

Submitted as Public Comment to the RTD Board Meeting, February 25th, 2025

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Julian Bouquet, RTD Board Chair
Regional Transportation District
1660 Blake Street
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Chair Bouquet,

Greater Denver Transit (GDT) would like to respectfully submit public comment on the following topic:

Allied Universal Security Contract Scope of Work

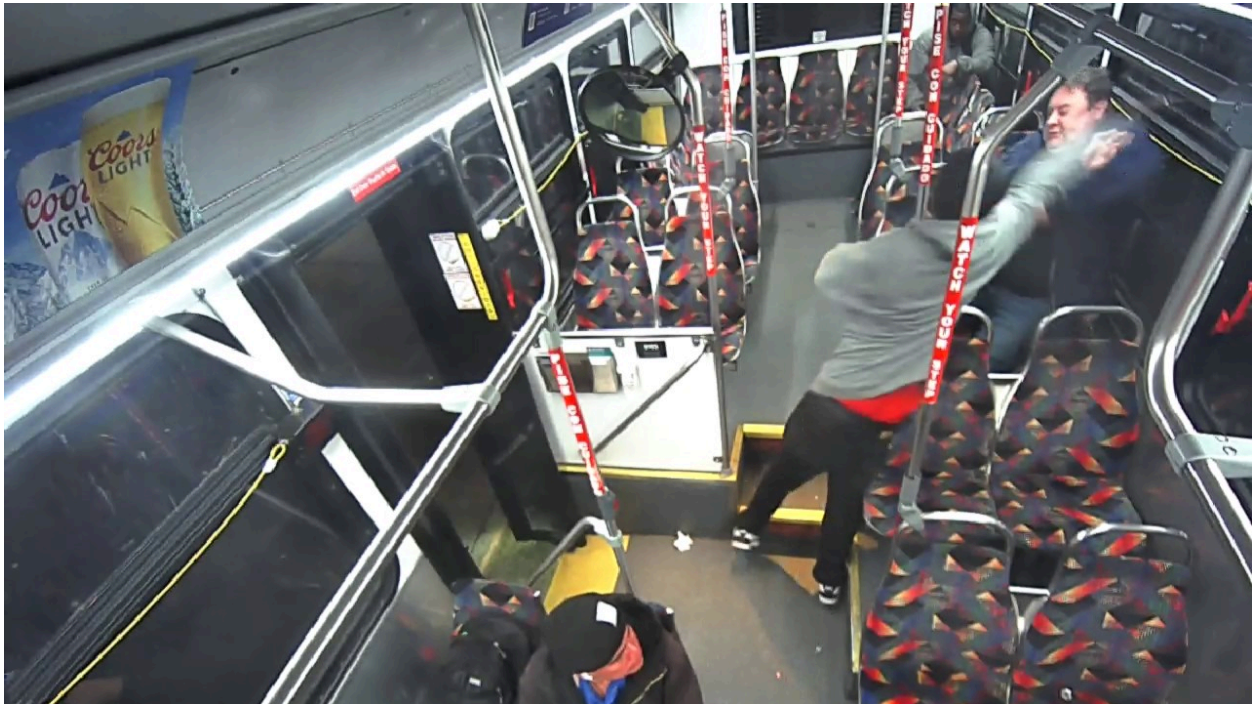
This month, the Allied Universal security contract [Scope of Work](#) is up for approval by the Board and sadly it features the same old vague task descriptions that have led to large parts of the RTD system almost never seeing security staff on a regular basis.

For years now, light rail and bus operators, riders, and prospective riders have been telling RTD Management and the Board they have felt abandoned when riding the network. Behaviors that violate RTD's 'Respect The Ride' and earlier codes such as fare evasion, drug use, playing loud music, and even more threatening anti-social behaviors are extremely widespread, and are still going unaddressed on-board buses and trains despite a significant ramp-up in security staff and department budget.

The persistent illegal drug use, and other criminal behaviors, are hurting both RTD's operator retention as well as ridership. In 2024, despite very positive hiring statistics, retention was abysmal. **For every 5 new bus operators hired, nearly 3 others left. In light rail, it was much worse: for every 5 hired, 4 others left.** Operators are regularly reporting that the drug use and other illegal behaviors are major contributors to the attrition, and to date, this has not been meaningfully addressed.

Last year, the RTD Transit Police reported to the [OSS Committee meeting on November 13th \(Page 246\)](#) they had contacted just 40 trains for fare inspections between July and September 2024, which is **less than 1 train per day** across the entire 60 mile system. At the same time, riders usually observe RTD security hanging out in large groups at Union Station, or in parked SUVs, rather than being out and visible on the system, where their presence would be supporting operators and riders by discouraging illegal behavior before it happens.

During the life of the new security contract, the East Colfax BRT service is expected to start operating, which will feature all-door boarding and off-board fare collection, meaning that the bus operators will not check for fares. The possibility of the City of Denver's premier transit project turning into "mobile hellholes" is real, given the current [challenging nature](#) of the existing 15/15L Colfax bus routes from a safety and security perspective and apparent lack of a security plan from RTD.



Tonight you will hear from several regular RTD riders who have been assaulted, robbed, threatened and otherwise made to feel very uncomfortable on board RTD's buses or trains. GDT urges all Directors to listen carefully and decide whether the proposed Allied Universal security contract scope of work is acceptable and will actually lead to an improvement in on-board conditions for riders. We respectfully remind everyone that it was confirmed by staff at the OSS Committee meeting on February 12th that a delay in signing the new contract to accommodate revisions will have minimal cost implications for the agency.

It is vital that RTD Management take steps to modernize the obsolete fare enforcement and security procedures away from irregular (on bus and light rail) police-driven fare checks in favor of a universal fare-collection program that includes giving security staff the ability to sell tickets on-board.

Thanks for all you do,



James Flattum



Richard Bamber



Emma Griffin



Joe Meyer

CC: RTD Board of Directors
Debra Johnson, RTD General Manager & CEO