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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA, TWU Local 100 and ATU Locals Team for First National Transit Workers Assault Conference

Conference in Downtown Brooklyn to Point Out Issues

Today, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), the Transport Workers Union Local 100, the Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 726 and 1056, District Attorneys, law enforcement and legislators participated in the First National Transit Workers Assault Conference, an event to address the growing number of assaults against transit workers and to build public awareness of the issue of transit worker security. The conference was a joint effort of the MTA, TWU and ATU.

Last November, MTA Chairman & CEO Joseph Lhota and Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelson co-signed a letter to the City's five District Attorneys urging more aggressive prosecution of those who assault transit workers to insure that offenders are punished for their acts, while also deterring similar crimes. Unfortunately, the assaults continue and are growing in number.

"Our front-line workers keep our transportation system running, but they are all too often confronted with violent situations," Lhota said. "We want to do everything possible to let people know that assaulting a transit worker has severe ramifications, and we want those cases prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson said: "The assaults on our members are a crisis of safety and security not only for transit workers, but for the millions of transit riders who use New York's most essential service every day. Along with the MTA, our brothers and sisters from ATU and well-meaning people in law enforcement and prosecution, I trust this conference will jumpstart all our efforts to mitigate this emergency."

"We constantly meet with local precinct personnel, MTA officials and our electeds on the need to improve security and safety," stated I. Daneek Miller, President/ Business Agent for ATU Local 1056. "We testified to the New York City Council that our safety concerns impact not only our members – bus operators and mechanics who work for MTA New York City Transit's Queens bus division, but the riding public."

"Transit and bus service are by nature customer-oriented, customer-contact services; this puts these public servants out on the front line. As a result, Local 1056 members and other bus operators serve on the front lines as they face members of the public who use our buses and other transit facilities or just choose to "interact" with them. This conference, which included the MTA, represents an important step to focus on efforts to ensure safety for those who provide and those who ride mass transit."

Assaults against transit workers have risen over the past several years, despite passage of legislation in Albany that raised such acts from misdemeanors to "D" level felonies. In response, the MTA, TWU and ATU are working on transit worker security initiatives such as bus cameras and bus operator safety shields, with some already deployed and more on the way.

For more information, please contact (212) 873-6000 x2137.