

**TESTIMONY OF  
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**BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION SECURITY  
AND  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COUNTERTERRORISM  
AND INTELLIGENCE**

**HEARING ON  
“SAFEGUARDING OUR NATION’S SURFACE  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS AGAINST  
EVOLVING TERRORIST THREATS”**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2015**

**2:00 P.M.**

**311 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING**

Chairmen Katko and King, Ranking Members Rice and Higgins, and members of the Subcommittee, good afternoon, and thank you very much for the invitation to testify today. Amtrak takes its responsibility to protect its riders very seriously, and on behalf of Mr. Boardman, our President and CEO, and the men and women of the Amtrak Police Department (APD) I welcome the opportunity to testify before you today.

Amtrak is America's Railroad. Our passengers travel between more than 500 communities in 46 states and our trains operate on over 21,000 miles of track. Amtrak operates more than 300 daily trains delivering over 30 million travelers a year safely to their destinations. The Amtrak Police Department was created to protect Amtrak's employees, passengers, patrons, stations, stops, rolling stock, and other critical infrastructure. We do that by working closely with our colleagues in the law enforcement and counter-terrorism communities to collect intelligence, pilot new technology, and surge our resources on Amtrak trains, along our right-of-ways, and in our stations and engage our passengers and patrons in being our partners in safety.

The Amtrak Police Department consists of more than 500 members based in 30 locations. While the Department was created in the 1970's, it really wasn't until after September 11 that counter-terrorism became a large focus of our security plans. Uniform Patrol Division officers are the most visible part of our department. They patrol stations, ride trains, perform education and enforcement on railroad safety, and are the first response to Amtrak incidents. Our Special Operations Unit consists of officers with tactical skills who perform station surges, conduct random passenger bag screening, and perform counter surveillance, right-of-way patrols, and dignitary protection. Our K-9 program which consists of both conventional and vapor wake detection dogs average 1,000 train rides a month. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) supports Amtrak's robust K-9 program.

Terrorist tactics continue to evolve, and we must keep pace. U.S. based extremists will continue to pose the most frequent threat to the U.S. Homeland. As the tragic attacks in Boston, Texas, and New York have shown over the last several years, the new terrorist threats are already here. Either alone or in small groups, with the ability to mask the extent of their radicalization, these individuals represent the most lethal of threats. From “lone wolf” attackers to ISIL radicals, we see a greater likelihood of attack than we have in years. The internet and cyberspace has become the new recruiting ground and the new battlespace. Aided by the internet and social media, ISIS has featured plans to kill U.S. soldiers or law enforcement and the recent attacks in France and against tourists in Tunisia demonstrate the threat is increasing.

Across the country, we coordinate with numerous other local, state, and Federal agencies, including the TSA, DHS, NCTC, CBP, DEA, FBI, U.S. MARSHALLS and the U.S. Capitol Police. Amtrak officers are assigned to the FBI National Joint Terrorism Task Force at the National Counter-Terrorism Center, as well as Joint Terrorism Task forces in Baltimore, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Washington, D.C.

One of our most visible efforts builds on a partnership with the TSA that led to the creation of the Regional Alliance Including Local, State, and Federal Efforts (RAILSAFE) Network. More than 200 agencies in over 40 states usually participate in Operation RAILS SAFE which increases visibility at stations and stops and along the right-of-way and by water and in the air. Amtrak Police, NYPD, and TSA started RAILS SAFE in 2010 and there have been 50 RAILS SAFEs in 42 states, the District of Columbia, and Vancouver, Canada involving over 265 agencies and over 1,600 law enforcement members since then.

Amtrak has used DHS funding to provide our RAILS SAFE partners and other first responders with training on railroad safety, the sharing of intelligence, and the unified

response to Amtrak incidents. This training has been provided to almost 300 participants since 2014 in 11 states.

Internationally, Amtrak Police has partnered with foreign rail law enforcement agencies throughout Europe with the RAILPOL organization. Rail policing issues, intelligence, and information sharing are discussed and solid relationships have been established by our participation. Additionally, Amtrak Police has a working relationship with Interpol.

Building on the extensive intelligence, military, and law enforcement backgrounds of its members, the Amtrak Intelligence Unit coordinates with the United States Department of Transportation Office of Intelligence, Security, and Emergency Response and has members aligned with the Washington Regional Threat Analysis Center and the Maryland State Fusion Center. Amtrak Police also welcome the Visible Intermodal Protection and Response (VIPR) Teams who deploy at many of our station facilities on an unpredictable and random basis. On a daily basis, TSA supports Amtrak's random passenger bag inspection program.

Amtrak is a DHS test bed for the piloting of new technology and we have taken advantage of the TSA Surface Transportation Security Inspection Program Baseline Assessment for Security Enhancement, which highlights Amtrak's security posture and adherence to accepted security practices.

To extend our reach, we have developed programs that enable other Amtrak employees as well as our passengers to report on things that strike them as unusual or suspicious. We have trained Amtrak's employees in techniques to spot suspicious behaviors. Using phones or texting, these tools have added tens of thousands of eyes to our efforts to watch over our passengers, trains, and facilities. The ability to leverage our skilled workforce, with its knowledge of the operating environment, is an important strength that contributes to the security and safety of our system. It is part of our larger strategy

of working collaboratively with partner organizations and passengers so that we can add their unique strengths to our own to ensure the safety of our system and the communities it serves.

Amtrak has taken advantage of DHS public awareness campaigns like “If You See Something, Say Something” and texting a tip to APD11 which was another initiative supported by DHS funding. I want to emphasize that since the creation of TSA there have been many security measures implemented but we need to continue our partnerships, encourage our employees, passengers, and patrons to be observant and report suspicious activity or behavior.

Thank you again, for this opportunity to discuss the Amtrak Police role in rail passenger and infrastructure protection. I look forward to answering any questions that you may have.