

## 2020 Bus and Rail Safety & Security Excellence Awards

APTA is pleased to announce the following winners of its 2020 Bus and Rail Safety and Security Awards. The winners will be acknowledged during APTA's TRANSform Conference & EXPO, March 14-17, 2021 in Anaheim, CA.

Congratulations to all!

### **BUS SAFETY:**

**Public Transportation systems providing more than 4 million and fewer than 20 million annual passenger trips**

**GOLD** – *Palm Tran, Palm Beach County, FL*

Palm Tran implemented a bold strategy to measure safety metrics, produce results-driven guidelines and communicate across multiple platforms to reach all levels of the organization and the riding public. Under its Palm Tran Statistics (PT-Stat) program, the agency created a safety and accident reduction team that works to combat preventable collisions. The strength of PT-Stat is derived from its commitment to implement Safety Management Systems (SMS). The agency's new Mandatory Wheelchair Securement Program is an example of the types of advances Palm Tran is seeing across the board, thanks to PT-Stat. For example, in fiscal year 2018 there were 35 total wheelchair falls. In fiscal year 2019, the number of falls dropped to 19, which represents a 46 percent reduction. Overall, Palm Tran is seeing a marked improvement in safety due to its new programs.

Certificate of Merit – *Pierce County Public Transit Benefit Area Corporation (Pierce Transit), Pierce County, WA*

Pierce Transit created several programs and initiatives to improve safety. After years of failed reactive coaching to improve collision rates, the Pierce Transit safety team determined it needed a system to consistently and accurately measure safe driving performance. The agency identified risk indicators early—before collisions occurred. With the procurement and implementation of the Lytx Driver Safety Program, Pierce Transit safety leaders now receive alerts to potentially unsafe driving events, and they can also quickly access video clips anytime. This collision avoidance program and other efforts have helped improve safety throughout the system.

**Public Transportation Systems providing more than 20 million annual passenger trips**  
**GOLD** – *Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Cap Metro), Austin, TX*

The Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Cap Metro) developed an internal Safety and Security Certification Program (SSCP) that has had many benefits to include: mitigation (or complete elimination) of the need to retrofit designs; correction of hazards or vulnerabilities after the system is placed in revenue service; certification of facilitates and the integration of operational functionalities in the design phase; reduction in changing work orders during construction; advanced identification and resolution of potential physical hazards and security vulnerabilities; and strict adherence to codes and standards in the specifications and design. The concept of the SSCP is perfectly aligned with one of the core principles of Safety Management System (SMS). It has increased public confidence in the system's program, and it provides a basis for conformance with state and FTA guidelines.

**BUS SECURITY:**

**Public Transportation systems providing more than 4 million and fewer than 20 million annual passenger trips**

**GOLD** – *Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA), Cincinnati, OH*

The Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) has taken a novel approach to improving security. Its security staff has been actively engaged in focusing on one key demographic on the system: the 'problem' passenger. SORTA security staff are working with the Hamilton County, OH, court system to use legal means to ban dangerous or threatening passengers. The decision to ban these passengers has resulted in improved employee security, enhanced customer experience and increased efficiency.

**Certificate of Merit** – *Metro Regional Transit Authority (RTA), Akron, OH*

METRO RTA formed its METRO Transit Police Department in April 2017 to focus on specific crimes that involve operators, or crimes within the system. METRO is one of only two transit police agencies in Ohio. Since its inception, the department has provided bus operator security refresher training to all bus operators, training on human trafficking given by the Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force, and an active shooter drill. METRO has lowered its assaults on operators over the last four years and no operator assaults occurred in 2019.

**RAIL SAFETY:**

**Commuter/Intercity Rail**

**GOLD** – *NY MTA Long Island Railroad, New York, NY*

MTA Long Island Railroad (LIRR) dramatically improved railroad safety by using roadway delineators at railroad crossings and enhanced GPS alerts. LIRR did this by becoming a member of the Connected Citizens Program (CCP), which gave the organization an opportunity to make permanent changes to Waze applications throughout the system. A custom-built application reads data from a web service, transforms the grade crossings information to a Waze-compliant format that is then displayed throughout the Waze live map. LIRR has seen an 86 percent

reduction in the number of delayed trains. In addition, USDOT's Volpe Center included LIRR's implementation of delineators, road striping and reflective markings at grade crossings as part of its published research for FRA.

**Certificate of Merit** – *NY MTA Metro-North Railroad, New York, NY*

The Grand Central Terminal (GCT) Fire Brigade is an evolving unit at MTA Metro-North Railroad (MNR), working out of the historic terminal. The brigade is an all-hazards prevention unit as well as an emergency response group. It provides a full range of mitigations for all fire, rescue and emergency medical incidents and often handles situations internally with minimal disruption to operations or unnecessary responses by outside agencies. By having trained personnel with key equipment on site, many incidents can be mitigated early, which significantly minimizes injuries, damage and operational recovery time. The GCT Brigade responded to more than 1,400 emergencies in 2019. The brigade has an average response time of under two minutes.

**Light Rail/Streetcar**

**GOLD** – *Niagara Frontier Transit Metro System, Inc. (NFTA), Buffalo, NY*

Niagara Frontier Transit Metro, a part of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), implemented a new contractor safety policy. As a result, there were very few reportable on-the-job injuries in 2019. New safety policies and training included right-of-way and blue flag/blue signal protection training, flagman procedures, compliance inspections, updates to lockout/tagout policies and personal protective equipment compliance. The new policy has led to increased awareness, more professional behavior and positive interactions that have resulted in a strong safety culture at the agency.

**RAIL SECURITY:**

**Light Rail/Streetcar**

**GOLD** – *Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT), Sacramento, CA*

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) has made great strides in reducing crime, particularly violent crime, by instituting a multi-faceted approach. The agency increased the level of SacRT staff participation in station ownership with the implementation of an Adopt-a-Station program. It also increased monitoring of the system using technology and added more security staff. SacRT Police Services ensure rapid and thorough follow-up investigations of crimes by specifically designating officers to work in the role of detectives. The efforts have resulted in a safer and more secure environment.

**Certificate of Merit** – *Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), Baltimore, MD*

The Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) policing technology is advancing quickly and now uses mobile and wireless technology, high-powered computing, visual and audio technology, advanced analytics and other technological advancements. Examples include: a homeland security surveillance project, intelligent CCTV, chemical detection and implementation of the student One Card. MTA also upgraded the statewide computer-aided

dispatch and report management system, implemented a statewide 700-megahertz digital radio system, and issues multi-band radios and iPhones to all security personnel.

### **Commuter/Intercity Rail**

#### **GOLD -The National Railroad Passenger Corporation, AMTRAK**

The Amtrak Police Department (APD) is responsible for protecting its employees, passengers and assets from criminal acts, including terrorism and threats in 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian provinces, serving more than 500 destinations. Its Canine Explosive Detection (EDD) and Canine Vapor Wake Detection (VWD) teams helped increase the APD's ability to provide a counter-terrorism resource to detect explosive devices and assist in passenger screening operations. APD employs 55 canine handlers and seven trainers who cover major stations across the U.S. They work and train in an operational setting to become familiar with the Amtrak environment. Partner agencies are encouraged to regularly participate in operational explosive detection scenarios at Amtrak stations and onboard Amtrak equipment. The impact on customers and employees has been positive and provides an increased sense of security.

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*The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) is a nonprofit international association of 1,500 public and private sector organizations which represent a \$74 billion industry that directly employs 435,000 people and supports millions of private sector jobs. APTA members are engaged in the areas of bus, paratransit, light rail, commuter rail, subways, waterborne services, and intercity and high-speed passenger rail. This includes: transit systems; planning, design, construction, and finance firms; product and service providers; academic institutions; transit associations and state departments of transportation. APTA is the only association in North America that represents all modes of public transportation. APTA members serve the public interest by providing safe, efficient and economical transit services and products.*