number of offenses cleared by arrest, and the personal characteristics of those arrested (8). A uniform reporting system makes these studies possible, permits the development of cost-effective programs of selective enforcement, and provides a sound basis for the appropriate selection of other countermeasures. There is a need for similar studies within the intercity bus industry as a prerequisite to improving passenger safety, protecting against lost revenues, and avoiding unnecessary litigation.

Index Crimes: Part I Offenses

Because of their seriousness and frequency of occurrence, eight offenses have been chosen to make up a crime index and serve as indicators of the nation's crime experience. A single definition has been

adopted for each of the chosen offenses to ensure meaningful crime data. These eight offenses, presented and defined in Table 1, are collectively referred to as Part I crimes. All other offenses are designated as Part II crimes.

Reporting Transportation-Related Crimes

The recognition of transportation-related crime as a special problem has given rise to a growing interest in the uniform reporting of these crimes. UMTA, for example, has undertaken a study to investigate the feasibility of a national uniform crime-reporting system for transit operators (Mandex, Inc., Vienna, Va., unpublished data). In California, the Security Committee (composed of representatives from public transit agencies in the San Francisco Bay Area) of the Regional Transit Association (RTA) has recently taken steps to adopt a method of uniform reporting. This effort is noteworthy in that the consolidated report form presents an immediate and clear picture of the crime situation and identifies opportunities for the selective application of countermeasures.

Uniform reporting is facilitated by the use of an appropriate incident report form. To this end, Shirazi and Payne at the University of California, Los Angeles, have developed a codified reporting method that lends itself to computer analysis and has potential application in the public and private transportation sectors nationwide (Shirazi and Payne, UCLA, unpublished data).

In Michigan, a transportation crime-reporting system (TCRS) has been in place since the mid-1970s to monitor crimes on board buses and at bus stops. This sophisticated program encompasses the tricity area of southeast Michigan (more than 50 percent of the state population) and assists regional authorities in maintaining a unified ridership security effort. The success achieved on this regional scale points to the potential for the success of a UTCR system at the statewide level that would include both public-and private-sector operators.

PUBLIC INTERCITY BUS STATIONS

Of the nearly 270 bus stations in California, only a few are publicly owned. Among these are the Transbay Terminal in San Francisco (one of the largest in the United States) and the El Monte Station in Southern California (one of the most heavily used). The Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal, although primarily

rail oriented [National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak)], is a service point for one nationwide intercity bus carrier and so has been included in this study. New publicly owned transit facilities have been constructed in Santa Cruz, Santa Ana, and Oceanside.

Transbay Terminal

The Transbay Terminal was originally a commuter rail terminal built in 1939 as part of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge project. It served interurban trains operated over the bridge by Southern Pacific, Sacramento Northern, and the Key System. In 1959, following removal of tracks from the bridge, the facility was converted to a transit and commuter bus terminal (9). Today the Transbay Terminal is used by local and intercity operators including AC Transit, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans, Trailways Lines, Amtrak Connecting Bus, and the San Francisco Muni. Several charter operators also initiate service from the Transbay Terminal.

In 1980 the average daily bus traffic totaled 3,814 departures and arrivals. By 1995 this figure is projected to rise to 6,220 buses serving 77,500 passengers per day (9).

Security at this state-owned facility is the responsibility of the California State Police (CSP). The data presented in Table 2 for this terminal, provided by the CSP, represent only a fraction of the reports taken. Not included is the large volume of reports of suspicious persons, noncriminal disturbances, or juvenile offenses that were taken at this location. Aggravated assault and larceny-theft were the most frequently reported index crimes at this station in 1983.

Santa Cruz Metro Center

A new facility for transit bus operations has been completed in downtown Santa Cruz. It is located adjacent to a privately owned intercity bus terminal. No figures on crimes at the new Metro Center were available at the time of this writing, but a number of newspaper articles from previous years reported crimes at the adjacent bus station. Commercial security guards provide protective services at the new transit facility.

Santa Ana Transit Terminal

The local transit district has recently completed work on this new facility to serve one of California's largest transit systems. The Santa Ana Transit Terminal incorporates closed-circuit television (CCTV), bulletproof glass, and rest room alarm features as part of its security program. In addition, uniformed guards and transit personnel maintain a high level of visibility at the terminal. Local police officers routinely patrol the station and the facility is locked and guarded during non-business hours. No Part I offenses have been reported at this station since its opening in April 1984.

Oceanside Transit Center

A new intermodal facility for bus and rail has been completed in Oceanside and has been fully operational since January 1984. Several Part I offenses were reported at this new station in the first 6 months of operation, including aggravated assault,

TABLE 1 Part I Offenses (8)

Offense	Definition
Homicide	The willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another
Rape	The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will
Robbery	The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear
Aggravated assault	An unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury
Burglary	The unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft
Larceny-theft	The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another
Motor vehicle theft	The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle
Arson	Any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle, or aircraft, personal property of another, etc.

TABLE 2 Summary of Reported Station Offenses, 1983

Offense	Transbay Terminal	Union Passenger Terminal	El Monte Station	Data for Greyhound by Agent Reporting			Total	Percentage of Total
				GLI ^a	CPD	BPD		
Part I								
Homicide	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rape	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	0.4
Robbery	14	6	-	4	1	-	25	5.1
Aggravated assault	25	4	2	26	1	-	58	12.0
Burglary	3	123	16	5	-	-	147	30.5
Motor vehicle theft	3	1	32	11	-	-	47	9.7
Larceny-theft	62	92	11	28	3	-	196	40.7
Arson	-	3	-	3	-	-	6	1.2
Total	109	229	61	77	5		481	
Part II								
Simple assault	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Counterfeiting	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	0.3
Fraud	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Embezzlement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stolen property	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vandalism	14	13	4	10	-	-	41	5.8
Weapons	13	-	-	4	-	-	17	2.4
Prostitution	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sex offense	3	3	-	-	-	-	6	0.8
Drug offense	32	7	3	3	-	-	45	6.3
Gambling	3	2	-	-	-	-	5	0.7
Family/child	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Driving under influence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liquor laws	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drunkenness	243	165	-	14	30	2	454	64.0
Disorderly conduct	32	-	-	5	6	-	43	6.0
Vagrancy	-	-	-	-	.3	-	3	0.4
Other	49	19	-	5	14	6	93	13.1
Total	390	209	7	42	53	8	709	

Note: All shootings, stabbings, and assaults not specified as "simple assault" appear as "aggravated assault." Percentages of total Part I and Part II crimes may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

^aGLI = Greyhound Lines, Inc.; CPD = Calexico Police Department (incidents not reported by GLI); BPD = Blythe Police Department (incidents not reported by GLI).

robbery, and larceny-theft. A CCTV system had been installed at this facility but there were no uniformed police or security guards during that period.

Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal

Although primarily rail oriented, the Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal is also used by a major intercity bus carrier. Daily passenger volumes vary according to season. During the summer months as many as 50,000 people may pass through the station in a week's time. Security at this facility is the responsibility of the Amtrak Police.

The data presented in Table 2 for this facility were provided by the Amtrak Police. These figures indicate that 94 percent of the reported Part I crimes were burglaries and thefts. Most of these offenses, however, involved the removal of items from automobiles in the parking areas. Because these parking areas are used by many persons who do not use the terminal, these particular crime figures do not necessarily reflect problems experienced by passengers alone. Drunkenness accounted for 78 percent of all the Part II crimes at this station in 1983. Most of these cases involved transients, according to police officials. A CCTV system was installed at the onset of the Olympic Games in 1984.

San Bernardino Busway: El Monte Station

This facility serves approximately 17,000 people on an average day and is shared by the local transit district and a major intercity carrier. Security is the responsibility of the transit police, whose en-

forcement capabilities at this station are augmented by CCTV. In Table 2 the data indicate that during 1983 the greatest volume of reported crimes (47 percent) at this station was motor vehicle theft. The parking areas were not monitored by camera. Aggravated assault and larceny-theft were the least frequently reported Part I crimes. No cases of homicide, rape, robbery, or arson were reported by the transit police.

REPORTING BY MAJOR CARRIERS

Although it is relatively easy to obtain available crime data from public agencies as a matter of public record, the task proves more difficult when common carriers are concerned. These companies are under no obligation to disclose what is now considered to be proprietary information.

Imprecise Reporting

Comparative studies based on the data released by private-sector carriers must remain tentative. Some of the information obtained in this study proved erroneous or of insufficient detail to allow distinctions, for example, between aggravated assault and simple assault. The problem of obtaining accurate crime data appears to stem from the manner in which the information is initially collected by these carriers.

Security guards, bus drivers, terminal managers, or other assigned station personnel, none of whom usually have any training in criminal terminology or reporting techniques, prepare incident reports and

submit these reports through various channels to the main offices. Thus, what may be reported as a robbery at one location may be reported as a burglary at another when, in fact, a theft (UCR definition) has been committed at each. Similar discrepancies were noted among reports prepared by public carriers that had no personnel trained in UCR techniques.

Discretionary Reporting

The accuracy of data obtained from private intercity carriers is further diminished by discretionary reporting. Certain crimes such as vagrancy and drunkenness are evidently so common in bus stations that they are usually not reported, and some incidents are not reported even if they involve police participation.

An illustration of this discrepancy was found at Calexico, California, where no incidents were reported during 1983 by one major nationwide carrier. Local police department records indicate, however, that officers were summoned to the company's terminal 58 times during the year. These incidents included robbery, aggravated assault, and larceny-theft.

These discrepancies between carrier records and police reports may be due to differences of opinion as to what constitutes crime. The unmistakably serious nature of these incidents and the absence of incident reports, however, suggests discretionary reporting. A UCR system would help to overcome this problem.

Although major carriers require station managers to report all incidents as a matter of policy, this does not appear to be strictly enforced, and there is evidently no means of monitoring compliance. The main interest in filing reports appears to be the need to have records in the event of subsequent legal action (5).

Available Data

Records kept at the main offices of nationwide bus carriers are incomplete and inaccurate. Company officials do not know the full extent of problems within their stations, and the information that may be obtained from a carrier must therefore be used with caution. Table 2 presents data released by one major nationwide carrier, Greyhound Lines, Inc., for selected stations. Although no definitive conclusions can be drawn from these data due to their demonstrated inaccuracy, certain observations may be made. During 1983,

- Of all crimes reported by Greyhound, 65 percent were Part I offenses;
- Of all Part I crimes reported by Greyhound, 39 percent were violent in nature (homicide, rape, robbery, and assault);
- Of all reported crimes (Parts I and II), 25 percent were violent in nature;
- The most frequently reported Part I offense was larceny-theft;
- Assault (simple and aggravated) was the second most frequently reported Part I offense; and
- Drunkenness and vandalism were the most frequently reported Part II offenses.

These observations may not necessarily reflect the actual situation in privately owned intercity bus stations. The data are inadequate, and therefore the nature and extent of crimes in these stations remain unknown. Although the observed percentage of violent crime may indeed reflect the private-station situa-

tion, it may also reflect the carrier's desire to have records on hand in the event of ensuing court action. The number of reported thefts is consistent with this posture in that it may reflect the company's need for records in the event of insurance claims.

Figure 1(a) shows the relative percentages of all index crimes reported statewide during 1983 by the California Department of Justice. Figure 1(b) shows the same trend among reporting publicly owned bus stations during the same period. Figure 1(c) shows index crimes reported in 1983 at selected privately owned bus stations. The pattern shown statewide and at publicly owned bus stations is not repeated at these privately owned bus stations.

Although private stations show a higher percentage of violent crimes, it cannot be concluded that they are more dangerous than publicly owned stations or that passengers there are at higher risk of becoming victims of crime. The data for these stations are incomplete and inaccurate, and therefore the observed difference remains unexplained if it cannot be attributed to imprecise or discretionary reporting practices on the part of the carrier and its agents.

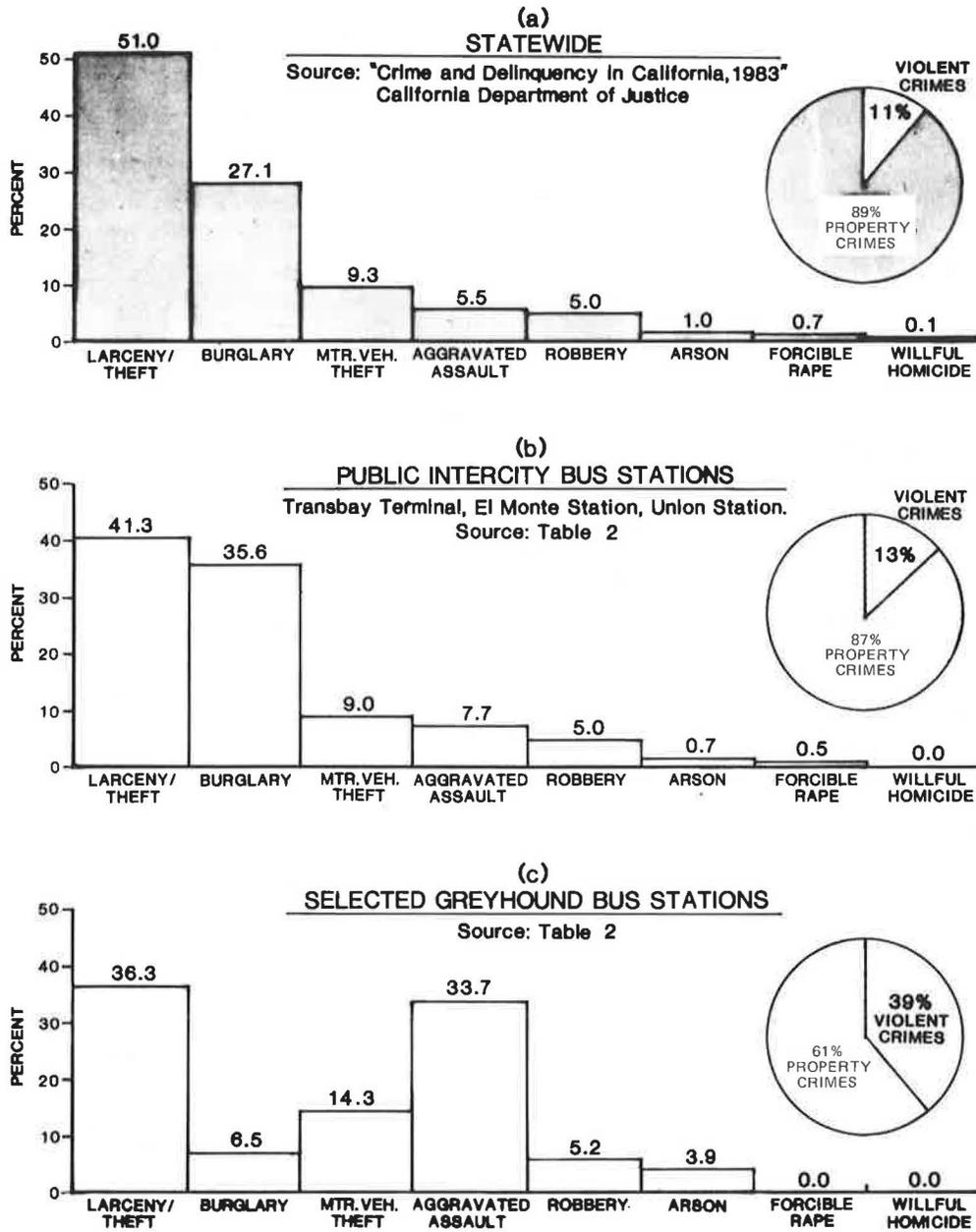
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Owners and managers of bus station facilities have been involved in litigation arising from incidents of crime occurring on station premises. In 1976 a North Carolina jury awarded a woman \$150,000 for damages suffered during an assault in a bus company's terminal. The jury determined that the carrier had been negligent in providing proper security for the 25-year-old woman. After the verdict, the jury foreman said that the jurors believed that the carrier "was responsible for the highest degree of care of its passengers." Another terminal incident occurred in Miami in 1974. Here the jury awarded \$350,000 to a woman who was severely beaten in the ladies' room. The plaintiff argued that the carrier did not provide adequate security (10).

The justification for suits of this nature may be found in state public utility codes or government codes. California's Government Code, Section 835, for example, provides that

a public entity is liable for injury caused by a dangerous condition of its property if the plaintiff establishes that the property was in a dangerous condition at the time of the injury, that the injury was proximately caused by the dangerous condition, that the dangerous condition created a reasonable foreseeable risk of the kind of injury which was incurred, and that either: (a) A negligent or wrongful act or omission of an employee of the public entity within the scope of his employment created the dangerous condition; or (b) The public entity has actual or constructive notice of the dangerous condition under Section 835.2 a sufficient time prior to the injury to have taken measures to protect against the dangerous condition.

Criminal activity may constitute a dangerous condition as established in *Slapin v. Los Angeles International Airport* [65 Cal. App. 3d 484 (1976)] and *Swaner v. City of Santa Monica* [150 Cal. App. 3d 489 (1984)]. The key to liability in this area of law, as the next case shows, is the condition of the property combined with a foreseeable risk that injury will result from that condition.



NOTES: Violent Crimes are Aggravated Assault, Robbery, Forcible Rape, and Willful Homicide.
Property Crimes are Larceny/Theft, Burglary, Motor Vehicle Theft, and Arson.

FIGURE 1 Comparison of reported index crimes, 1983.

In a unanimous decision released October 17, 1984, the California State Court of Appeal upheld a county court's ruling that a major carrier could not have foreseen the 1981 stabbing and sexual attack on a 13-year-old girl as she waited for a bus connection on a bench outside the depot of a small California town. The appellate court agreed that the carrier was obligated "to protect her from the criminal acts of third persons if those acts might reasonably have been foreseen" (11). In this case, however, the carrier could not be held accountable because there were no previous violent incidents or other circumstances that should have alerted the carrier to the potential danger. There was "nothing in the nature or operation of the Auburn depot [sug-

gesting] that such an attack was more likely there than on any other business premises" (11).

The failure by any public or private operator to maintain adequate records and to carefully monitor crimes experienced at its stations may lead to serious consequences. Full and accurate crime incidence reports will assist in the early recognition of potentially dangerous conditions that need remedy and will indicate precisely which measures are best suited to prevent crime at a given station.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

Methods of deterrence with potential application to bus stations can range from the basic elements of

bus station design (sight-line distance, lighting levels, and so forth) to sophisticated electronic devices and techniques. Richards and Hoel have summarized various such methods and the effectiveness of these measures against different types of crime (3). Countermeasures are best determined from an analysis of crime data.

The first consideration in the development of a security program for a bus station should be the location of the station. Many stations are found in the inner areas of cities where increasing age and deterioration of facilities have been factors in the development of high crime rates. Because station crime is often a manifestation of the street crime around it, the existing or planned location of a station will determine, in part, the type of crimes that may be expected and the appropriate countermeasures that might be taken.

Another important consideration is the general character or appearance of the station. If it is dark, of drab color, dirty, pervaded by odors, noisy, or marked with graffiti or other evidence of vandalism, users will perceive it as unsafe because these conditions are often associated with unsafe environments (1). The timely repair of vandalism and high standards of cleanliness have been advocated as a basic means of enhancing perceived security.

A higher level of station security is possible through analyses of crime data. The most effective countermeasures can then be selected. A few countermeasures have been so widely tested and proved effective that they have essentially become standard design options. The use of vandal-resistant materials, access control, alarm systems, and electronic locks and keys are a few examples. However, CCTV systems and the presence of uniformed police are perhaps the best known and most effective of these commonly employed strategies.

CCTV Systems

The use of multiple CCTV cameras in bus station settings permits the monitoring of many locations simultaneously. Security personnel may be dispatched or police notified to interrupt suspicious activities before crimes are actually committed.

Uniformed Police

The single most effective deterrent to crime may be the presence of uniformed police officers (1,5). Private intercity bus carriers often contract with commercial security firms for protective services. Security guards, however, have limited training and no police powers (5).

At some bus stations, off-duty police officers are employed as security guards. In other situations, local police departments may assign a contingent of officers to police the local transit systems. Another emerging strategy is the use of dedicated transit police whose sole jurisdiction is the transportation system.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is growing national concern over crime in the transportation environment. An unsafe system is an unacceptable one and therefore one that becomes increasingly subject to economic and legal liability.

Public and private transportation authorities have at their disposal a variety of methods for the deterrence of crime. The selection of appropriate

and cost-effective countermeasures, however, must be based on complete and accurate information describing the nature and extent of crimes at a given location. Such information is best obtained through a UTCR system. Although increasing numbers of transit agencies across the United States are recognizing these facts and adopting programs based on the FBI's UCR program, there remains considerable room for improvement in this area.

In an attempt to examine the nature and extent of crime in California's bus stations, this study discovered a paucity of data, which stems from a lack of uniform crime-reporting procedures. This lack of uniformity has given rise to inaccuracies in the data obtained from public and private carriers and has fostered a condition that permits discretionary reporting. Claims by some carriers that no problems had occurred at selected bus stations during 1983 could not be supported.

Data obtained from police records, carrier records, and newspapers are not in agreement with respect to the number and types of crimes occurring at intercity bus stations. These differences are more likely due to discretionary and imprecise reporting on the part of bus companies than to a failure to recognize crime when it occurs. Inadequate data preclude the efficient design of security programs by forcing operators to apply countermeasures randomly or in isolation.

The information obtained through this study suggests that the nature and extent of crimes may vary from station to station. So too should any crime prevention program. This is the driving principle behind the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concept, which seeks to derive benefits from the concerted effect of complementary strategies.

The available figures also indicate that among UCR index crimes, motor vehicle theft, burglary, larceny-theft, and aggravated assault were the most frequently reported offenses at California's largest intercity bus stations during 1983. Although uniformed police and CCTV are among the most effective countermeasures against these offenses, neither of these measures was used at most of the 30 stations that came within the scope of this study. Only the El Monte station employed both countermeasures, and it recorded only 2 assaults and 11 larceny-thefts during the 1983 study period--the least of any major California bus station.

To overcome the current lack of information and to alleviate the burden that crime places on owners and operators of bus station facilities and their patrons, certain steps are necessary. The following recommendations provide a starting point toward the improvement of existing conditions:

- * The implementation of a UTCR system is urgently needed for all transportation operators, public and private, statewide. Such a program would permit the establishment and monitoring of a baseline figure for crime in the transportation environment and would indicate which steps could be taken when necessary to enhance the personal security of those who use bus transportation. It would also promote the cost-effective selection of countermeasures and protect operators from potential declines in ridership, loss of revenues, and legal liability.

- * Existing police agencies should indicate by means of a location code on their incident report forms whether a crime occurs in the transportation environment. Such codes, entered into a computer system, would aid in monitoring the accuracy of reports obtained through the proposed UTCR program and assist police authorities in allocating resources.

* Security guard training should include instruction in criminal terminology and basic uniform crime-reporting techniques. This will aid in improving the quality of reports submitted by carriers that employ security guards.

Additional research should be conducted to detail the scope, cost, and administration of the suggested UTCR program; to bring about its implementation; and to monitor the effectiveness of preventive programs that will logically result from the data thus collected. In cooperation with the intercity bus industry, data supplied on station patronage levels can be joined with UTCR data to develop accurate crime exposure levels and perform other analyses that will place the problem of crime at intercity bus stations in the proper perspective.

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Discussion

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This paper presents a number of concerns, particularly the impact that its conclusions would have on regular-route intercity bus carriers.

The actual purpose of the paper was to determine the extent of crime in intercity bus terminals and report to the California legislature. This clearly suggests a preconceived need for possible legislation in this area. Yet, the paper's primary conclusion was that there is a need to develop a uniform crime-reporting system modeled after the national UCR program.

The suggested benefits from a UCR system would include reduced legal implications to users of such facilities, the ability to develop specific security countermeasures, and a lessening of concern for safety by the traveling public using bus terminals. Not all of these perceived benefits were objectively documented.

The legal implications resulting from possible inadequate security at a terminal are a matter of concern to all carriers. Increasingly, our society is prone to file suit for any event that adversely affects them during the course of their use of either public or private facilities.

With the advent of national uniform crime statistics, a ready source for adverse information is available. Without taking into consideration the hundreds of millions of passengers carried annually, such crime statistics of the national bus system can and have been used to mislead a jury. Such statistical information could be used to attempt to establish gross negligence on the part of the facility operator, thereby opening the door to punitive damages. The real danger to the carrier is that many states do not allow punitive damage awards to be covered by insurance. Therefore, they come directly

out of the operating revenue of the carrier and, depending on their magnitude, could force the carrier into bankruptcy.

This is not idle speculation. At Trailways Lines we have seen increasing efforts on the part of plaintiffs' attorneys to attempt to establish a base to pursue punitive damages because significantly higher monetary awards can be granted versus those for normal tort-limited damages.

The end result for a carrier or an operator of a bus terminal is to provide a reasonable level of security at terminals in an effort to limit exposure to lawsuits.

Security countermeasure programming from uniform data is extremely questionable. Other than the environmental location of the terminal, its overall layout, access, and lighting, no specific countermeasure development is to be gained by this type of statistical data gathering.

The reality is that most intercity bus terminals in larger cities were built many years ago at a time when their neighborhoods and our society were much different than they are today. With the passage of time many of these neighborhoods have deteriorated, creating a crime problem around the terminal. During this same period of time, the intercity bus industry's overall economic fortunes have declined; therefore, because of the lack of adequate capital in the 1980s, a massive relocation of these facilities is clearly impossible.

The other two security countermeasures suggested are CCTV and uniform patrol. Both of these countermeasures have limitations. It is recognized that the mere knowledge of CCTV can have an "omnipresent" effect on the public. In reality, the uniformed personnel or supervisory personnel present to monitor what is seen by CCTV is limited. In addition, if a videotape recorder is attached to the system, it still requires equal viewing time to see what has happened.

Uniformed patrol has proven to be the most effective overall deterrent to crime in bus terminals, whether these are security personnel without police power or off-duty police officers used as security guards. Security personnel with full police powers are recognized as having this authority by the public. However, other uniformed security guards do provide an overall positive deterrent effect. Intercity bus companies cannot always hire off-duty police officers for security because of local legal restrictions or city policy decisions. Thus the carrier is left with the uniformed security force as their patrol alternative. Trailways has set up specific guidelines, including written duties and responsibilities for security guards, and we satisfy ourselves as to their selection and training before engaging an outside security force.

Regardless of the approach taken, with the types of incidents that are occurring in any particular terminal, these are the only two productive countermeasures available to any carrier.

Finally, the paper does not take into consideration the distinction between company-operated terminals, city-operated transportation centers, or commission agents. Commission agents fall in two categories: those whose only business is to run a small community bus terminal providing all of the usual services and, in smaller communities, an established business that has agreed to work on a commission basis to represent and sell tickets for the intercity bus companies.

The wage and hours laws make it important that the intercity bus carrier maintain an arm's-length relationship with these commission agents. As a result, the carrier can exert little control over

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these independent businessmen as to the manner in which they will maintain security other than an overall general requirement that the agent provide a safe, clean, and secure facility. Granted, many of these commission agents are in small towns where crime is less of a problem than it is in large metropolitan areas.

The authors assert that there is a public perception or concern that intercity bus terminals are unsafe. In support of this argument, they cite two references that relate to urban mass transit, which were funded by UMTA. Because an intercity bus carrier may be in a transportation center also utilized by an urban mass transportation system, these studies cannot be construed to reflect the same situation that intercity bus terminals experience, in my view. Any attempt to relate crime problems from one environment to another without more substantial evidence is without merit and should not be used in support of a conclusion that uniform reporting of crime data is a current need within our industry.

Although the authors attempted to obtain more broad-based data from intercity bus carriers as to the incidence of crime in their facilities, the lack of such information should not be a basis for supporting the conclusion of a need for uniform crime reporting for bus terminals.

The nation's two largest intercity bus companies, Trailways and Greyhound, both have terminal incident-reporting requirements, which were never intended to be used as crime-reporting data-collection instruments. Instead these are reports that are to be prepared and filed to protect the company from tort claims arising from incidents in their facilities. This has historically met the needs of the intercity bus operator. The authors should not suggest that these reports are not useful when they have satisfied the business needs of these two companies. Because these incident reports did not fulfill the authors' research needs, this should not be perceived as a need to now create an entire new reporting requirement and add a significant paper burden to an industry whose resources are stretched to the extreme. Therefore, it is my opinion that there is no overriding need to create yet another administrative paperwork burden for the intercity bus company as suggested in this paper.

Authors' Closure

Our conclusion that there is a need to develop uniform crime statistics arose from the discovery of inadequate crime data, not from any preconceived scheme for new legislation, as suggested by Forman.

The relationship between the UTCR system and security programming could not be more lucid. Accurate data will indicate potential problems at bus stations. Countermeasures specific to those problems may thus be selected. Confusing data only impede careful planning and design.

The adoption of a UTCR system will not predispose the bus industry to litigation. Bus company records have always been subject to subpoena by the courts. The UTCR system will, among other things, only improve the quality of these reports. Poor record keeping may prove to be a greater and indefensible liability. The reporting methods that have "historically met the needs of the intercity bus operator" may have grown obsolete in modern society.

We agree that the report does not distinguish between company-owned terminals and commission agent

stations. We submit, however, that bus passengers do not make such distinctions either. The point is therefore irrelevant in the minds of the traveling public with concern for personal safety.

We cannot agree with Forman's assertion that the principles of crime perception do not apply equally to users of transit and intercity bus transportation. A common denominator between these two services has been the bus station experience addressed by our paper.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to restate that the details of the proposed UTCR system remain to be investigated. UTCR does not necessarily imply an additional paperwork burden but rather encourages an improvement in the quality of reports. In some cases, an adjustment of existing practices may be all that is necessary to enhance the quality of crime data and to augment security at intercity bus stations.

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