

Examination of Passenger Assaults on Bus Transit Systems



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Background

- Upward trend nationally in assaults on vehicle riders
- Increasing prevalence of assaults poses a significant threat to transit safety
- Assaults reported by agencies are limited to those meeting specific FTA reporting criteria
- Need to discover extent of non-reportable assaults



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Research Goals

- Determine prevalence of reportable and non-reportable assaults
- Classify assaults by time of day, location, and type of service
- Identify environmental factors that may contribute to an increase in assaults
- Catalog mitigation measures agencies have employed to reduce incidence rates
- Identify measures used outside of Florida that appear to be successful in mitigating assaults



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Research Method

- Complete a review of the literature
- Conduct a comprehensive examination of bus transit safety data
 - National Transit Database
 - Incident Reports – 20 Florida transit properties to be visited by the project team
- Complete an extensive phone interview with agencies not visited
- Compile a final report in the form of resource document for transportation professionals and practitioners



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Current Status

- Identified a total of 26 transit agencies for participation in data collection
- Completed 13 of 22 planned site visits
- Prepared an extensive questionnaire for phone interviews with 4 agencies
- Completed analysis of NTD assault data – 2008 through 2013
- Initiated analysis of data assembled to date



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Preliminary Data Analysis

- 8 of the 13 agencies visited provided data in the form of incident logs
 - Incident logs vary in terms of the fields reported
 - All include the date of the incident
 - Few report the time of the incident
 - Location information generally varies in specificity
 - Some code the nature of the incident
 - Incident descriptors vary, e.g., “assault,” “threat,” “disorderly conduct”
 - Some provide a summary of events without a detailed description
 - One agency reported no incidents during the past two years
- Currently awaiting data from 3 agencies visited



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Preliminary Database

- Based on two years of data from each agency
- Conduct-related incidents include:
 - Drunkenness
 - Operator assaulted passenger
 - Security incident
 - Fare Evasion
 - Passenger assaulted operator
 - Service animal issue
 - Indecent Exposure
 - Passenger assaulted passenger
 - Theft
 - Object thrown at bus
 - Passenger assaulted supervisor
 - Trespassed
 - Onboard disturbance
 - Passenger complaint
 - Vandalism
- One agency provided summary data
 - Verbal threats to operators/passengers
 - Assaults/physical altercations (operators/passengers)
 - Aggravated assault (operators/passengers)
- A single agency provided the time of each incident



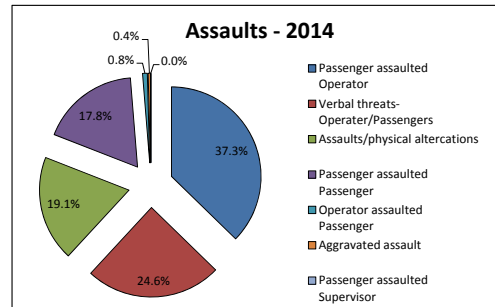
Preliminary Data Analysis

<i>Incident</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>%/Total</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>%/Total</i>
Aggravated assault	4	0.4%	1	0.1%
Assaults/physical altercations	33	3.2%	45	4.5%
Disorderly conduct	270	26.4%	262	26.4%
Drunkenness	48	4.7%	29	2.9%
Fare Evasion	124	12.1%	83	8.4%
Indecent Exposure	21	2.1%	16	1.6%
Object thrown at bus	55	5.4%	46	4.6%
Onboard Disturbance	154	15.1%	193	19.5%
Operator assaulted Passenger	1	0.1%	2	0.2%
Passenger assaulted Operator	71	6.9%	88	8.9%
Passenger assaulted Passenger	43	4.2%	42	4.2%
Passenger assaulted Supervisor	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
Passenger Complaint	22	2.2%	8	0.8%
Security Incident	33	3.2%	29	2.9%
Service Animal Issues	2	0.2%	2	0.2%
Theft	31	3.0%	31	3.1%
Trespassed	40	3.9%	31	3.1%
Vandalism	20	2.0%	25	2.5%
Verbal threats	50	4.9%	58	5.9%
Total	1,023	100.0%	991	100.0%



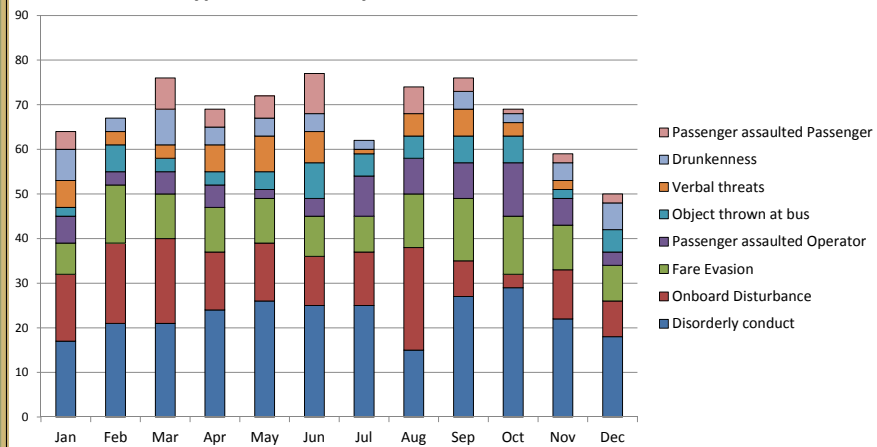
Preliminary Data Analysis

Incident - Assault	2013	%/Total	2014	%/Total
Aggravated assault	4	2.0%	1	0.4%
Assaults/physical altercations	33	16.3%	45	19.1%
Operator assaulted Passenger	1	0.5%	2	0.8%
Passenger assaulted Operator	71	35.0%	88	37.3%
Passenger assaulted Passenger	43	21.2%	42	17.8%
Passenger assaulted Supervisor	1	0.5%	0	0.0%
Verbal threats	50	24.6%	58	24.6%
Total	203	100.0%	236	100.0%



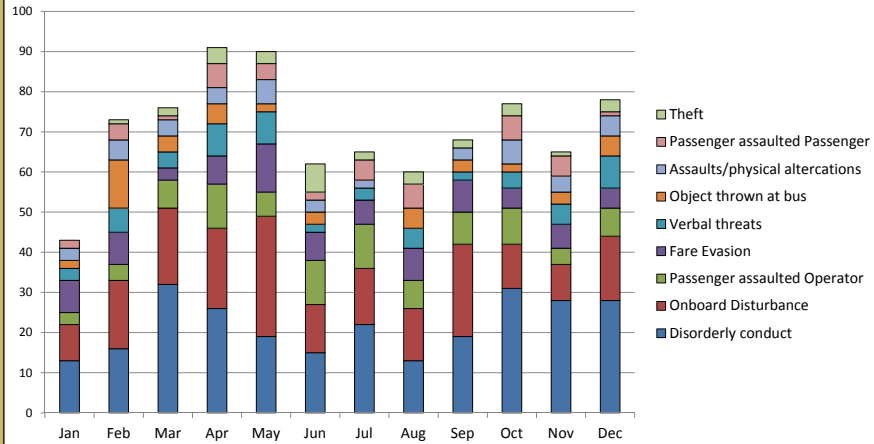
Preliminary Data Analysis

Type of Incident by Month - 2013



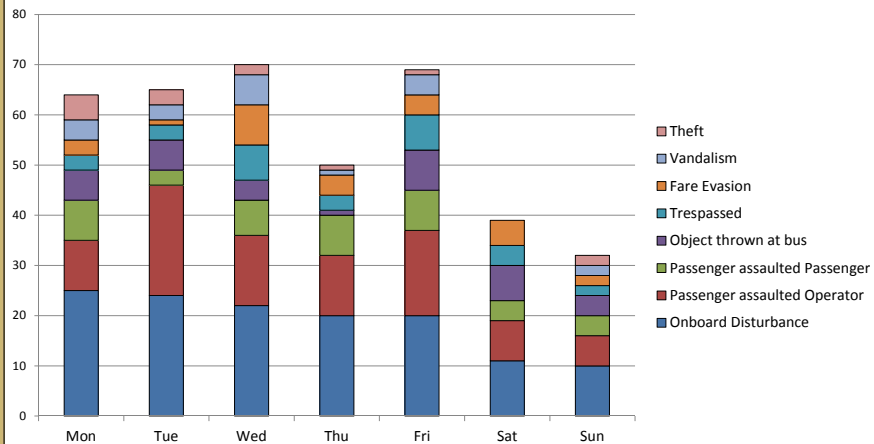
Preliminary Data Analysis

Type of Incident by Month - 2014

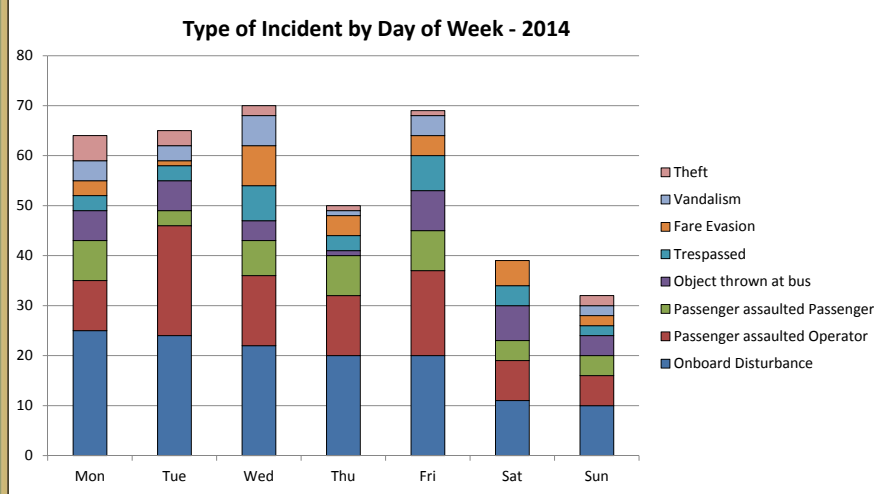


Preliminary Data Analysis

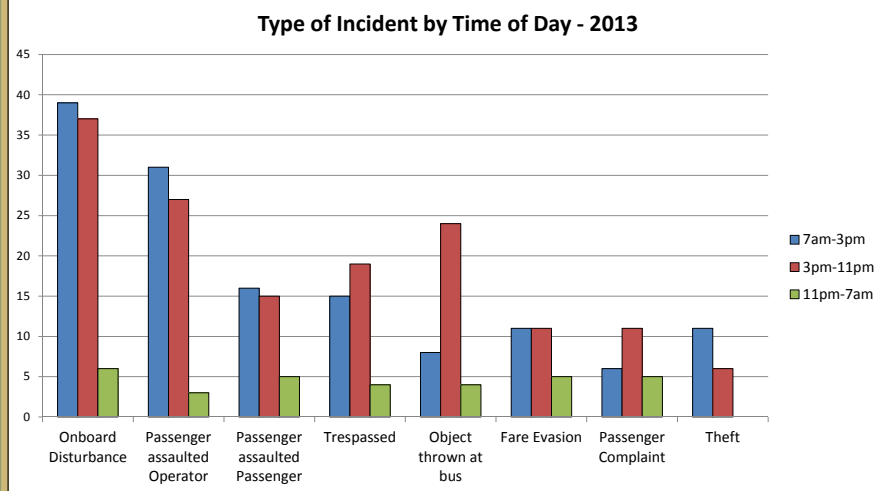
Type of Incident by Day of Week - 2013



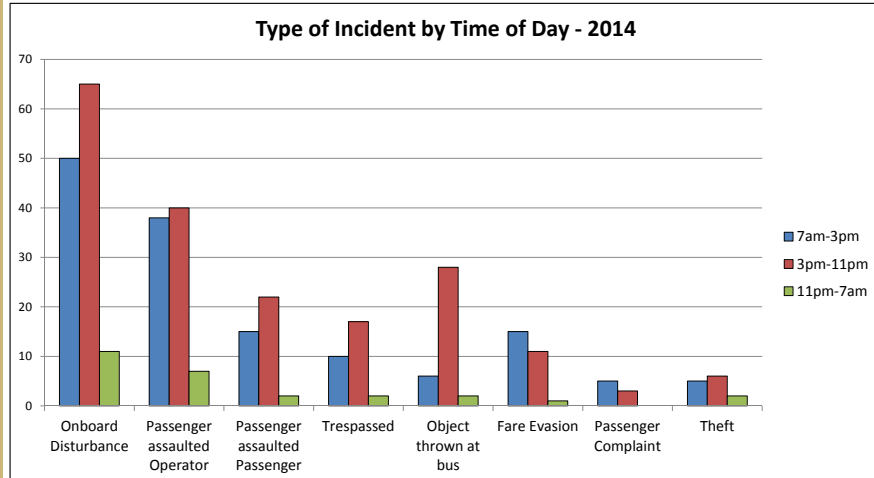
Preliminary Data Analysis



Preliminary Data



Preliminary Data Analysis



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Remaining Schedule

- Site visits to continue through August
 - Pasco County Transit
 - Miami-Dade
 - Broward
 - Palm Tran
 - JTA
 - Gainesville RTS
 - VOTRAN
 - StarMetro
 - ECAT
- Update to FTSN in September 2015
- Draft final report: November 30, 2015



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