

Corporate Report

REPORT NUMBER 311-2023-Community Services-Transit Services

DATE

PREPARED

September 29, 2023

FILE

MEETING DATE

October 16, 2023

SUBJECT

Transit Services Safety and Incidents Report

RECOMMENDATION

For information only.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the August 14, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting, Administration presented an interim update around safety issues facing Transit Operators. This report provides additional information on safety related occurrences and an incident summary concerning incidents on buses and at transit hubs/stops for reported data from 2022 to June 2023. The report also provides an overview of the activities and initiatives which have been undertaken to respond to the higher levels of incidents and negative interactions which front line transit operators may be exposed to while performing their work.

DISCUSSION

Negative interactions arising from incidents occurring on buses and around transit facilities are reported by staff on paper forms, usually after a shift unless there is a call for immediate assistance. Calls to emergency services through 911 are not included as part of this report. Work remains underway to automate and simplify the incident reporting process with the introduction of new software tools.

Information regarding negative interactions on buses and at transit facilities have been tracked and logged from 2022 onward and were reviewed for this report. Transit Services has defined a negative interaction as an interaction that involves at least one of the following attributes. A single interaction may have up to three (3) of these attributes assigned:

- Act of Aggression - an action made with the intent to cause harm or intimidate.
- Assault - physical contact made with an operator or person.
- Body Fluid – exposure to blood, spit, urine, or feces.
- Fare Dispute – a passenger refusing to pay fare after being advised by the operator.
- Harassment – continued disruptive or unwelcome behaviour directed towards an operator or passengers.
- Intoxication - a passenger suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs impacting passenger or operator's feeling of safety. This also includes persons that are unresponsive.
- Sexual Harassment – comments or conduct of a sexual nature.
- Verbal Altercation - exchange between passenger and operator involving shouting and/or swearing.

All Incidents Reported Including Operators, Passengers and the Public

Table 1 includes the number of all incidents reported by staff which have occurred on buses and around transit facilities between January 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023. Of the number of incidents shown in the table, 59% of incidents occurred on buses while on route, followed by 17% occurring at City Hall. Incidents at the Waterfront Terminal comprised 11%, while the remaining 13% occurred off the bus at other stop locations across the City.

Table 1. All incidents reported including Operators, passengers, and the public.

Negative Interactions Involving	2022 to June 2023	
	Incidents	Percent
Transit Operator - directly impacted	252	24%
Passengers on bus - not including the Operator	480	45%
General Public – outside of bus	335	31%
Total	1067	100%

A breakdown of the type of negative interactions involving either operators directly, passengers on the bus or general public members outside of the bus at transit facilities are included as follows:

Negative interactions where an Operator was directly impacted by a passenger/member of the public.

The number of negative attributes which have directly impacted Operators, either on the bus or off the bus, is outlined in Table 2. The most common negative interactions where Operators are directly impacted include incidents involving intoxication, verbal altercations, fare disputes and acts of aggression, together totaling 81% of all negative interactions. A single negative interaction may have up to three attributes assigned,

causing the total number of instances in the chart below to differ from the number of reported negative interactions in Table 1.

Table 2. Negative interactions where an Operator was directly impacted.

Attribute Type	2022 to June 2023	
	Occurrences	Percent
Acts of Aggression	57	15%
Assault	14	4%
Bodily Fluid	8	2%
Fare Dispute	68	17%
Harassment	51	13%
Intoxication	105	27%
Sexual Harassment	2	1%
Verbal Altercation	84	22%
Total	389	100%

Negative Interactions Involving Passengers on Bus

Table 3 includes the number of interactions reported by staff involving transit passengers and not directly including the Operator (ex. incidents that occurred between passengers while on the bus).

The most common attribute associated with these types of interactions continues to include intoxication related issues, which represent 76% of the total interactions. It is noteworthy that a substantial portion of intoxication issues involve passengers who are unresponsive while on board, causing a safety concern for themselves and passengers around them. Again, a single negative interaction may have up to three attributes assigned, causing the total number of instances in the tables below to differ from the number of reported interactions in Table 1.

Table 3. Interactions Involving Passengers on Bus and Not Including the Operator.

Attribute Type	2022 to June 2023	
	Occurrences	Percent
Acts of Aggression	18	3%
Assault	32	6%
Bodily Fluid	15	3%
Fare Dispute	2	0%
Harassment	27	5%
Intoxication	398	76%
Sexual Harassment	4	1%
Verbal Altercation	29	6%
Total	525	100%

Negative Interactions Involving Members of the Public at Transit Hubs and Stops

Table 4 includes the number of negative interactions reported by staff involving members of the public at transit hubs and stops (ex. incidents that occurred between members of the public outside of the bus).

Again, observations are that issues related to intoxication are the most prevalent of incidents occurring outside of the bus at transit stops and hubs, representing 73% of the interactions reported.

Table 4. Interactions involving the public outside the bus at transit hubs and stops.

Attribute Type	2022 to June 2023	
	Occurrences	Percent
Acts of Aggression	19	5%
Assault	24	6%
Bodily Fluid	11	3%
Fare Dispute	0	0%
Harassment	40	11%
Intoxication	270	73%
Sexual Harassment	2	1%
Verbal Altercation	4	1%
Total	370	100%

General observations made from the analysis of negative interactions reported and experienced by transit operators are that there are societal challenges that continue to impact the transit system including:

- Mental health and addictions
- Use of transit as shelter space
- Random acts of aggressive behaviors

Negative Interactions in Other Transit Properties

Administration participates regularly in dialogue amongst other transit properties in Ontario as well as similar sized properties across the nation regarding negative interactions. The public transit industry at large acknowledges that there is an increasing number of incidents of violence and harassment on public transit systems across Canada and that the need for action to ensure the safety and security of transit riders and workers is always top of mind.

Overview of Measures, Initiatives and Progress

Administration continues to expand on the range of initiatives to address Operator safety in the areas of data analysis, education and training, programs and procedures, incident response and support and CTB Employee Safety Task Force – Transit Specific action items. An overview of the ongoing safety management measures, initiatives and progress can be found in Attachment 1.

Administration will continue to encourage operators to report all negative interactions and track and monitor the data as well as specifically undertaking a comparison of incident data involving operators prior to and after the implementation of new measures and initiatives so that ongoing support for the safety and well-being all front-line transit staff can continue to be provided.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the information in this report appropriately describes the current state of safety, security and well-being activities associated with the Transit Services Division.

BACKGROUND

At the April 3, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting, a deputation was provided by Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU 966). Council passed a motion that the contents of the deputation be referred to Administration and the Employee Safety Task Force for review and follow up and that Administration provide an interim update on or before August 14, 2023, and report back on or before October 16, 2023. This report provides additional information further to the interim update which was provided at the August 14, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

Attachment 1 – Overview of Measures, Initiatives and Progress

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REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY

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10/06/2023