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

## **Client**

Organization: Metropolitan Transportation Authority

## **Background**

The New York City Subway is a rapid transit organization system owned by the City of New York (NYC) and leased to the New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA). NYCTA is a subdivision of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), which is the world’s largest subway system with 472 stations in operation. Approximately 2 million people per day take the subway to commute from one point to another. [[1]](#footnote-1)As life is getting back to normal post-pandemic, the stats show the numbers of riders are increasing on daily basis.

**Environmental**

New York Subway system used to be one of the safest transit systems in the world, however over the past few years during the pandemic NYC crime rate increased, subsequently NYC city subway crimes have increased also[[2]](#footnote-2). People fear taking the train during off-peak hours.

**Political**

In one interview with The New York Times the newly elected Mayor of NYC[[3]](#footnote-3). Eric Adams suggested the solution is clear, “The City needs to increase the level of police enforcement against smaller crimes in the subways.”. Eric Adam is a former transit Police office.

**Technological**

Face to the increasing number of crimes, MTA and NYPD has install hundreds of surveillance camera in the subway station.[[4]](#footnote-4) However, there are still no solution in the subway car. Different with station, the height of the subway car limits the viewing angle of the camera, and more likely to be blocked by dense crowds.

## **SOLUTION**

**Policy**

My plan is to create a Safety Ambassador program to reduce small crimes in the subway car. Safety Ambassador program will include citizens who will work with police enforcement to watch unusual behavior on platforms, stations, and trains. These ambassadors will not be law enforcement officers, but they will be given some basic training, uniform, and video camera.

**Technology & Platform**

To collect the video information from ambassadors, we need one new algorithm to automatically sort the video records, and one platform to publish the program schedule and record the ambassador’s information. The potential volunteer should be able to see whether MTA are hiring in a specific time slot on the platform.

## **BENEFITS & IMPACTS**

* Reduce the small crimes includes abuse, theft, Intimidate
* Reduce the negative behavior includes eating, begging, selling, making noisy and littering
* Spend less money to acquire the status in subway car
* Deter the people who want to commit crimes on the train
* Improve public safe feeling when passengers see the people wire uniform are inspecting
* Improve public safe feeling by using environment design (CPTED), rather than surveillance

**Resources**

* MTA website
* MTA NYC current public safety policy
* NYC Transit/Bus Crime Reports[[5]](#footnote-5)
* News articles related to subway crime
* Initial interview with NYU Tandon Students who always taking subway

## **Research Plan**

* Conduct detail research and review of the MTA’s current public safety policy
* Conduct detail interviews with riders, MTA station employees and employees on trains or platform
* Research more news articles
* Research policies of different transit system in the world where crime was reduced
* Review complaint data
* Review case studies by third party consulting firms
* Review Financial cost and this policy’s impact on budget
* Review MTA’s organizational structure in detail to understand people position and authorities that can help us implement this policy or act

## **Similar plan**

On May 15, 2019, Beijing Mass Transit Railway Operation Corporation issued the Beijing Rail Transit Passenger Code. At the same time, they do train for a special team to inspect the passenger behavior on the train. The member in the team are not police and officer, so they have no arrest or punish the small crimes and wrongdoings. However, they can stop those behavior and report to the police. According to the news[[6]](#footnote-6) reported by ZHONGXIN, which is a national press business, the result is good.

## **CHALLENGE**

* Predict on ambassadors’ number in different time slot is hard.
* Platform will base on the time and train lines rather than traditional coordinate
* Platform should be able to identify when and where should MTA hire an ambassador
* Interview MTA employees who can have a direct impact on the policy would not be easy
* MTA is old bureaucratic organization, implementing a new policy or any change would not be easy
* Evaluating direct impact of people feelings and safety concern is hard. It can also be impacted by people mood or other factors

1. "Day-by-day ridership numbers | MTA." https://new.mta.info/coronavirus/ridership. Accessed 3 Nov. 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. "NYC subway crime rate jumps amid 50 percent increase in thefts." 17 Oct. 2021, https://nypost.com/2021/10/17/nyc-subway-crime-has-50-increase-due-to-thefts/. Accessed 3 Nov. 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. "To Get New York Going, We Have to Address Subway Safety." 19 Jul. 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/19/opinion/nyc-subway-crime.html. Accessed 3 Nov. 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. "MTA Announces Security Cameras Installed at All 472 Subway ...." 13 Sep. 2021, <https://new.mta.info/press-release/mta-announces-security-cameras-installed-all-472-subway-stations>. Accessed 4 Nov. 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. "Transit/Bus Crime Reports - NYC.gov." https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/stats/reports-analysis/transit-bus.page. Accessed 4 Nov. 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. "北京地铁成立专项巡查组严巡 “进食” , “霸座”等行为 - 中新网." 23 May. 2019, http://www.chinanews.com/m/sh/2019/05-23/8844986.shtml. Accessed 4 Nov. 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)