

April update

Community Safety E-Newsletter



Rail Safety & Standards Board

Welcome to the April 2009 edition of UPDATE, a monthly e-newsletter produced by Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), in support of the rail industry's efforts to address rail related community safety issues.

I am delighted to report that the Railway Community Safety Forum that took place at the National Motorcycle Museum on 18 March was a great success. A summary of the day's activities can be found in the newsletter. Thanks must go to everyone that participated!

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back Kerry Dolan, Community Safety Programme Manager. Kerry returns from maternity leave and will be responsible for the production and further development of this newsletter. I would also like to thank the readers of UPDATE for contributions during my time as Editor.

UPDATE is a tool for promoting awareness of current initiatives and encouraging the adoption of good practice. If you have any stories to share about initiatives or events in your area, or would like to provide feedback on this issue, please contact: **community.safety@rssb.co.uk**

I hope you enjoy this issue of UPDATE.

Marina Kilcoyne, Editor.

RSSB is moving offices. From 14 April 2009, our new contact details will be:

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Reducing crime on Britain's railways: Community Safety Forum 2009

Criminal behaviour brings with it considerable risk to the rail industry – but the industry is getting better at addressing it in a joined up way. That was the message coming out of this year's Railway Community Safety Forum, organised by RSSB on behalf of the industry, on 18 March, at the National Motorcycle Museum in West Midlands.

Under the chairmanship of Southeastern managing director Charles Horton, the forum provided an update for over 160 delegates about the industry's approach to tackling four key areas of crime risk, namely level crossing misuse, ticket vending machine vandalism and theft, removing criminal opportunity through reassurance policing, and metal theft. Prefacing this, Passenger Focus chief executive Anthony Smith provided the context with market research on how customers feel about their own personal security and railway crime.

The first themed session – on level crossings – was as sobering as it was humanising. The industry response to deliberate misuse of level crossings by Network Rail has been to use shock tactics, releasing recent CCTV footage and investing in a second wave of Don't Run The Risk television adverts - clearly aimed at both the well-behaved majority and the minority who break the rules risking fatal consequences from jumping the lights and barriers. The conference also heard the dignified testimony of Tina Hughes. In December 2005, Tina's daughter Olivia Bazlinton, died with her friend Charlotte Thompson when they were struck by a train at Elsenham station crossing. They had crossed, mistakenly presuming that the red warning light related to the stationery train they were trying to catch, and not another train passing through on the other line. From Tina's perspective, more needed to be done to tackle underlying human factors issues – ie the way the crossing user interacts as a human being with the crossing technology confronting him or her. A DVD interview with Richard Fleming was presented – in February 2007, at age 18 shortly after passing his driving test, Richard caused his car to crash into a train at a level crossing at Delny near Invergordon in Scotland, through irresponsible driving, and as a result caused the deaths of his passengers, his friends Paul Oliver and Alan Thain. Interviewed near the start of his five year prison sentence, Richard was clearly full of remorse and regret. The session also included a perspective on the issue from Northern train driver Ian Palmer who himself has been involved in a serious level crossing incident.

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Reducing crime on Britain's railways: Community Safety Forum 2009 continued



The second themed session led by First Capital Connect (FCC) and British Transport Police (BTP), looked at ways of protecting ticket vending machines (TVMs) from vandalism and theft. Interestingly, the biggest financial risk is not the loss of the cash inside, but the physical vandalism to the machines, resulting in high repair costs and significant down time. Without TVMs, it's impossible for the company to properly implement a penalty fares regime (because customers cannot purchase a ticket at their starting station). The presence of a vandalised machine in a booking hall also serves to reduce customers' positive perceptions of personal security. To get an idea of the scale of the problem, between July and December 2008, there were 39 TVM attacks at 18 stations, with seven attacks at one station alone. This resulted in £16k loss in cash, £60k in repairs and an estimated £100k total loss in revenue, notwithstanding significant management and police time. The lessons learned for the industry are to undertake better planning when installing the machines – including getting BTP support – and to take advantage of newer technology and better machines. A manufacturer featured their most recent machine in the exhibition area which was physically stronger, but also featured a range of anti-theft and detection devices.

Following a networking lunch, RSSB's Matt Clements provided a reminder of what RSSB does in support of cross-industry resources on community safety – including launching the new on-line resource centre – www.railcommunitysafety.com (see also other article). An update was also provided on two research projects: T723 *Making the most of data associated with railway crime*, where guidance is expected to be produced in summer 2009, and T703 *Facilitating shared expectations between passengers and front-line staff*, where resources are being prepared, and the first was launched at the forum. Trust and Respect – a report of three case studies, provides out-in-the-field examples of what train operating companies are doing to encourage positive behaviours amongst the travelling public and increase personal security.

The third themed session led by South West Trains and BTP, focussed on “reassurance policing”. The train operating company gave an overview of the initiatives they had undertaken to provide a stronger staff presence on trains and on stations. The result is that teams of Rail Community Officers (RCOs) patrol services to provide greater reassurance for the law-abiding majority but also human surveillance of anti-social and potentially criminal behaviour. The REOs operate under the Railway Safety Accreditation Scheme (RSAS) initiated following the Police Reform Act 2002, which provided for persons who are not police officers to exercise certain police powers.

The fourth session led by BTP and Network Rail looked the costs and impact of cable theft. The problem is not isolated to rail or Great Britain – similar forms of theft affect telecoms and power which can have similarly serious consequences. The nature of the problem is expected to change with growing adverse economic circumstances providing stimuli for organised gangs to steal valuable metal and sell it on for scrap. In response the industry is using its own human eyes and ears out on the railway in addition to technological advances like drone helicopters to maintain surveillance of the infrastructure, where possible.

Initial feedback on the event is proving highly positive, and there has been some useful input to future events and the way RSSB and industry partners might tackle these issues going forward. These will be food for thought for the Community Safety Steering Group (CSSG), and its sub-groups the Rail Personal Security Group (RPSG) and Road-Rail Interface Steering Group (RRISG).

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DNA spit kits track known serial spitter

London Underground staff have successfully used spit kits to track down and charge a teenager from Barnet. Sophia Daba, a 19-year-old from Fairgreen in Barnet, was found guilty of racially aggravated threatening behaviour and disorderly conduct after she was positively traced by her DNA, and has been sentenced to 200 hours community service for twice spitting at Tube staff.

The first spitting incident occurred when Daba became racially abusive towards a station supervisor at South Harrow Tube station when he asked to see her ticket on in June 2007. She then spat into the money chute below the ticket office glass. Following the incident the British Transport Police were contacted, CCTV was downloaded, statements taken and DNA samples were obtained using a spit kit. These were sent off for testing but the results came back negative.

Less than a year later, in February 2008 Daba committed a similar spitting offence at Neasden Tube station. Again, the spit kit was used to preserve a DNA sample.

Both cases appeared to be unresolved, however, in June last year, police received information that a DNA match had now been made. Daba was identified and arrested in July and subsequently charged with both offences.

Aidan Harris, Manager of London Underground's Workplace Violence Unit, said:

"Spitting is disgusting, totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We are pleased that this serial spitter was tracked down and brought to justice as a result of our spit kits being present at every Tube station in the Capital."

BTP PC Andrew Burns, one of the investigating officers, said:

"Tube staff have the right to work without fear of abuse or assault and this is a high priority for BTP.

"The spit kits were submitted for DNA analysis, identifying Daba as the culprit and providing us with the evidence we needed to place her at both crime scenes and bring her to court.

"These were two nasty attacks on members of staff who were simply doing their jobs. People have a right to go to work without being subjected to this sort of criminal behaviour and I hope Daba's conviction represents some justice for her victims."

Spit kits were introduced to help tackle abuse on LU staff and are currently held in every London Tube station. Samples of the saliva spat are sent to the Police National Database for analysis where seven out of ten are found to have a match.

For more information, please visit: www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/2777.aspx

New neighbourhood police team starts operations in the Croydon area

British Transport Police has launched a new Neighbourhood Policing Team in an effort to cut crime and reassure rail passengers travelling through and around Croydon.

The team consists of a Police Sergeant and six police constables who began patrolling in March and have recently held their first policing operation.

Officers attached to the team will be dedicated to patrolling 14 stations on the Southern railway route between East Croydon, Sutton and Streatham.

The Croydon Neighbourhood Policing Team has been created following an announcement from the Mayor of London in January for an additional 50 officers to patrol trains and stations in outer London. It brings the total number of Neighbourhood Policing Teams on the rail network in the south to 12.

BTP Croydon Inspector Jack Ioannou, who will oversee the team, said passengers traveling through Croydon can expect to see a more visible policing presence with this new team.

"The Neighbourhood Policing Teams will be aiming to clamp down on low-level disorder and anti-social behaviour at stations and on trains. Officers will be working closely with Southern trains staff to tackle fare evasion and staff assaults and we will be actively encouraging passengers to approach officers and raise any concerns they have about safety or criminality on the railway.

The team will regularly engage in crime reduction surgeries and will be conducting operations targeting knife crime and drug carrying."

The beginning of patrols for the new team now means BTP has a Neighbourhood Policing Team presence on the railways within every south London borough.

Insp Ioannou said: "Our existing teams have had great success in driving down crime and building a sense of community on routes in which they patrol. Since their inception in 2006 the teams have been instrumental in achieving reductions in robbery, which is down by 76 per cent, criminal damage/graffiti offences, which are down 73 per cent. They've also assisted in reducing instances of violence against the person and staff assaults, which is down 60 per cent and theft offences are down 25 per cent. We are predicting a similar success for the Croydon team."

Southern Head of Security David Hynes said: "Following the tremendous success of the existing teams we are delighted that Neighbourhood Policing is being extended to the Croydon area. I am confident that staff and passengers will soon get to know their team and will see positive benefits in safety and security."

The railway stations the team will be dedicated to patrolling include:

East Croydon, Selhurst, Thornton Heath, Norbury, Streatham Common, Streatham, Mitcham Junction, Hackbridge, Carshalton, Sutton, Carshalton Beeches, Wallington, Waddon, West Croydon

For more information, please visit: <http://www.southernrailway.com>

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Rail signs European Road Safety Charter

The railways in Europe – including Great Britain - have taken a major step forward in engaging with high level EU decision makers on level crossing safety. The European Level Crossing Forum (ELCF), which is facilitated by RSSB, was one of four major signatories of the European Road Safety Charter – a new European Commission initiative designed to develop firm action to reduce traffic accidents and fatalities through exchange of best practice across the EU.

The EC Vice President and Transport Commissioner, Antonio Tajani welcomed Jurgen Menge, ELCF chairman, to a signing ceremony on 20 March at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels.

ELCF brings together rail and highway safety professionals from across Europe, in order to exchange information and provide experiences and lessons for improving the management of level crossings. RSSB participates and provides the secretariat for the group.

Level crossings present a risk to both road and rail safety, and the ELCF, with support from RSSB, has been keen to engage with high level political decision makers on the issues concerned.

In addition to ELCF, the Charter was also signed by the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), the association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM) and the International Union of Railways (UIC).



Alan Davies, project manager at RSSB, and ELCF secretary said: “This is crucial recognition from the European Commission of level crossing safety issues – both from a perspective of the relationship between rail and road safety, and in terms of encouraging awareness of what the rail industry in particular is doing across Europe to tackle public behaviour.”

He continued, “Level crossing accidents account for just two per cent of all road deaths in Europe, but in signing this Charter, the European Level Crossing Forum is showing it’s a serious team player, and by the same token, the European Commission has shown its willingness to acknowledge and value rail’s zeal to engage with others on a notable area of rail safety risk.”

ELCF is also planning a pan European education campaign at level crossings. Twenty countries have so far committed to take part in the event, planned for 25 June 2009 – including Britain and involving both RSSB and Network Rail. With railway companies, road sector groups, government agencies, law enforcement authorities and media expected to participate, the campaign will be a collaborative effort building on existing national programmes – including in Britain, the work undertaken by Network Rail on the Don’t Run The Risk campaign.

For further information go to www.levelcrossing.net and www.erscharter.eu

Car Park Improvements at Shifnal

Rail users in Shifnal will receive a boost when work starts on a programme of improvements at the station’s car park.

Rail operator London Midland and Shropshire County Council begin work on the £40,000 project to improve the car park, which is free to rail users, on Monday (March 9).

Shropshire County Council is providing £29,000 of funding, with London Midland adding around £6,000 as well as managing the project.

The work includes re-surfacing, marking of parking bays including a disabled space, and the installation of a crash barrier.

Contractors will also improve drainage and install lighting at the 19-space car park. The work is expected to take around two weeks to complete.

London Midland managing director Steve Banaghan said the work was part of a continuing programme of investment.

“Working in partnership with Shropshire County Council we are providing a better environment to promote rail use,” he said.

Councillor John Overall, Shropshire County Council cabinet member for Environment and Sustainability, said “This is good news for rail users in the Shifnal area. It is a fine example of how we can work with the rail industry to encourage the use of public transport.

These new improvements complement the work done last year to provide CCTV coverage of the station area.”

For more information, please visit: <http://www.londonmidland.com>

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On-line Rail Industry Community Safety Resource Centre launched



A new password-protected website www.railcommunitysafety.com was launched by RSSB at the Community Safety Forum this month to help provide a one-stop-shop for industry resources and information on community safety issues.

The site will only be accessible to industry – users can apply for a login username and password via the main home page at www.railcommunitysafety.com

This means the information can be shared conveniently but securely, outside the public domain.

Primarily aimed at practitioners in the rail industry and British Transport Police (BTP), the new web hub will save time and money by collecting and sharing beneficial industry knowledge and tools in response to a range of community safety business risks.

RSSB's community safety programme managers and IT development specialists combined their expertise to build the site in-house – resulting in quicker delivery of a more cost-effective product.

The site is easy to navigate – with a simple “ribbon” at the top of the main page containing the menu, and links to individual elements of each topic or section running down the left hand side. The design is also simple, making it easy to find what you're looking for, but also presented in a fashion that's pleasing to the eye and readily accessible.

Areas of the site focus on community safety topics, including crime risks, tools and resources as well as industry groups. Each has its own designated page providing a foundation to build on, and populate with shared industry knowledge.

RSSB's head of national programmes, railway operations, Maurice Wilsdon said:

“The site has been launched but this is just the beginning – we now want to attract industry personnel to hit on the site, and get access – and importantly, tell us what they think. This is also a great opportunity to get contributions from the wider industry – in real time – to each of the topic areas on the site so that these can be accessed by community safety practitioners and specialists across GB rail.”

To get access go to www.railcommunitysafety.com and follow the on-screen instructions. The site can be accessed free of charge – there is no annual subscription. For more information, contact RSSB by email community.safety@rssb.co.uk

Action Stations as scouts take on adoption

Kidwelly railway station has been adopted by the 1st Kidwelly Scouts and local resident Julie Dobney as part of Arriva Trains Wales' Station Adoption Scheme.

Launched in April 2004, to strengthen community involvement across the rail network, the scheme has proven very successful with more than 160 individuals and groups volunteering to help the train company keep an eye on its 189 unstaffed stations.

The 'Adopt a Station' scheme, which has the backing of British Transport Police (BTP), allows local communities to 'have a say' about the condition of their station to ensure it meets the high standards expected by rail users.

Scout leader Shan Cheesman, said: “Our group was formed in 1964 and in the last 18 months, we have gone from strength to strength with more than 50 young people taking part in Scouting activities. Our catchment area is quite large with Scouts travelling from Ferryside, Burry Port and Mynydd y Garreg for weekly meetings.”

She continued: “We have adopted the local recycling plant, organised community litter picks and do a lot of badge work. As part of the adoption, some of the Scouts will gain work experience by helping to re-paint the waiting shelters with staff from Arriva. We also intend to plant flowers and create some murals for display on the station. Trains are an environmentally friendly way of travelling so if the station looks nice, it will hopefully encourage more people to travel.”

Station manager Frank Slater, said: “The scheme is all about encouraging involvement with local people. The station is an important community facility and many tourists pass through the area so it's important to present the station in the best possible condition. With Julie and the Scouts' support, we're looking forward to taking forward some exciting projects that will help improve the environment for passengers.”

As part of the adoption, officers from the Swansea based BTP Neighbourhood Policing Team will also visit the Scouts and give a talk about their role and personal safety on the railways.

Volunteers, referred to as 'station adopters', are asked to carry out regular spot checks, in addition to those already done by the train company, relating to the tidiness and cleanliness of the station.

They then report any issues that may need addressing so that they can be dealt with promptly. Station cleaning and maintenance is undertaken by Arriva's station care team.

In return for their effort station adopters receive complimentary travel vouchers to use on any part of the National Rail Network.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk>



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Funding boost for major Bolton train station makeover

Transport chiefs have agreed to fund part of a major £4 million overhaul of passenger facilities at Bolton train station.

Members of Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority's (GMITA) Policy Committee today agreed to contribute £950,000 towards the project, which will radically improve waiting areas, passenger information and security.

The scheme, which is being managed by Network Rail as part of the Department for Transport's National Station Improvement Programme (NSIP), has been developed with partners at GMPTA, Northern Rail and Bolton Council.

The work - which includes a new concourse area and improvements to passenger facilities on the platforms - is scheduled to start on site in autumn 2009 and could be completed by spring 2010.

Councillor Keith Whitmore, Chair of GMITA's Policy Committee, said: "We've wanted to see these improvements delivered for quite some time, so this is something of a red letter day for Bolton train station.

"The improvements on offer are really passenger focused and I am sure they will encourage even more people to travel by train. It will give visitors a great first impression and make the station a truly modern, welcoming gateway to the town."

David Golding, Network Rail's Route Enhancements Manager, added: "This is one of eight stations in the north west owned by Network Rail and managed by Northern Rail to get a complete makeover as part of the NSIP programme.

"Bolton is a hugely important station, being the interchange point for three of the busiest commuter routes to and from Manchester, and its facilities should reflect that position."

The project will deliver new covered waiting areas and shelters, customer information screens, CCTV and public address systems, and fully accessible toilets serving all platforms. The waiting rooms, Travel Centre, ticket office and booking hall will also be refurbished.

Lee Wasnidge, Area Director, Northern Rail, said: "At our recent Meet the Manager session at Bolton our customers told us the changes they would like to see at the station and I'm sure they'll welcome these improvements.

"We've also listened to their feedback on where trains stop at the station, and this work will reduce the distance customers have to travel along the platform from the footbridge to board their train."

Councillor Cliff Morris, Leader of Bolton Council, said: "This is good news for passengers. There will be a huge improvement to the building, which means a better travel experience for commuters.

"The redevelopment is key to our ambitions for Bolton and means further investment is secured towards the £300 million Innovation Zone."

Over £2 million has been already been spent on the major refurbishment of Bolton Interchange. This included works to upgrade the rail overbridge, including refurbishing the lifts and enhanced lighting, floor finishes, handrails and redecoration.

The bus station and taxi rank have also been completely remodelled, providing passengers with a modern, comfortable and safe environment and offering improved links to the town centre and the rail station.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.gmppte.com/>

News from Overseas - Australia

Level crossings – different railways, similar issues

Whilst there are differences in the nature, terrain and operation of railways in Australasia as compared to Great Britain, recent developments have suggested the issues surrounding level crossing safety are very similar.

Recently, the Queensland state government launched a community education program to improve level crossing safety, following two fatal incidents in the state in the past three months. Victoria has also reported several near misses recently, and in 2007 11 people died when a truck slammed into a train at a level crossing north of Kerang.

The Australasian Railways Association, a national group that represents the interests of the rail sector in Australia and New Zealand, says a study it commissioned in 2007 revealed drivers in the 16 to 25 age group were most at risk of causing a level crossing accident. However drivers over 50 tended to also break the law at level crossings and most didn't know it. This echoes findings by Network Rail into the GB experience of the profile of risk-takers at level crossings.

Truck drivers were a high risk group that needed further assessment, the Australian Rail Industry Safety And Standards Board (RISSB)'s general manager Kevin Taylor said.

"The sad fact is that around Australia not one road rule test where people undertake to get their driver's licence, actually has a question about level crossings," he said. Again, the GB experience is similar, and work by the Road-Rail Interface Safety Group, facilitated by RISSB and working with the Driving Standards Agency, has resulted in a much improved section on level crossings in the latest Highway Code as well as more questions on level crossing safety in corporate into the Driving Theory Test, which learners must take and pass before booking the practical test.

In Australia, RISSB is working on initiatives with the state and territory roads and traffic authorities and on campaigns like National Rail Safety Week, to begin on 24 July, to raise awareness of level crossing safety. It has also been active in lobbying the government, particularly on reducing the speed limit at crossings, and raising awareness of the train driver's perspective.

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News in Brief

Improved Automatic Ticket Gate access at Edinburgh Waverley - Plans to introduce two wide aisle automatic ticket gates at Edinburgh Waverley station have been backed by Transport Scotland. In addition to improving access for wheelchair users, the wider design will allow customers to pass through with luggage, pushchairs or bikes without the need for staff assistance. Similar wide automatic gates are already operating successfully in Aberdeen, Ayr, Dundee and Stirling stations.

Events this month:

Event Name	Date	Event Details
'Governing through anti-social behaviour' – ESRC Seminar Series Programme	<i>Wednesday 22 April 2009</i>	Venue: Kings College, London For further information: http://www.community-safety.net/events.htm
The Policing and Crime Bill: The future of CDRPs and Community Safety Partnerships	<i>Thursday 23 April 2009</i>	Venue: The Commonwealth Club, Westminster For further information: http://www.westminster-briefing.com/
Young People and Violent Crime National Conference: Innovative Solutions through Multi-Agency Working	<i>Thursday 30 April 2009</i>	Venue: One Birdcage Walk, Westminster For further information: http://publicpolicyexchange.co.uk/events.php

Future Events:

Event Name	Date	Event Details
The 14th Annual Conference of the National Community Safety Network	<i>Tuesday 9 – Wednesday 10 June 2009</i>	Venue: Leeds For further information: http://www.community-safety.net/conference2009/home.htm
ACORP - Value of Volunteers	<i>Wednesday 15 July 2009</i>	Venue: Brian Jackson Centre - Huddersfield For further information: http://www.acorp.uk.com/
ACORP Community Rail Awards – Carlisle	<i>Friday 25 September 2009</i>	Venue: Carlisle For further information: http://www.acorp.uk.com/
ACORP- Working with other modes	<i>Tuesday 24 November 2009</i>	Venue: TBC

National Railway Crime Hotline
0800 40 50 40

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