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JAMAICA PLAIN

MBTA data: Forest Hills station saw most assault reports last year

Posted by Matt Rocheleau February 4, 2011 10:10 AM

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By Sara Brown, Jeremy C. Fox and Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondents

For the second consecutive year, Forest Hills saw the most assault reports of any MBTA subway station, according to recently released crime data.

SEARCH

The MBTA has compiled its 2010 tally of serious crimes, including arson, assault, homicide, rape and various forms of theft. Overall, reported crime on the MBTA rose 19 percent last year to 986. Search a breakdown of crime by line and station. Our search does not include data on bus routes.

While other serious crime dropped slightly at the Orange Line terminus, assaults remained steady. There were 10 at Forest Hills in 2010, one above the year prior. Assaults accounted for one-third of the station's total reported serious crime last year, Transit Police records show.

The bustling transit hub in Jamaica Plain also serves as a stop along 16 bus routes and a commuter rail line. With 31 overall crimes last year, Forest Hills had the third-most serious crimes during 2010. South Station **led in serious crime** with 74, followed by Alewife with 42.

"Forest Hills Station is a very busy station for us. It's a big transfer point for a lot of the school students," said Transit Police Chief Paul MacMillan, adding that targeted efforts to reduce other crimes, including robberies and larcenies which were both down from 2009, at Forest Hills saw success last year.

The Dudley Square bus terminal was second to Forest Hills in assaults reported to Transit Police during 2010 with six, followed by three other stations with five. There were 124 assaults at MBTA stations last year, a

Station

Line

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39 percent increase from 2009.

Overall, reported serious, or "Part I," crimes on the T rose 19 percent last year to 987. Still, that number was the fourth-lowest in the [past three decades](#). Only 2006, 2008 and 2009, [the lowest total on record](#) since the the data collecting began in 1980, saw fewer serious crimes reported.

Part I crimes are those deemed most serious, consisting of arson, assault, homicide, rape and various forms of theft. A online database, searchable by station, of that crime type can be found [here](#). Part II crimes consist of fare evasion, simple assault, vandalism, loitering, drug and alcohol violations, disorderly conduct, trespassing and others. That less-serious crime type saw a 5 percent increase last year to 5,218 reports.

"Over the last five years, we've averaged 942 serious crimes per year, and we have seen a little uptick in 2010 from that number," MacMillan said. "But when you put that in perspective to the number of passengers we have per day, which is 1.3 million, the number of incidences occurring based on the number of passengers is very low."

Nonetheless, he said one crime is too many. "We continue to work to drive all these numbers down."

Various forms of theft – burglaries, larcenies and robberies – rose in the past year.

Larcenies increased system-wide by 11 percent from two years ago to 581 in 2010. Robberies jumped 24 percent to 233 and burglaries were up from eight in 2009 ago to 13 last year.

Burglary is breaking and entering with intent to commit a felony, often to steal something. Larceny is stealing that involves no force or violence, robbery is stealing that involves force.

Mimicking an increase in GPS thefts seen several years ago, transit law enforcement officials say have noticed a rise in cell phone thefts as more commuters carry more expensive cellular devices. Like what the agency did when GPS thefts rose, officials have been running awareness campaigns to reduce such occurrences.

"This is a problem not only for us but many agencies," MacMillan said of mobile phone thefts. "These are a very popular item ... People have their cell phones out; it can be easily stolen; it can be grabbed from the hands when the doors open. Or they're not paying attention because they've got their headphones in, and it can be easily stolen that way."

Andrew Station saw the [most dramatic change](#) in reported serious crime as figures quadrupled last year compared to the year prior. Downtown Crossing [saw the most robberies](#).

Across all stops, auto thefts rose from 17 to 32. There was one homicide last year compared to none the year before and three rapes compared to two in 2009. There were no arsons reported in 2010 compared to one two years ago.

In the same order as 2009, the Red Line led its subway counterparts in total serious crime with 261 reports, followed by Orange with 202, Green with 72 and Blue with 54. Except for the Red, all lines saw crime increase, including the commuter rail, which reported the largest increase, up 65 percent to 238. Buses, transit yards and surface activity accounted for 157 serious crimes, a 19



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percent climb.

The T is working on eventually rolling out an updated online interface on mbta.com that allows for a more user-friendly experience than the current one for commuters who want to research crime data on a station-by-station level, MacMillan said.

"We want to have a mechanism that can easily allow people to find out what's happening at their local stops," he said.

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