**MTA Public Safety Policy Reform Plan to Reduce Crime in Subway***Final Research Plan | Siyong Liu | sl9404*

**INTRODUCTION**

The New York City Subway is a rapid transit system owned by the City of New York and leased to the New York City Transit Authority, an affiliate agency of the state-run Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). Opened on October 27, 1904, the New York City Subway is one of the world's oldest public transit systems, one of the most used, and the one with the most stations.

**SITUATION ASSESSMENT**

**Previous security implementation**MTA just finished installing surveillance in 472 stations. Some startup companies are developing quick reaction platforms such as RapidSOS.com and Citizen. However, this surveillance is only on the platforms. These security systems capture trains only when they arrive on the platform and once the train departs the station the surveillance is negligible.

**Current Situation**  
Recently, the number of crimes in various regions has increased, and the subway is no exception. Asian Hate is a problem that the MTA is currently solving. Since January, there have been attacks against Asians in the subway. The measures taken by the MTA are to display advertisements on the screen and to launch anti-discrimination forms on the official website. The advertising words on the screen have a promotional effect, and the form allows the MTA to understand the incident. At the same time, as cities gradually recover from the new crown epidemic, the number of crimes has also increased significantly. The number of crimes in the subway has decreased due to the decrease in commuting, but the probability has increased. Therefore, if the situation is not controlled, the number of crimes in the subway will increase significantly. The MTA is already aware of this phenomenon and most thing increasing the enforcement will help bring peace. However, increasing enforcement cost a lot of money and has limited effect. There is a slight if the enforcement drops to the original rate, the crime can still increase. Thus, the use of technology can have a greater impact in the long run.

**Policy Design**

The plan is to hire citizens for patrols and surveillance, they will be the eyes and ears of MTA. The concept is similar to the auxiliary police force in NYPD, a community helping the community. This will reduce the crime rate in the subway while saving money. The whole plan includes two important steps, one is how to plan the employment and deployment of personnel which will include training, and the other is the establishment of a supporting security system. Combining both the resources together will help us provide short-term and long-term solutions. Deployment of personnel can rather be quicky thus have a controlling effect on crime rate while the technology is adopted and deployed. Another great advantage of this personnel is that people like to interact with people and are more comfortable. This will have a psychological effect on the commuters and will increase confidence in MTA overall. The reason why commuters or students are chosen is that compared to hiring employees, commuters have a rigid need to use the subway, which will enable the MTA to hire these employees in a low-cost manner while allowing the students who are interested in pursuing a career in law enforcement to get first-hand experience. To maximize the benefits of both parties, it is a win-win strategy.

**Platform Design**

A database upgrade and a new APP are significant while implementing this policy to maximize this project's effect. About the database, the category of data column currently cannot meet the expecting increase in data volume and data diversification from this program. MTA needs to redesign the data column to fit it. In addition, the app will need to have two functions. First, it needs the have capability to record an instance in the subway car via bodycam of the personnel. Secondly, it needs to be able to have a support function where the commuters can report an incident. This function will also help send to that specific location.

**Database**  
Currently, there is no distinction between inside subway stations or subway cars in the crime data of MTA. So, it is impossible to understand the real-time situation in the car, which hinders the policymakers to make the correct decisions about the current situation. In the future, this data collection methodology must improve to make effective decisions. Data collection and data diversification is a critical step to making urban policies, this project will provide an opportunity for MTA to collect new data from this video and application. Like 311 this program will enhance MTA capabilities to make a strategic policy-making decisions and improve customer service and safety based on real-time data. The complaints provided by passengers will help MTA understand the situation and make analytics in the subway car.

**APP**

To maximize the effectiveness of the policy, the app should not only be used to report the crime is in which line and car but can also have a function that can make the data available to commuters so they can see the progress and status of the crime rate on each platform and MTA’s support.

**Evaluation**

**Economic**

The predicted impact on the budget is limited in the initial phase when deploying ambassadors, while the technology implementation will have a huge upfront cost which will offset over the years. So, to evaluate the correct cost of the whole project we would have to review union labor agreements and how much would personnel cost while looking at the cost for the technology and its implementation.

**Social**

The effectiveness of policy depends on reducing the crime rate, so we should also evaluate the side effects, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a type of side effect. It shows the crime rate could be reduced by just seeing the ambassador.

**Legal**

**According to our plan, every ambassador will have a camera that will be recording other commuters. The policy issue includes whether to allow an informal employee to record and how people would feel for random recording.**

**DIFFICULTY**

* **It is hard for Ambassador to walk between the subway cars.**
* Hard to predict when ambassadors will come.

**Looking Ahead**

First, the beauty of this policy is that it helps MTA get in touch with the passenger, which helps them understand what happens in the car and do reaction as much as possible.

Secondly, according to the research, increasing police enforcement is still the best way to reduce the crime rate. No matter how many camera installations, they could not use them to prevent the crime, but an **ambassador can be there to stop the crime or prevent the situation from spreading**

**Appendix**

* Organizational Evaluation Summary and Chart

**Bibliography**

* Interview with Hansen, Steven, and Henry, Francia
* Interview with commuter and polices