

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND
TRANSPORTATION**

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Chairman Lautenberg, Ranking Member Hutchinson and distinguished members of the Committee -- my name is Joseph Kelly and I am the Acting Chief of Police of NJ TRANSIT. NJ TRANSIT is the nation's largest statewide public transportation system, operating in three States providing nearly 900,000 weekday trips on 2000 buses, three light rail lines and 12 commuter rail lines. My department is authorized for 244 police officers, including 39 police positions full-time to counter-terrorism.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and the other distinguished members of this committee for providing me the opportunity to testify today on the criticality of protecting our nation's passenger rail system.

Let me first describe some of the counter-terrorism strategies we have put in place since September 11th, including our close partnerships with Federal authorities. I will then outline some of the challenges we face at NJ TRANSIT going forward.

We know that we cannot place a police officer on every corner of our system. However, force multipliers are desperately needed to protect our passengers. To that end, we have focused our efforts on technology advancement, coordination, force augmentation and education.

NJ TRANSIT has been very active installing security surveillance cameras and deploying radiological and explosives detection and protection systems. We have also added a variety of other equipment aimed at prevention, detection and recovery of all hazards. Thanks to grant funding from the Transit Security Grant Program, Urban Area Security Initiative Grants funding and State Homeland Security Grants, we have recently added:

- A Continuity of Operation Vehicles capable of emergency response and sustained operational redundancy.
- Satellite Communications (fixed and mobile).
- Interoperable communications equipment including ICRI and MACOM gateway switch. The "ICRI" is a small, portable 'switch' used to interconnect municipal public safety radios, state and federal radios and telephone.
- A variety of Hazardous Material response and investigative equipment.
- Rescue and extrication equipment.
- Radiological pagers and handheld isotope identifiers.
- Explosive Trace Detection Machines capable of detecting both nitrate and peroxide based explosives.

With respect to coordination, NJ TRANSIT has created a crime analysis and intelligence unit and we have implemented COMPSTAT aimed at information sharing and thorough investigation. NJ Transit Police officers are assigned to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and the NJ State Police Regional Operations Intelligence Center. Additionally the department exchanges information with the Regional Transit Security Working Group and the Northeast Corridor Coalition. Through these partnerships, the NJ TRANSIT Police Department exchanges real time intelligence across the region and the nation in a timely and efficient manner.

Our Department also relies heavy on force augmentation. We are assisted with park, walk and talk patrols of our stations and facilities by municipal, county and State law enforcement agencies. In addition, we run regular counter terror exercises with the New Jersey State Police, the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and our regional transportation partners (including the NYPD) and some of New Jersey's county rapid deployment teams.

In terms of education, we have offered counter-terrorism related training in three groups; transit employees, police officers, and the commuters and public.

Our transit employees have been trained in terrorism awareness dating back to 2002. Our front line employees have also received related courses and are all targeted to receive behavioral assessment training through a 2008 Regional Transit Security grant. Some employees also receive advanced training through our citizens police academy program.

Our police officers receive counter-terror training now as part of their basic police training and have also been trained in behavioral assessment. Police officers assigned to counter-terror full time also attend a variety of specialized courses such as the federally funded Incident response to a terrorist bombing and the strategic counter-terrorism training program for transit managers.

We train our commuters through some non-conventional means using uniformed police officers in the field. Commuters and citizens alike are given information containing our TIPS telephone number, the type of information to report and the pre-cursors of terror related activity. This information is distributed on counter-terror deployments such as community outreach details.

As I mentioned earlier in my testimony, NJ TRANSIT is in constant communication with our Federal partners. The two principal Federal repositories for counter-terrorism related information are the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and the Transit Security Operations Center, known as TSOC, operated by the TSA. The required reporting to both of these entities can be problematic and duplicative at times. For instance, a lead provided to the JTTF by NJ TRANSIT has the potential to be compromised by virtue of the reporting process of the Transit Security Operations Center, which shares this information via email when suspicious activity is reported. A preferable approach may be to rely on the Joint Terrorism Task Force to communicate with the Transit Security Operations Center after the JTTF makes a determination as to how it wants to proceed on a given piece of information.

Let me briefly touch on NJ TRANSIT's budgetary challenges. As you know, the national economic downturn has had a dramatic effect on State and local revenue. A survey recently completed by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) found that 60% of APTA systems have already cut service or raised fares and that 84% of public transportation systems will do so by the end of the year.

NJ TRANSIT recently approved a 22% fare increase to close a projected \$300 million FY11 budget gap. In addition, we have instituted a hiring freeze and are eliminating more than 200 positions. With these local funding challenges, federal operating support for security efforts has become even more critical.

Since FY07, NJ TRANSIT has received much needed operating support for security efforts. The police officers funded by these grants will be completely dedicated to counter-terror and will be a critical component to our prevention efforts. I urge the committee to continue this support.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.