

Sound Transit Fare Enforcement Program

Program Effectiveness

Sound Transit's Fare Enforcement program began in August 2009, shortly after revenue service for the Central Link Light Rail opened. As a new system of transit in the region, some of the challenges faced by the agency were how to educate the ridership, establish ownership, achieve low evasion rates and develop a tool to modify behavior to help achieve those low evasion rates. Prior to 2009, Sound Transit conducted fare inspections, with no enforcement component, on a quarterly ad hoc basis to determine the level of evasion. The decision to operate a barrier-free system and the anticipated increase in ridership necessitated the development of a fare inspection and enforcement program.

Sound Transit's Fare Enforcement began with purpose of achieving several goals at once: Providing a customer service based enforcement team, inspecting 10% of the ridership in a systematic yet random manner, conducting inspections and enforcement in fair, consistent and equitable means and keeping evasion below 3%.

From inception, the Fare Enforcement Program was designed to meet these goals and grow in line with the growth of the agency. The purpose and intention of the Sound Transit Fare Enforcement program is to provide a highly visible customer service orientated security presence along the "Link Light Rail" system operated by Sound Transit.

The achievement of these goals begins with the team of Fare Enforcement Officers (FEOs), and while their title implies that fare enforcement is their primary purpose – although a crucial part of their mission – the foundation of the Fare Enforcement program is customer service. It is from this foundation that Fare Enforcement Officers act to achieve the goals of the agency whether conducting fare enforcement inspections, ensuring that passengers are using the system for the purpose of transportation, or simply providing a security presence providing a safe, comfortable and secure environment to riders while utilizing the system. Sound Transit Security views fare enforcement as a tool for behavior modification and the FEO's as more of a customer service agent with an underlying enforcement role.

Sound Transit has an average of 18 FEO's that are contracted through a private security provider. Although the FEO's focus is on customer service, they do fulfill an enforcement role and in some instances situations arise where police intervention or assistance is required. Sound Transit has its own police department contracted through the King County Sheriff's Office. STPD has Deputies that are readily available for assistance to the FEO's and Transit

Security. The presence of the FEO's for fare enforcement augments STPD's ability to reallocate resources to respond to other crimes committed in the system or troubled areas, thus improving even further our customer service and increased visibility to the public enhancing their sense of safety and security.

Prior to the opening of Sound Transit's Link light rail system in 2009, fare enforcement was not cost effective. The Agency's Regional Express Bus program contracted the operations and maintenance to three local bus agencies. This contract included the enforcement of fares according to each individual agency's policies. The Sounder Commuter rail system demonstrated a low evasion rate of one percent or less during quarterly fare inspections conducted by staff volunteers. The cost associated with the establishment of fare enforcement program just for Sounder Commuter rail outweighed the benefit considering the low evasion rate. A cost benefit could not be realized unless Sounder could be included as part of a fare enforcement program that encompasses other modes of service.

The 2009 opening of the initial segment of the Central Link light rail brought a shift in the fare enforcement paradigm. The light rail would replace many of the local bus routes that provided service along the alignment's route. Ridership assumptions of a 40% increase over the first 4 years, coupled with an assumed evasion rate up to seven percent pushed fare enforcement to the forefront of the overall security plan. The fare enforcement plan called for inspection of 10% of the ridership per day with a goal to keep fare evasion at 3% or less. Inspection alone would not deter the evader. Sound Transit determined that the fare enforcement program would use the legal authority granted by state law to assess a penalty stiff enough to modify the behavior the chronic fare evader.

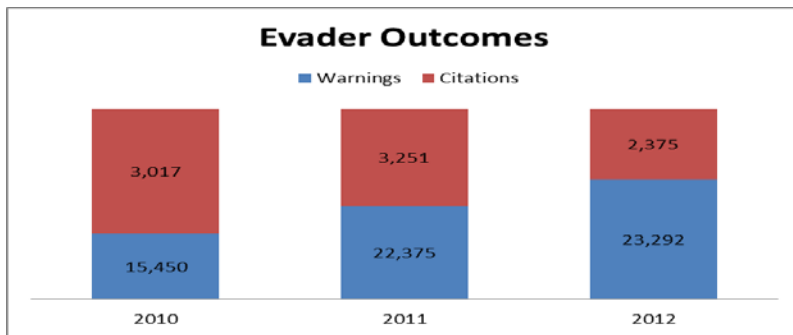
The Sound Transit Fare Enforcement program employs several tactics to engage and modify the behavior of fare evaders and repeat offenders. It is in the best interest of the Agency for a patron to pay the \$2.75 fare versus issuing an evader a \$124 citation. Sound Transit does not financially benefit from citations issued as a result of Fare Enforcement violations, all funds collected by the court remains with the court.

It is Sound Transit Security Policy to, in most cases; issue a warning on the first evader contact. In addition to the warning, a patron without valid fare is educated on the correct methods to obtain and use fare media.

The evader is then placed in a warning log for a period of 12 months. If the evader is contacted again without having valid media within that 12 month period, a civil infraction of \$124 is issued for that and each subsequent contact not having valid fare.

The civil infractions are adjudicated through the District Court system and any fines or fees collected remain with the Court. Sound Transit receives no revenue from issued citations. The use of the District Court allows the riders the due process to contest or explain mitigating circumstances behind the fare evasion, and allows for an impartial third party to make a ruling in that contest. Again Sound Transit does not gain any revenue from citations issued or processed regardless of the adjudicated status.

Subsequent contacts for intentional fare evasion after the citation stage have the possibility of a theft 3rd degree case being filed against the offender through the Sound Transit Police Department. Theft 3rd degree is a misdemeanor in the State of Washington. This method 'behavior modification' as an enforcement tool has shown demonstratively that it is effective. In 2010 16.3% of persons contacted for evasion were issued citations, in 2011 that number dropped to 12.8% and dropped further to 9.2% in 2012.



The number of theft third cases filed in 2011 was 154, in 2012 that number dropped to 57.

These evasion numbers were all generated while the number of contacts FEO's were conducting increased contemporaneously with ridership numbers. Inspections in 2010 were about 965K increasing to 1.1 million in 2012.

These numbers clearly show that the philosophy of educating our ridership in proper use and utilizing a method of behavior modification through penalty of a civil infraction is effective. In the same vein the while the FEO's are conducting an enforcement activity, the response from the public is generally positive and FEO's receive a minimal amount formal complaints. In 2012 the number of complaints received against Fare Enforcement amounted to less than 0.025% of persons contacted for fare evasion and .004% of total persons contacted.

Program Benefits

Utilizing the standard expected loss per transaction formula, $L * S = ELPT$ where L is the Frequency of Loss, S is the Severity Loss, we can estimate the loss per fare due to fare evasion. On Central Link, the 2012 fare evasion rate is 2.8% (L) and the maximum fare of \$2.75

(S) gives us an Expected Loss per Transaction (ELPT) of 6.24 cents per fare. Rounding the 2012 ridership to an even 9 million riders, a fare evasion rate of 2.8% costs the Agency an estimated \$561,000 in lost revenue.

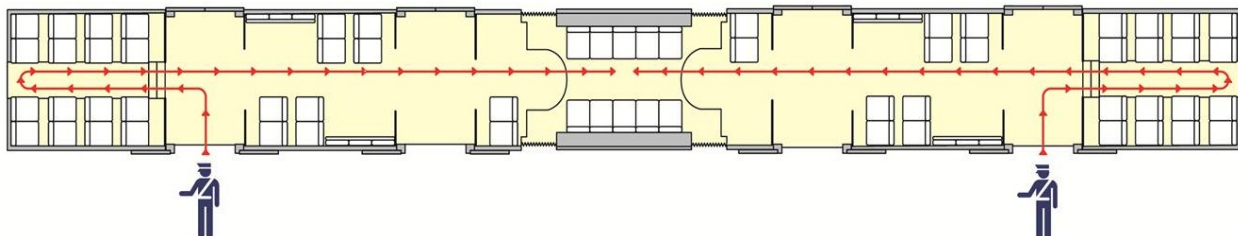
The historic planning fare evasion rates for Link prior to opening estimated fare evasion to occur at 7%. Realizing a fare evasion rate of 7%, the ELPT would have been 19.25 cents per fare lost. This would have caused the Agency to lose an estimated \$1.7 Million in revenue due to fare evasion. Based on this scenario, Fare Enforcement activities recovered between \$675,000 and \$1.17 Million in potential lost revenue. Utilizing the 7% extreme fare evasion rate, the Fare Enforcement unit recovered the entire unit's operating expense in 2012.

Project Innovation:

FEO's conduct their inspection duties in line with specific policy and procedures; the policies greatly reduce the perception and ability for any kind of biased fare inspections to occur. Our program employs the use of random checking not within the passengers checked but the trains and frequency of trains inspected.

For the purposes of Fare Enforcement the alignment is divided into four zones, FEO's will focus their efforts in one zone per shift, randomly selecting trains for PoP in that zone. The FEO's work in teams of two, once a train is selected for proof of payment (PoP) inspection the officers will enter the same car at opposite ends. The officers take position by the door facing one another; once the doors to the train close they clearly announce they will be coming through the car conducting fare inspections.

The officers will immediately turn contacting the first person behind the door and continue in a clockwise/counter clockwise fashion contacting each rider until they either encounter a fare evader or the Officers inspect each passenger meeting in the middle (see below graphic). At the next stop they will immediately leave the car moving to the next car or selecting a different train.



If a evader is contacted, the FEO's will obtain the riders information, determine if the fare evasion is intentional and if educating the rider on the use of the system is needed.

Specific steps are followed by the FEO's if a fare evader does not have identification, and a need for Transit Police to become involved to assist in identifying the person.

This systematic inspection process is in place to eliminate any chance of profiling or bias fare checking by eliminating the opportunity and perception by taking away the discretion on whom in a car is inspected. Additionally FEO's are required to report demographics of all persons contacted for fare evasion. This information is tracked to ensure that no one officer is giving unfair treatment to any single group and to validate the inspection process.

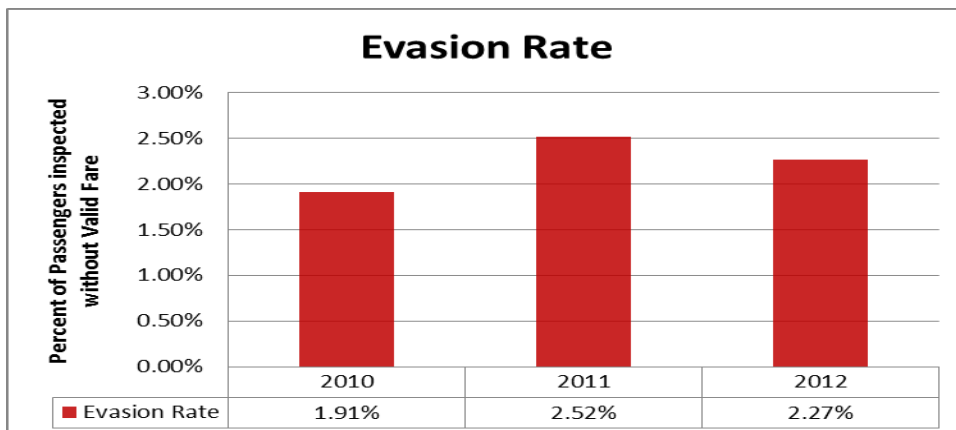
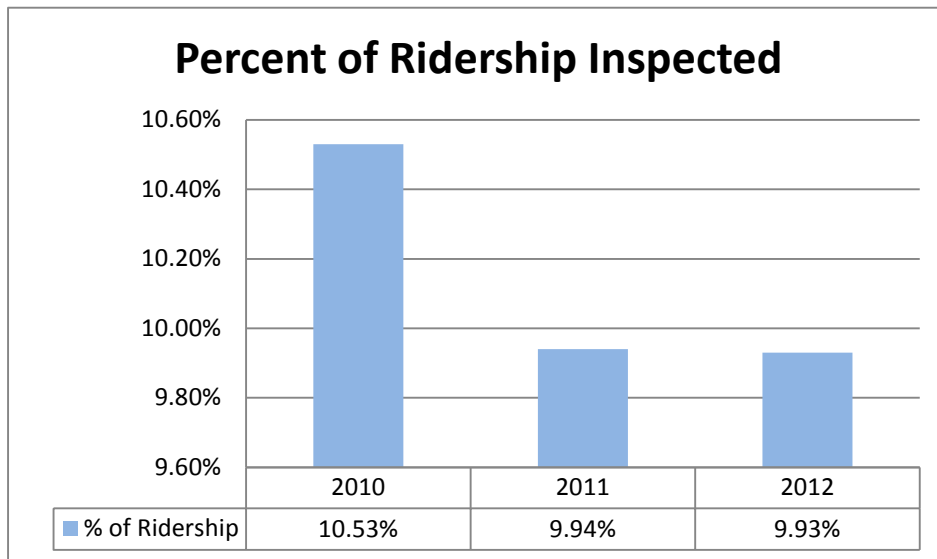
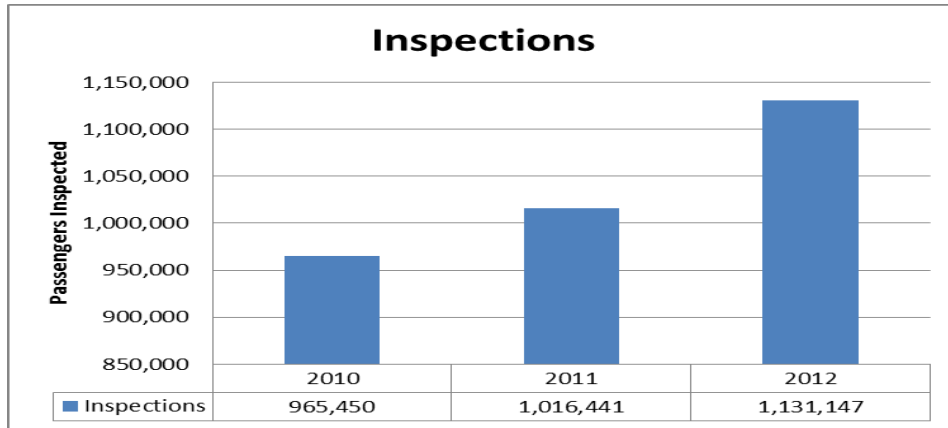
To even further advance our ability to provide a safe and secure environment for our customers as well as the need for self-defense measures among the not just Fare Enforcement but our entire Transit Security division. Officers were issued mechanical restraints, and defensive expandable batons. Prior to the issuance of these items all officers receive several blocks of training in their use as well as training in de-escalation and managing aggressive or violent persons. With the deployment of these tools was the development and implementation of very progressive, encompassing policies and procedures that governed not only their use by the officer but oversight by the agency whenever a "use of force" incident occurred. These comprehensive oversights mandate that a use of force review board review any incident that is falls under the purview of a use of force incident. These policies implemented by Sound Transit in 2011, is fundamentally the same model policy recommended by the Department of Justice to the Seattle Police Department in 2012, in light of the need for great accountability and transparency with this issue.

Program Transferability

The model of this program, its policies, and procedures can be easily adopted by any transit entity; currently our program is being adopted by our partner agency King County Metro for use in their newly developed Rapid Ride Transit Bus system. The Sound Transit Fare Enforcement Program is a design that provides a framework that is easily transferable to and can maintain its integrity while fitting the unique needs of an agency.

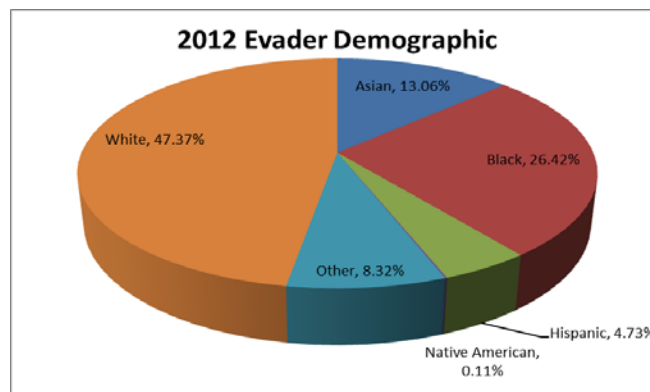
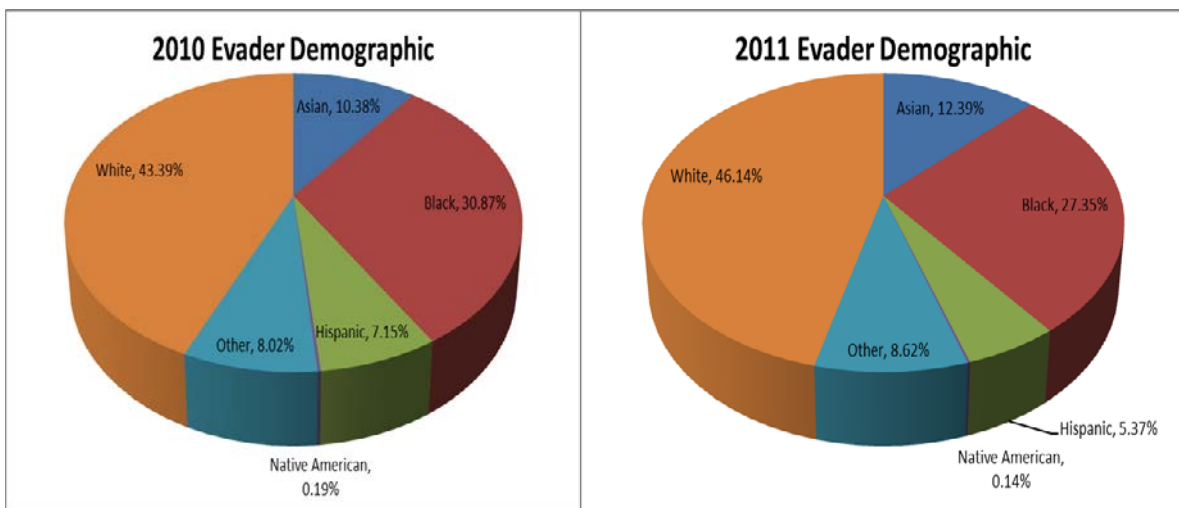
Addendum

Fare Inspections 2010-2012

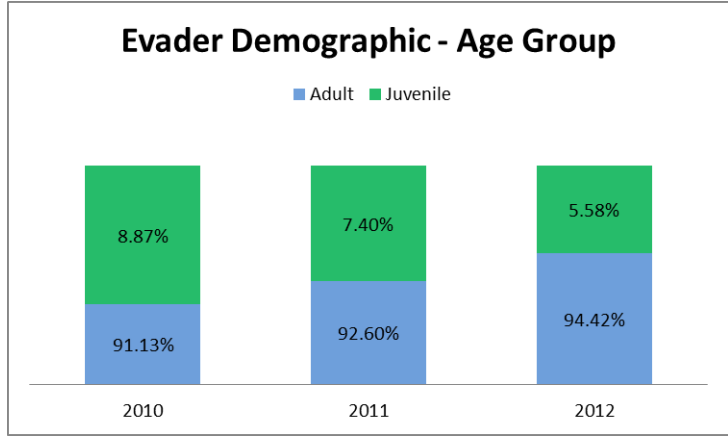
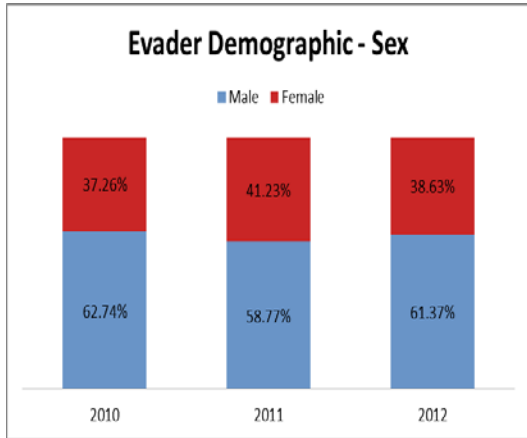


Evader Demographics

The below figures illustrate the racial makeup of all evaders, based on the Washington State Uniformed Citation codes for each demographic group, between 2010 through 2012. The year to year performance suggests that the fare enforcement program is non-biased and fair to all groups.



The figures below show the 2010 – 2012 Age and Sex trends of the contacted evaders. The year after year trends indicate that, again, the Fare Enforcement program is non-biased towards age or sex of the evader.



Sample "Monthly Profile Report" utilized by Fare Enforcement Supervisors to track individual Fare Enforcement Officer contact demographics.

OFFICER ID #	Warnings	Citations	Total	Juv	Adult	Total	A	B	H	I	O	W	Total	Male	Female	Total
Fare131	108		108	7	101	108	23	29	4	0	14	38	108	65	43	108
Fare131		22	22	0	22	22	2	9	1	0	6	4	22	19	3	22
Fare132	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare132		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare140	146		146	2	144	146	36	29	0	0	11	70	146	80	66	146
Fare140		10	10	1	9	10	0	9	0	0	1	0	10	8	2	10
Fare141	180		180	10	170	180	37	33	9	0	9	92	180	122	58	180
Fare141		12	12	0	12	12	0	9	1	0	1	1	12	8	4	12
Fare144	293		293	16	277	293	39	80	17	0	25	132	293	180	113	293
Fare144		31	31	0	31	31	1	21	2	0	2	5	31	23	8	31
Fare145	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare145		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare147	110		110	2	108	110	12	20	9	0	3	66	110	79	31	110
Fare147		13	13	0	13	13	0	10	1	0	0	2	13	9	4	13
Fare148	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare148		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare149	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare149		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare150	1		1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Fare150		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare151	268		268	19	249	268	46	82	6	0	40	94	268	160	108	268
Fare151		50	50	0	50	50	3	24	6	0	5	12	50	35	15	50
Fare152	102		102	3	99	102	17	27	6	0	5	47	102	64	38	102
Fare152		11	11	0	11	11	0	8	2	0	0	1	11	11	0	11
Fare154	135		135	6	129	135	23	38	5	0	12	57	135	82	53	135
Fare154		19	19	1	18	19	0	13	1	0	1	4	19	16	3	19
Fare155	101		101	6	95	101	9	35	3	0	8	46	101	68	33	101
Fare155		17	17	1	16	17	0	13	0	0	1	3	17	11	6	17
Fare156	129		129	3	126	129	27	25	6	0	13	58	129	80	49	129
Fare156		1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Fare157	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare157		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare158	27		27	0	27	27	2	8	0	0	5	12	27	27	0	27
Fare158		2	2	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	2
Fare159	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare159		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fare160	155		155	3	152	155	27	34	10	0	9	75	155	152	3	155
Fare160		22	22	1	21	22	1	14	0	0	2	5	22	13	9	22
TOTAL	1755	210	1965	81	1884	1965	306	572	89	0	173	825	1965	1314	651	1965