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Inter-Con responsible for 190+ transit security officers

San Diego – The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) Board of Directors approved a new 5-year, \$66 million contract with Inter-Con Security to provide security services on Trolleys, buses, and on MTS properties. The contract is for three base years with an option to extend for an additional two years and will go into effect on January 1, 2022. At the same meeting, the MTS Board also extended its Fare Evasion Diversion Program for another year.

“This is an important day for the future of MTS passenger safety and security,” said Monica Montgomery Steppe, MTS Boardmember and chair of the agency’s Public Security Committee. “We look forward to Inter-Con joining our efforts to reshape the way MTS manages passenger security.”

MTS Chief Executive Officer Sharon Cooney added, “MTS engaged in a national search to find the right firm to continue our mission to improve our approach to security and enforcement. Inter-Con has 48 years in the business, working with both federal and state governments, and presented an impressive work plan backed by the use of technology to track training and certifications. We look forward to bringing them on board.”

Inter-Con employs a highly diverse workforce of over 30,000 employees across North and South America, Africa, and Europe, with sustained operational growth. Inter-Con provides tailored security services to Fortune 500 companies; public utilities; high net worth individuals; non-profit organizations; as well as federal, state, and local governments around the world.

At MTS, Inter-Con will provide support by employing 190 public safety officers to patrol the system. The MTS service area covers 570 square miles, 62 stations, 53 miles of double-tracked railway. Officers are responsible for conducting fare inspections, acting as system ambassadors, supporting bus and rail operations and other employees in need, helping with lost and found, and much more.

“We are thrilled to partner with MTS and its excellent management team in their ongoing efforts to improve the MTS security program.” Said Inter-Con CEO Henry Hernandez. “At Inter-Con, we bring decades of experience providing high-quality security programs that emphasize best-in-class training and customer service. We are committed to do our part to ensure the best possible experience for the passengers who rely on MTS on a daily basis.”

In addition to hiring a new security contractor, the MTS Board also extended the Fare Evasion Diversion Program to August 31, 2022. This pilot program reduces fines, offers a community

service option in lieu of payment, and a new appeal window for fare violators. The purpose is to provide more flexibility for passengers who receive citations for not having a valid fare while riding buses and Trolleys.

MTS is extending the pilot to get a better understanding about success factors. The COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult to fully realize the success of the Diversion Program thus far. An extension allows additional time to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program and identify if any changes are necessary.

In addition to the Fare Evasion Diversion Program pilot and hiring a new security contractor, MTS has also implemented other changes to its security policies and procedures, including:

- Hiring a new security director
- Establishing a Security and Passenger Safety Community Advisory Group
- Adopting many of the principles in the “8 Can’t Wait” campaign and as a guideline for its use-of-force policy
- Banning carotid restraints and choke holds, including the prohibition of using knee pressure on the neck, throat or head
- Adopting a “duty to intervene” if MTS security officers witness excessive force by another employee

Conducting a third-party peer review of its security policies and procedures, which includes a community-based steering committee to assist with recommendations

MTS operates 95 bus routes and three Trolley lines across 10 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego county. Frequencies and spans have been restored to near-pre-COVID-19 levels. Updated schedules can be accessed on the MTS website. MTS requires people to wear face coverings at all times, and practice physical distancing when possible.

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