



**BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Edgardo Alvarez, Chief of Police**

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**[www.bart.gov/police](http://www.bart.gov/police)**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** BART Police Citizen Review Board

**DATE:** April 24, 2023

**FROM:** Kevin Franklin, Deputy Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** BART Police Department Deployment Update

**Executive Summary**

Since the mid-1990's, the BART Police Department has utilized a policing strategy much like that of a small city. The Police Department has been organized into policing zones and primarily utilized vehicle beats to patrol each zone. This strategy works for a rapid response to 9-1-1 calls for service but does not provide as much visibility of uniformed personnel inside the BART system as is provided by a train-patrol focused strategy. Vehicle patrols tend to be more reactive to calls for service as opposed to train patrols which are proactive in addressing quality of life issues and criminal activity.

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in direct response to the safety concerns raised by many of our riders and employees, the BART Police Department implemented a new patrol deployment to increase visibility on trains and in stations by focusing both sworn and unarmed civilian personnel on trains in the core areas of the BART system. The new patrol deployment strategy includes Police Officers, Community Service Officers, Fare Inspectors, Ambassadors, and Crisis Intervention Specialists assigned to train patrol.

This new deployment strategy allows the BART Police Department to place resources where most of the 9-1-1 calls for service originate and proactively address quality of life issues and criminal activity before the trains travel outside of the core areas of the system. In addition, the new deployment strategy provides a highly visible uniformed presence of sworn and unarmed civilian personnel in the areas of the system where the majority of passengers are traveling.

The Police Department is committed to evolving our policing strategies to best suit the needs of the District and will continue to find creative ways to provide safety within the BART system. Our focus is maintaining a highly visible presence of uniformed sworn and unarmed civilian personnel on the trains and in stations within the core areas of the BART system. Based on the initial data collected about the new deployment strategy, calls for service requiring a police response have decreased while positive customer feedback has increased.

**Structure of Deployment**

To increase train patrols, the BART Police Department adjusted the deployment for seven patrol beats from patrolling in vehicles to patrolling via trains. The patrol areas for the remaining vehicle patrol beats were extended, but the expectation is that by addressing calls for service in the core areas of the system fewer incidents will migrate towards the ends of the line which would require response from a vehicle beat. Train patrol officers are also available to respond to calls for service in their assigned areas and patrol sergeants supplement the availability of

personnel with vehicles for emergency patrol response. Patrol cars are also strategically placed at BART stations for use by train patrol officers for emergency response or in any other situations that require a vehicle (such as the transport of a victim, witness, or person who was arrested).

To free up resources for additional train patrols, the Police Department suspended the focused proof of payment inspections conducted on weekday mornings at Embarcadero Station thereby providing additional Fare Inspectors to ride trains and check proof of payment at stations during the day and evening hours.

The result of the new deployment strategy is that the Police Department is deploying eight to eighteen additional uniformed sworn and unarmed civilian personnel per shift dedicated to high visibility train patrol as compared to the prior vehicle patrol focused deployment.

**Positive Outcomes**

Compared with the same period in 2022, the BART Police Department has recorded a 38% decrease in calls for service and a 40% increase in arrests with this new deployment strategy. During this same period, BART ridership also increased by approximately 20% compared to the prior year.

The following tables show the decrease in calls for service and increase in arrests:

Period 3/20 through 4/16	2022	2023 (preliminary)
Calls for Service	12,746	7,804
Arrests	203	286

During this same period the Crisis Intervention Specialists supported the deployment by responding to 277 of the calls for service, avoiding a law enforcement response, and completed an additional 1,998 self-initiated contacts with individuals in need of services. This demonstrates that the Progressive Policing component of the deployment is diverting calls for service from law enforcement while providing a visible presence and a connection to services for persons in need of assistance within the BART system.

A review of preliminary use of force incident data and Internal Affairs complaint data show the following results for the same periods.

Period 3/20 through 4/16	2022	2023 (preliminary)
IA Complaints	5	9
Use of Force Incidents	21	21

It should be noted that the IA complaints recorded in the preliminary 2023 data include three incidents of complaints about inadequate police response, one complaint about an interaction with an employee during a phone call, and one administrative investigation for an interaction

between employees. These five incidents do not appear to be related to the changes implemented in the new deployment strategy. There was one complaint about police conduct when dealing with a person on a train and two complaints (from the same person) related to conduct associated with fare enforcement, but further research would be required to determine if the complaints were associated with changes implemented in the new patrol deployment strategy as opposed to general complaints. There does not appear to be a significant increase in use of force incidents or Internal Affairs complaints associated with the new patrol deployment strategy during this initial period.

### **Customer Feedback**

BART Customer Services received six compliments specifically about the new deployment strategy. Customer Services reported no similar compliments received during the same period of 2022. Customer Services also reported an increase in complaints about fare evasion and lack of police presence between the same period in 2022 and 2023 indicating increased demand for uniformed presence from sworn and unarmed civilian personnel in the system.

- *It was very reassuring to see officers getting on and walking through the trains. Thank you 😊 via Android app Version 1.24.0064*
- *Hi, just wanted to thank you for adding more officers to ride on trains. I saw this on the news last night. I have had some iffy experiences on BART and a friend had a razor held to her throat a few months ago, so it has seemed unsafe. Really appreciate the response!*
- *Thank you to the BART police officers who stepped in at Lake Merritt this afternoon at 5:20 pm to check on a mentally challenged passenger in the Dublin direction. While it is sad to report such cases, I feel that it is necessary to report unruly behavior. The anticipated increase in police forces and the expected gate upgrade are welcoming news. Taxpayers should support such measures. Thank you!*
- *I want to thank all the individuals for making their presence on the trains and the Bart Administration for listening to the Riders and seeing the decreased number of riders using public transportation. We did stop, especially at night. I quit taking Union Entertainment jobs in San Francisco because of the conditions on Bart. These actions by the public can make a difference. I now feel much safer and experience less anxiety with the knowledge of the presence of police, peace keepers, and fair enforcement. Thank you for listening. Sincerely, via Android app Version 1.24.0064*
- *I just want to relay the very positive interaction I saw on the Bart train yesterday. Two Bart policemen got on at the 12th Street Station and approached the "homeless" man sitting on the train. (I don't know for sure if he was homeless). They were calm, spoke in normal-tone voices, and asked the man reasonable questions about how he was doing. Obviously the man was in some trouble mentally and probably physically, because his pants were around his thighs. The police escorted the man off the train at 19th Street without any kind of scene. These are the most basic details of the incident but the policemen are to be commended, and I thank them, for their appropriate response to the situation.*
- *Noticed a cleaner car, some police presence, and people walking the cars checking*

*tickets today. Keep up the good work. I look forward to being comfortable bringing my toddler son along with me on the train sometime in the near future. My wife and i decided that we would not be able to do this some time ago given the conditions frequently encountered on the cars. She and my sister also will not ride anymore, which is a shame because we specifically chose to live near a bart station as my wife cannot drive. I commute most days. Happy to see improvement please keep it up!*

**Conclusion**

Overall, these results demonstrate that the new patrol deployment strategy is making a positive impact. BART is serving more passengers and the Police Department has received fewer 9-1-1 calls for service in spite of this increased ridership. This is a collective effort with sworn police officers and unarmed civilian personnel being responsive to the needs of our passengers and employees.



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Kevin Franklin