



Guardian Angels Want To Patrol MAX Trains

TriMet Explores Legal Issues

PORTLAND -- Portland's Guardian Angels want to take on crime aboard TriMet's light rail trains.



The crime-fighting group rode TriMet buses back in the 1980s. Now, more than 20 years later, they have regrouped and are focusing on MAX trains.

TriMet officials say they're not opposed to having the group on board, but because Guardian Angels are trained to be physical, they are concerned about liability issues.

Chapter leader Michael McDaniel says the purpose is simply to keep train passengers safe.

"Cases of harassment, people being intimidated, and in some cases, people being assaulted," McDaniel told KOIN News 6.

"The large concern is how they're structured and how they will work within our rules," TriMet spokeswoman Mary Fetsch said. "There's liability issues, there's legal issues and just operational issues."

McDaniel says there's no need to worry.

"99.9 percent of what we would do is be present," he explained.

Right now the Angels limit their patrols to the streets in and around downtown Portland. They say riding the MAX line would not only improve train passenger safety, it would also allow them to expand their street patrols to other parts of the city.

TriMet already has security measures in place, with transit police, hired security officers and rider advocates.

The transit agency says meetings with the group could begin as early as next week.