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San Diego – A recent passenger satisfaction survey the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) carried out uncovered that riders want to see a larger security presence on the transit system. In response, MTS unveiled plans today to improve security on its Trolley and bus system. MTS officials announced the security initiatives the agency is taking such as increasing the number of officers, improving visibility and response times.

“We want to show MTS riders our appreciation by letting them know we are listening to their recommendations to improve their riding experience on our system,” said Stephen Whitburn, MTS Board Chair and San Diego City Councilmember. “Riders want to feel safe and seeing an increased security presence during their trip does just that.”

Based on the survey’s findings, last year the MTS Board approved a \$4.2 million increase to the security budget to add more Code Compliance Inspectors. This will result in a 60% increase in the number of security officers in the MTS system. Additionally, MTS will increase security officer teams and riders can expect to see officers more frequently during their trip, improving response time.

“Now more than ever, MTS security is more than fare enforcement. It’s about being helpful as well. It’s about having a presence and being visible. It’s about being that lifeline for people when they really need it,” said Steve Goble, MTS Board Vice Chair and El Cajon City Councilmember. “I’d like to thank all MTS security officers for embracing this approach. Our passengers appreciate the role officers play on our system.”

In order to increase security officers’ visible presence on both the Trolley lines and buses, MTS will:

- Increase security officer “train” teams on Trolley lines from 5-6 teams per shift to 8-10 teams per shift,
- Double the number of officers patrolling buses,
- Double the number of officers in plain-clothes,
- Boost the number of officers conducting homeless outreach to seven-days-a-week coverage,
- And operate security outposts at busy transit centers to increase visibility.

In addition to staffing plans, MTS consolidated its 24/7 security hotline to one number, which aims to improve response times. Riders will now be able to call or text one number to report incidents on the system. The security hotline number is 619-595-4960.

MTS officials also announced more initiatives coming up this year to make the system better. The service improvements include:

- 24-hour bus service between the border at downtown
- All-day, every day 15-minute service on all three Trolley lines.
- Increasing the span of service on many popular routes

MTS riders can also expect the launch of a new payment technology in April, allowing them to just tap a credit or debit card on a validator to pay a fare, bypassing the ticket machine altogether.

Lastly, MTS announced improvements to its stops and stations to keep them safer and cleaner. This includes improved shade and lighting and modernizing the trash collection process.

About MTS

The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) operates 97 bus routes and three Trolley lines in 10 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego. MTS is a leader in advancing initiatives to create a greener, cleaner and better-connected transit system in San Diego. Each weekday more than 250,000 passenger trips are taken throughout the MTS system taking people to work, school, health appointments and other essential trips. In FY 2023, MTS served more than 68 million riders. For service schedule updates, news, alerts and more information on how you can use public transportation, go to www.sdmts.com.

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