

City pressured for more ferry cops

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The head of the newly created Bureau of Transit Operations said yesterday he will ask the city to beef up its police coverage on the Staten Island Ferry, following the brutal beating of a passenger on Sunday.

Henry White said he "definitely" will meet with police brass to "work something out."

"I can't tell you what the result will be," White said. "It may not necessarily mean two cops on every boat."

Borough President Ralph J. Lamberti also has requested increased police coverage on the ferries in letters to Mayor Edward I. Koch, Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward and Transportation Department Commissioner Ross Sandler.

Following the July 7 attack on the ferry in which two people

were killed and nine wounded by a man wielding a sword, Koch proclaimed that two officers would be assigned to every boat. That policy was only temporary, however, and within a few weeks after the double homicide, police patrols were down to about 50 percent of the ferry's trips.

A spokesman for the police assigned to the ferry said there are 25 officers assigned to the special detail and said police patrol as

many trips as they can, depending on available manpower. He said between 50 and 60 percent of the trips are covered, but a ferry official said he thought the percentage was lower than that.

By comparison, a transit police officer is assigned to every subway from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m., according to William Murphy, a Transit Authority spokesman. They are randomly assigned during the rest of the day and are present on subway platforms during rush hours, Murphy said.

Sgt. Peter Sweeney from the Police Department public affairs office said the ferry detail will not be increased. He said police brass wanted to increase the amount of trips that were patrolled by sending police out alone, rather than allowing them to travel in pairs as they do now. The Patrolmen's