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Municipal
Transportation
Agency

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****Press Release****

Crime on Muni Reduced by 30 Percent

Citywide partnership showing positive results

San Francisco—The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), which oversees transportation in the city, including the Municipal Railway (Muni), today announced that overall crime on Muni has fallen by 30 percent and cell phone thefts have decreased by 77 percent since May 2013.

The reduction of crime onboard Muni follows the partnership announced by Mayor Edwin M. Lee, the SFMTA and the SFPD in November of last year to deploy more officers on the system to increase overall security. Uniformed patrols riding Muni provide a visual deterrence for both terrorism and criminal activity.

Mobile devices have been the target in the vast majority of robbery cases, which is why the city also launched the “Eyes Up, Phones Down” anticrime and public awareness campaign in August of last year.

“We are reducing crime and increasing security on Muni so riders feel safe moving around our city,” said Mayor Lee. “While enforcement is key, we need to take every opportunity to remind riders to be aware of their surroundings and help prevent crimes of opportunity - particularly in cases where thieves are targeting electronic devices. Eyes up, phones down. We must keep Muni safe, reliable and affordable, and continue to invest in our world class public transit system for families, youth, seniors, residents and visitors today and for the future of San Francisco.”

“These numbers speak for themselves,” said District Attorney George Gascón. “Muni is much safer today than it was just a year ago because transit riders were made aware of the threat posed by being distracted on their smartphones. These public education campaigns coupled with the significant increase in enforcement enabled us to successfully prevent many passengers from becoming victims.”

As part of the “Eyes Up, Phones Down” campaign, Transit Fare Inspectors (TFI) handed out anti-crime tip cards with cell phone screen cleaners to customers. The second wave of the campaign launched last month. Transit riders are reminded to be aware of their surroundings at Muni stations, stops and on vehicles.

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“This inter-agency partnership has not only made it safer to ride Muni but is essential to deterring criminal activity in San Francisco,” said SFMTA Director of Transportation Ed Reiskin. “While enforcement is a vital component to public safety, Muni passengers also play a large part in preventing opportunities for crime, so we continue to remind people to keep their eyes up and their phones down.”

“Having more uniformed SFPD on buses has proved to be a tremendous deterrent to crime as evidenced by the dramatic drop in robberies on Muni all over the city; and with regard to crime in general on historically problem routes,” said San Francisco Chief of Police Greg Suhr. “We can be even more successful if riders would be more aware of their surroundings when using electronic devices. Maybe read a book while on Muni and wait to use your electronic device(s). We have no issues and/or concerns with book theft on Muni.”

While thefts are down, thieves continue to target mobile devices. Crimes on Muni are often crimes of opportunity and customers can help deter theft by staying alert and aware of their surroundings. The additional support is funded through a Transportation Security Administration Homeland Security Grant and is expected to continue until the end of the year.



Safety tips for when you are in public:

- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Avoid engaging in cell phone conversations while on transit.
- Keep your cell phone and/or other devices in a pocket, purse or backpack.
- Do not walk and text.
- Never loan your cell phone to a stranger.
- If your cell phone is lost or stolen, immediately report it to your service provider and the police.

More tips to protect your phone:

- Password protect your phone.
- Write down your model number, serial number and unique device ID.
- On most phones, you can dial *#06# and the International Mobile Equipment Identifier or IMEI number will show up on your screen, or remove the battery for IMEI and serial number.
- Use a location tracking app or anti-theft app.

If your phone is stolen:

- Fill out a police report. Give the model number, serial number and Unique device ID to the police.

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- Change all your passwords for social networks, email, banks and important information stored in your phone.

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Established by voter proposition in 1999, the SFMTA, a department of the City and County of San Francisco, oversees the Municipal Railway (Muni), parking and traffic, bicycling, walking and taxis. With five modes of transit, Muni has approximately 700,000 passenger boardings each day. Over 1 million people get around this city each day and rely on the SFMTA to ensure safe and reliable travel by transit, walking, bicycling, taxi and driving.

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