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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

Governor Cuomo Directs MTA & Port Authority to Heighten Security Throughout the Holiday Season

Coordinated Law Enforcement Effort Increases New York State Police Presence and New York National Guard Personnel at All MTA & Port Authority Bridges, Tunnels, Airports and Mass Transit Systems

MTA and Port Law Enforcement Also Surging Deployments at PA Bus Terminal, LaGuardia, JFK, Grand Central, Penn Station and Other Transit Facilities

Deployment of Special Operations Teams Will Include Additional Bomb-Sniffing Canines, Increased Heavily Armed Presence, Enhanced Surveillance and Rapid Radiation Response Vehicles

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today directed the MTA and Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to surge their security presences at all bridges, tunnels, airports and mass transit systems throughout the holiday season in New York City. In light of recent terrorist attacks and out of an abundance of caution, the Governor is deploying special operations teams from the New York State Police and National Guard to work with the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority Police, MTA Police Department, Port Authority Police Department and New York City Police Department in this coordinated effort. Additional personnel and security equipment will be deployed by state agencies, including rapid radiation response trucks, bomb-detecting canines, an increased heavily armed presence, enhanced surveillance and rapid response vehicles at all high-profile locations.

"New York's status as an international symbol of freedom and democracy too often makes us a target for people who oppose our way of life, and we must remain vigilant and do everything we can to keep New Yorkers safe," Governor Cuomo said. "The holiday season is one of the busiest travel times of the year, and out of an abundance of caution I am fortifying security throughout the region to ensure the safety and security of all New Yorkers and visitors."

The Special Operations Team deployment will include Penn Station, Grand Central, Port Authority Bus Terminal, all nine MTA-operated bridges and tunnels and Port Authority-operated bridges and tunnels, as well as LaGuardia and JFK airports.

In response to recent events and upcoming holidays, the New York State Police deployed additional resources to key transportation hubs in New York City. State Troopers will increase staffing and patrols at all MTA & Port Authority bridges, tunnels, airports and mass transit systems. In addition, during the busy holiday travel season, the New York National Guard's Joint Task Force Empire Shield will coordinate with partner agencies to ensure increased vigilance at New York City's transportation hubs.

Following last week's attack in a Times Square subway station, the MTA has also increased their patrols and surveillance in order to provide heightened protection at major rail hubs. The MTA Police Department has stepped up its uniformed and plainclothes presence in Penn Station and Grand Central Terminal as well as other major stations throughout the Metro-North Railroad and Long Island Rail Road network. Police canine teams and units with heavy weapons will provide extra protection as well as a noticeable sign of increased security. Railroad customers will also see surge patrols, increased step-on/step-off patrols of trains, and random bag checks at various locations.

In addition, the Port Authority has significantly increased its presence at all of the agency's bridge, tunnel, rail, bus terminals, World Trade, airports and other facilities following last week's attack. Following last week's incident, the Port Authority Bus Terminal will also see increased security presence. The Port Authority has also significantly increased the numbers of police officers, including long gun-carrying police officers, and deployed special tactical teams. Actions include increased patrols and checks of bags, buses, trucks and trains at agency locations.

Joseph J. Lhota, Chairman of the MTA said, "Our top priority is ensuring New Yorkers, and all visitors to our system, are able to enjoy their holidays with the knowledge that they are safe. I can assure visitors that our employees are trained and prepared for all situations, and we are working closely with the Governor's Office and other state and local agencies to ensure our bridges, tunnels, subways, commuter rails and buses are secure."

Rick Cotton, Executive Director of Port Authority of New York and New Jersey said, "As New Yorkers prepare to travel to visit family and friends for the holidays, we are prepared to ensure that our state's major gateways are secure and protected. Today, under the Governor's direction, the Port Authority and the MTA will work with local partners to step up our security efforts to give New Yorkers the peace of mind as they embark on their travels this season."

The New York State Police and New York National Guard responded immediately to the incident and worked on scene with the PAPD, NYPD and other state and federal law enforcement partners. The Governor also directed the State Police to double the number of Troopers assigned to the major transportation hubs in New York City.

In coordination with these efforts, in the wake of the attack, the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services was in close contact with key local public safety officials in New York City including NYPD, Port Authority, and MTA, as well the FBI. Commissioner Roger Parrino along with key staff from the Office of Emergency Management and Office of Counter Terrorism immediately rushed to the scene of the attack. The New York State Emergency Operations Center, as a precaution, was activated to Level 4 enhanced monitoring.

Counterterrorism Advisory Panel

Earlier this month, Governor Cuomo [launched](#) a counterterrorism advisory panel, chaired by Kenneth L. Wainstein, partner at Davis Polk & Wardwell, and former Homeland Security Advisor to President George W. Bush. The advisory panel also includes Raymond W. Kelly, the former New York City Police Commissioner under both Mayors David Dinkins and Michael Bloomberg, and Lisa O. Monaco, the former Homeland Security Advisor to President Barack Obama.

After agreeing to chair the panel, Mr. Wainstein immediately started an in-depth evaluation of the state's counterterrorism assets, authorities, and overall effectiveness, which will result in recommendations for enhanced coordination among the state's counterterrorism authorities and strengthened security at airports, bridges, tunnels and other major assets throughout the state. Those recommendations will be formulated in conjunction with Mr. Kelly and Ms. Monaco, and delivered to the Governor in time to inform his 2018 State of the State and Budget addresses. After delivery of its initial recommendations, the panel will continue its important work, developing execution plans for their initial recommendations, further studying the state's readiness to meet today's terrorist threat, and developing other possible proposals that will enhance the effectiveness of our counterterrorism program.

"If You See Something, Say Something"

New Yorkers are reminded to stay alert to their surroundings, and to report any suspicious activity. Reports can be made to the Counter Terrorism Center at the New York State Intelligence Center via its terrorism tip line: 1-866-SAFENYS (1-866-723-3697); or by email: ctcenter@nysic.ny.gov.

New Yorkers can also download See Something, Send Something on your smartphone to inform authorities of a potential threat. Visit <https://www.ny.gov/programs/see-something-send-something> for more information.