



Amtrak cannot determine its police department's size, composition without first determining its roles and priorities, OIG finds

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WASHINGTON – Amtrak has not reached a consensus on the role and priorities of its police department, and the company cannot ensure that the department is of the right size and composition to meet its needs because of this, Amtrak's Office of Inspector General found in a new report released today.

While the company has taken steps to improve its oversight of the Amtrak Police Department, such as establishing a security steering committee and approving a company-wide security strategy for fiscal year 2020, the company's executive leadership has not resolved all issues related to APD's role and priorities, the report said. For example, the company has debated whether officers should provide more visible presence on trains or in stations, and whether APD should focus on traditional policing or improving customer experience.

Until such foundational decisions are made, the OIG found that Amtrak does not have reasonable assurance that it is using its police department efficiently and effectively and could be exposed to unanticipated risks to its security, operations, finances, and brand.

In recent years, Amtrak increased and decreased its police departments size without a full assessment of the company's needs and risks. After multiple interviews and site visits with 14 of the 16 largest rail organizations in the United States and site visits to international rail police and security departments in five countries, the OIG developed a list of eight key practices for rail police management to guide its analysis of APD, to include effective processes for determining the size of a rail police department.

The OIG identified three elements that rail police departments can use to guide decisions on workforce size. First, auditors found that decisions on workforce size should be data driven and consider items such as crime statistics, calls for service, and ridership to support workforce assessments. Second, the report said agencies should consider balancing the size of their force against the risks they are willing to accept. For example, some rail police officials considered potential reputational damage if their force is perceived to be too small after a serious incident. Third, decisions on size should be coordinated with executive leadership to ensure the workforce can meet the organization's objectives.

To address the findings in its report, the OIG recommended that the company determine and formalize the full scope of APD's role and priorities, then develop and employ a data-driven,

risk-based process to determine APD's optimal size. Additionally, the OIG recommended the company examine the potential use of alternative staff across the department to determine appropriate staffing composition and reevaluate goals and metrics to ensure they align with APD's established role and priorities.

More details are available in the full report, located on the OIG's website: <https://direc.to/e5FS>.

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