



Transit Driver Appreciation Day is March 17th, can we keep transit drivers safe?

As we prepare to show our favorite transit drivers our appreciation, a looming problem is extremely difficult to ignore. Attacks on transit drivers.

WEYMOUTH, MA, USA, March 13, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Transit Driver Appreciation Day is celebrating Friday March 17th.

As we prepare to show our favorite transit drivers our appreciation, there is a looming problem that is extremely difficult to ignore. Attacks on transit drivers are happening more frequently, ranging from verbal outburst to extremely violent assaults. It is hard to believe that drivers are being attacked so openly, even with video surveillance and increased awareness of the issue.

ELERTS Corp offers a See Say app that allows riders to instantly and discretely report safety and security concerns. Physical and verbal assaults on transit drivers have been reported with ELERTS app. Riders report what they see & hear and can send a photo/video, plus a GPS map identifying the incident location. This reporting app enables real-time 2-way communication between rider and console operator, without a word being said.

Because ELERTS offer this product, ongoing research occurs geared toward increasing the safety of transits and transit riders. We felt compelled to re-share this information, disturbed by the reality faced by transit drivers.

JOYANNE PURSAGA, Winnipeg Sun Tuesday, February 28, 2017 "Assaults are ongoing. They're almost a daily occurrence," said John Callahan, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1505 Winnipeg, Manitoba

Callahan said daily incidents include many verbal assaults, though physical attacks are also common. The ATU tracked 45 physical attacks on drivers in 2016 and 62 in 2015. Callahan said the incidents are a key factor in why 100 transit staff, about one in 14, are now on long-term disability leave.

"The safety of our members is only a part of it. What affects our members can affect the riding public," he said.

"One of the fears that we have is that a possible worst-case scenario is if the driver has a bus full of people and he is in service and gets struck or knocked unconscious behind the wheel."

Bus Drivers Under Attack- Amalgamated Transit Union In the past five years, we have seen a dramatic increase in the level and intensity of senseless attacks on defenseless operators. Drivers have been punched, slapped, stabbed, shot, and have had hot coffee and bodily fluids thrown upon them. And they are confronting all of this while trying to safely steer their vehicles through traffic, protecting the lives of passengers, pedestrians, and other drivers who are seriously distracted by today's hand-held gadgets.

Five transit employees are assaulted every day. Each year, more than 2,000 transit operators are assaulted, and 755 of these incidents occur on buses, putting passengers and other vehicles at risk. SEON Blog September 4, 2014 Lori Jetha Operator assaults have increased by 31% between 2008

and 2013. These attacks not only take a personal toll on the victims, but can have a significant financial impact on the transit system in terms of lost work hours, medical claims, employee absenteeism, and lawsuits. These can also result in a loss of public confidence in the safety of the transit system and lead to decreased ridership and reduced fare box collections.

By Janet Moore Star Tribune September 10, 2016 “You have to sum up people at every stop,” said Russ Dixon, a Metro Transit bus driver for the past 29 years, who was spit on by a passenger five years ago. “When you open the doors, you think, ‘Who will be the problem?’”

Airline pilots are locked in the cockpit during flight following the Sept. 11 terror attacks. Light-rail operators are enclosed in the front car of trains. Even taxicabs feature a partition to protect drivers from virulent passengers. Only bus drivers — fundamental cogs in the nation’s transit infrastructure — are left so widely vulnerable to attack.

A startling statistic by the Amalgamated Transit Union recently released saying the number of assaults on city bus drivers went up by 50 percent in 2015.

Preventing and Mitigating Transit Worker Assaults in the Bus and Rail Transit Industry In 2014, the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS) was tasked with developing recommendations for FTA on the elements that should comprise a Safety Management System (SMS) approach to preventing and mitigating transit worker assaults.

Best practice recommendations included:

- Installing protective barriers, video surveillance, automatic vehicle location (AVL) systems, and overt or covert alarms on bus and rail transit vehicles.
- Training safety_sensitive employees about how to de_escalate potentially violent situations, the important of reporting assaults, and the standard agency response to reports of assault;
- Educating the public about reporting assaults by conducting public awareness campaigns, providing resources and incentives for passengers to report assaults, and meeting with passengers to discuss strategies for preventing assaults;
- Enforcing transit agency policy by posting passenger codes of conduct, suspending service for assailants, posting police officers on transit vehicles and property in high_risk areas, providing legal support for transit workers who file complaints, and collaborating with other agencies and organizations to develop social safety plans and advocate for changes in state and local legislation to better address assaults against transit.
- Collecting data regarding the number, location, times, and types of assaults.

Preventing Transit Worker Assaults Rule - The FAST Act requires FTA to issue an NPRM to establish “rail and bus safety standards, practices, or protocols” for “protecting rail and bus operators from the risk of assault.”

ELERTS Corporation provides an easy to use incident reporting app for riders to report what they see without having to say a word. Police receive incident information and can establish 2-way communication between riders and console operators.

ELERTS is the leading provider to Mass Transits for See Something Say Something apps. With years of experience, the ELERTS system is proven to deliver results. Police gain real-time visibility to activities in a way that was not previously available. Crimes get stopped. People in distress get help.

For more information, please visit <http://elerts.com/solutions/transit/?Stop> Transit Driver Attacks, call 877-256-1971 or email support@elerts.com.

Heather Arrascue

ELERTS Corporation
5084044145
email us here

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