**MTA Public Safety Policy Reform Plan to Reduce Crime in Subway** *Organizational Review Part II | Siyong Liu | sl9404*

**OVERVIEW**

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is North America’s largest transportation network, serving 15.3 million people across a 5,000-square-mile travel area surrounding New York City through Long Island and southeastern New York State.

The MTA’s operating agencies are New York City Transit (NYCT), MTA Bus, Long Island Railroad (LIRR), Metro-North Railroad (MNR), and Bridges and Tunnels. Overall, the agency has 68,890 employees. NYCT, which is the focus of our project employees, 49,375 employees. In the previous organizational review, we discovered the organizational chart and key personnel leading MTA and is its subsidiary.

**CULTURE ASSESSMENT**

I reached out to NYC Transit Leadership and employees on the station who were on duty, and I got three replies about their feelings and opinions. Except for an auxiliary police officer, no one wanted to voice their opinions. I speculate that they are either too scared of the seniors, out of line, or very loyal to their employer.

Based on my organization research, I identify MTA’s and Transit system culture as old school, bureaucratic, and a culture of fear. The executive management is appointed or influenced by the government while the senior management follows their footstep and rarely go against their superiors. The labor force is union labor, which is also old; they have negotiated contracts to protect their jobs, responsibilities, and benefits. Some teams and departments within NYC Transit Authority are effective and determined to make a meaningful impact to help the public. However, it’s hard for them to make a change as they are powerless to act independently.

**RACE, BIAS and Equity Assessment**

In March 2021, a vicious beating on the New York City subway caused a 68-year-old man to bleed. Witnesses who came to help him described the attack as anti-Asian motivated. At the time of the attack, NYC struggled to cope with the increase in anti-Asian violence.

MTA updated its anti-hate public information campaign in response to the recent disturbing increase in attacks against Asians in New York City. In addition, MTA currently has a form that anyone who believes they have been discriminated against can file a Title VI complaint form. But all of them are so weak. The offender will not stop attacking because of the warm words on the billboard, and the victim will not be left unchanged because of a form.

My plan increases the ‘patrols’ without increasing a lot of expenses and uses real agencies to reduce the crime rate, which will help MTA fight these racial crimes and provide a safe method of transportation to all communities.

**DATA ISSUE**

**Current**

MTA does collect data for crime; However, this data is not readily provided for civic purposes because of outdated design. All the data currently available do not accurately represent location and crime detail. For example, it is impossible to find out the crime location was in the station or subway car. Our proposal will reduce the barrier allowing MTA to collect a more detailed, robust, and accurate dataset.

**Use**

MTA should ban misuse of data. Take Predictive policing as an example. It uses computer systems to analyze large data sets, including historical crime data, to help decide where to deploy safety personnel or identify hot spots. However, if the dataset or algorithm has a bias, we should keep away from them. Like the ImageNet, which is regarded as a milestone of deep learning. It is recently proved to have serious racist tendencies.

**EARLY CHAMPION**

Currently, MTA has installed cameras at 472 subway stations. Security cameras can be installed in the train to broadcast real-time data back to the control center, which can be costly due to the massive infrastructure needed. However, we are proposing body cameras which would be worn by safety personnel while on duty. At the end of the shift, these cameras would be returned to the control center to download and archive. This would eliminate the massive infrastructure and sometimes enhance psychological effects to increase trust and make them more secure. As a result, this would effectively decrease crime.

**FINAL INSIGHTS**

NYPD, before making bodycams mandatory, the department piloted 1000 cameras to ensure that its program is per the interests and concerns of the community members. It will assist the department in soliciting public input regarding the proposed policy. Some of the key takeaway from the program was the following:

* Respondents overwhelmingly favored body-worn cameras and expressed the hope that the use of the cameras would improve police-community relations, enhance officer and public safety, and improve the conduct of both officers and members of the public during police-citizen encounters.
* Respondents urged the NYPD to establish a transparent and streamlined process by which the subject of a body-worn camera recording could ask to see the footage.

**Cost**

The annual projection cost for this program will be roughly 2 million dollars per year. This would include new safety personal hiring, training, benefits, equipment, and technology, and the cost of new control to collect data and archive files.

**Training**

For the new program to be the success we need to train our new task force on the following issues:

* Ethical surveillance
* Community issues
* Policing laws and procedures, which would include training of protocols, reporting, and how to request to help
* Data protection
* Data collection
* Self-defense and Community defense
* Integrity
* Use of technology

**Partnerships and Collaboration**

New York City is home to the few best educational institutions and the best police force. MTA can partner with John Jay College of Criminal Justice and NYPD to help them train a new task force on the use of technology, auxiliary police training, reporting, and legal requirements, and community issues.

From an equity and bias perspective, MTA can partner with local communities to get them involved, build trust, and ensure the new task force represents all groups from the communities.