

Welcome to the March 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.

This month's issue highlights some of the initiatives that British Transport Police (BTP) is undertaking to tackle staff assault. A fraudster is ordered to pay almost £5000 to National Express and, a young vandal 'scrubs up' a railway bridge in Scotland as part of a restorative justice scheme pioneered by Network Rail. Also included are details of 'Try the Train' day, an event organised by South West Trains giving disabled passengers an opportunity to explore this mode of transport.

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 or **020 7904 7674**

I hope you enjoy this issue of UPDATE.

Marina Kilcoyne, Editor.

Railway vandal scrubs up



Mark Henderson, Community safety manager, on site in Edinburgh with a reformed railway vandal

A young vandal is scrubbing the slate clean by helping to clean up a railway bridge in Edinburgh after being caught red handed.

The vandal, 16, was charged by the police in late 2008, when caught throwing objects into a fire near the track in Rutherglen, Glasgow. He spent a weekend painting over the ugly graffiti in the Meadowbank area as part of a restorative justice scheme pioneered by Network Rail.

Due to the nature of the offence, the procurator fiscal decided to offer him the opportunity of an alternative to prosecution by diverting the case to the restorative justice service run by South Lanarkshire Council. He acknowledged his disruptive behaviour and expressed regret before volunteering to get involved in a Network Rail-led clear-up of mess left by other vandals.

Mark Henderson, Community safety manager for Network Rail in Scotland, commented:

"The restorative justice programme aims to help young people understand the dangers of misusing the railway and the true cost of the damage they cause. In 2007, railway crime cost the industry an estimated £264m. This unnecessary cost is a massive drain on our society and is obviously preventable. In Scotland alone, the railway has to employ the equivalent of six full-time members of staff to continually clean graffiti from the railway.

"Every year, dozens of young people are killed or injured accessing the tracks to spray graffiti and damage property. In many cases, restorative justice is not an option, we will simply ask BTP to prosecute offenders. Graffiti and vandalism on the railway is regarded as a serious crime by the courts and frequently results in prison sentences for offenders.

"The offender has clearly learned a valuable lesson from this incident and I was impressed by his positive attitude when we took him out and about. We even received a couple of 'thank yous' from local residents in the Meadowbank area and I think he really valued that."

Network Rail has been involved with a number of similar schemes across the country. In November 2008, two teenagers caught painting graffiti in Inverkeithing were given a restorative justice task painting over graffiti in Glasgow's west end.

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

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CCTV sees man jailed for 20 months and banned from the Railway network for 10 years after train staff assault

A man who assaulted a member of staff and head-butted another on a train between Nottingham and Langley Mill railway stations has been jailed for 20 months after BTP detectives used compelling CCTV evidence to prove its case.

He was also handed an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) banning him from entering any station or travelling on any train for a period of 10 years.

His sentencing comes after he violated a suspended prison sentence handed to him in February 2008.

The man, of Bretby, Burton-upon-Trent, was sentenced in January after pleading guilty to actual bodily harm, common assault and obstruction of the railway.

He boarded the 2142 Nottingham to Sheffield East Midlands Trains service on Wednesday 01 October 2008 and entered the first class carriage. Despite the carriage being almost empty he sat opposite a couple and began making offensive comments towards them.

He then refused to show his ticket when requested by a member of train staff and aggressively grabbed her arm before moving towards the rear of the train to stand with two other men.

The member of staff reported the man's aggressive behaviour to the train manager, who then approached the three men. When the manager asked the men for their tickets the man head-butted him and physically and verbally assaulted him.

Detective Sergeant Bill Henry, one of the investigating officers, described how the man continued to assault the train manager while at the same demanding he open the carriage doors to facilitate his escape.

"Despite being repeatedly assaulted the train manager explained the dangers of opening the door on a moving train. However, the man continued to rain blows down on his victim until the carriage door was opened."

He and one of the other men then left the train around a quarter of a mile outside of Langley Mill station.

BTP and Derbyshire Police officers met the train as it pulled into Langley Mill station and spoke with the remaining man. Officers cautioned the two men who were present during the man's attack, a 27-year-old from Somercotes and a 36-year-old from Australia. He was traced and subsequently arrested the following day.

DS Henry described how CCTV was used to build a case against the man, adding: "CCTV footage from the train was crucial in this case since it allowed us to place him at the crime scene and it also captured his attack, proving the case."

"Passengers should be aware that assaults like this on the railway network are significantly down, and that CCTV is proving increasingly valuable in tracing offenders."

East Midlands Trains Safety and Environment Director, David Maxwell said: "Attacks of this extremity on either passengers or staff are thankfully extremely rare. However, we take all assaults very seriously and we have worked with the BTP to provide CCTV information and to ensure appropriate action is taken against this attacker. We welcome the outcome and hope it sends a clear message that as a company we will not tolerate such violent behaviour on our stations or services."

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



London Overground to run eight trains an hour following £326m upgrade

The staging of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London will bring big challenges for the rail network supplying the capital – not only for those involved in the Games themselves, but also in terms of operating the normal day-to-day railway for the commuters and the travelling public.

The rail industry has already begun preparing for the London Olympics, and this includes putting in place plans to handle the potential for increased community safety risks from those who behave inappropriately or commit crime.

Work began 07 February 2009 on a £326m upgrade of Transport for London's (TfL) Overground network.

When complete, passengers will see longer trains, more frequent services and benefit from reliable connections to the main London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Park in Stratford.

New and longer platforms at some stations will also allow more carriages per train, which will increase capacity and reduce overcrowding.

Work has been fast-tracked to ensure completion before 2012 and is being carried out by Network Rail as part of plans to improve rail services in and around the Capital.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/>

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Alcohol Ban calls time on unruly behaviour

A crackdown on alcohol fuelled anti social behaviour is being introduced on trains and stations between Pontypridd and Merthyr.

Arriva Trains Wales and the BTP have joined forces in an initiative aimed at raising awareness of the current railway bye-laws. Similar schemes were launched in the Rhondda Valley in December 2007 and in the Rhymney Valley in June 2008.

The objective of the initiative, Codename Operation 'Zenith', which went live on 23 January 2009, is to discourage the culture of loitering and drinking at stations, which often leads to more serious crime being committed against passengers, staff and railway property.



Railway bye-laws state that it is an offence for "any person travelling on certain services to be in possession of intoxicating liquor or to attempt to enter any of the above trains with intoxicating liquor". It also states that "no person shall enter on the railway where such person is unfit to enter or remain on the railway as a result of being in a state of intoxication".

The initiative will run for a trial period of six months and target hot spot stations known for anti social behaviour. New signage is being introduced to raise awareness of the bye-laws, which will prohibit the consumption of alcohol on any station or train between Pontypridd and Merthyr.

Gwilym Bowen, security manager for Arriva Trains Wales, said, "This initiative is about setting new standards of acceptable behaviour and creating a safer environment for the travelling public and staff. We recognise that this will be a long term process. However, this initiative demonstrates our commitment to work with partners for the benefit of the communities we serve."

A similar scheme launched in the Rhondda Valley in December 2007 has contributed to a 38 per cent decrease in the number of notifiable offences recorded from 2007 to 2008. Officers hope to achieve the same success with the initiative at trains and stations between Pontypridd and Merthyr.

BTP officers will also be engaging with young people through visits to schools and youth centres to help raise awareness of the dangers and consequences of participating in anti social behaviour on the rail network.

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

'Try the Train' day: 10 March 2009

Following the success of 'Try the Train' days, South West Trains are holding a third event to give disabled passengers an opportunity to explore this mode of transport.

The event, being held at Poole station on 10 March 2009, will highlight the accessibility of train travel for groups including disabled and older people, wheelchair users, people with visual or hearing impairments and those with learning difficulties.

Paul Bentley, Access and Integration Manager, said: "We are aware that transport plays a crucial role in people's lives but there are a number who lack the confidence or knowledge to travel by rail.

"Our 'Try the Train' events have proved both popular and useful to local disabled people and we hope more come along to find out about the service we offer."

The aim is to introduce train travel to disabled people who may not know the extent of accessibility on trains and those who have not used the train before. It will also provide a forum for regular users to discuss their experiences with South West Trains.



The event will provide information about rail travel, specific rail journeys, information about getting assistance during journeys and an opportunity to experience train travel first hand.

For more information or to book a place at the event, please visit: <http://www.southwesttrains.co.uk/SWTrains/>

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Graffiti Vandal Sentenced for Drear Tagging Escapades

A man who spent many hours vandalising rail property was sentenced recently for causing £17,000 damage to trains and trams in south London and Surrey.



The graffiti vandal faced Southwark Crown Court and was handed an eight month suspended sentence for his crimes. He was also handed a 12-month supervision order, a six-month curfew and five-year ASBO prohibiting him from possessing graffiti paraphernalia and from entering parts of the railway.

British Transport Police Graffiti Unit PC Ian Garden said Kinsella was responsible for spraying the tag DREAR on trains, trams and other rail property in Croydon, Streatham and Norwood Junction.

He was also linked to the tag KC – short for Kaos Crew.

PC Garden said: “The man was prolific in the Croydon area, regularly engaging in night-time tagging escapades.

“Not only did he break into depots and sidings to commit his crimes, but he risked his life by trespassing on rail property to get access to carriages to deface property.”

PC Garden said the man was arrested after BTP mounted an operation to target vandals who commit graffiti offences over the Christmas period when the rail industry comes to a halt. He was arrested on Boxing Day 2007 and continued to commit offences in 2008, despite being on bail.

“Network Rail, Southern and London trams in Croydon suffered a combined total of £17,000 damage as a direct result of Kinsella’s criminal activity,” PC Garden said.

“If you add onto that the costs of having to take carriages out of service to have the offending paint removed, along with the inconvenience caused to rail passengers by having less services available, then the real damage caused is substantial, and in effect those costs are passed back to the travelling public.”

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



Staff assaults issue gets coverage in The Sun newspaper

The problem of staff assaults on the railway has received some high profile recognition in a recent column in The Sun newspaper. Kelvin MacKenzie covered the issue in January, arguing that assaults are far too easily tolerated and that punishments are too lenient.

Unfortunately like many other staff delivering a public service, railway staff often endure abuse, and, in some cases, physical assault from the people they are trying to help in the course of their work. The human cost can be significant when people are injured and have to take time away from work. There is also the psychological trauma and loss of confidence when they return, which can increase staff turnover, adding to recruitment and training costs.

The industry has lobbied hard on this subject – seeking some reinforcement of just principles on behalf of front-line rail staff. Recently, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), working with the train operating companies and the Association of Chief Police Officers, has confirmed that assaults on public-facing rail staff should be considered as ‘assaults against a person serving the public.’ This makes it an aggravating factor so that prosecution is likely to follow in the public interest, under the code for crown prosecutors. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service also has a similar policy, so that cases involving attacks on staff working with the public on the railway in Scotland will lead to prosecution.

The Sentencing Guidelines Council reinforced this in new guidelines published last year, outlining a series of factors that will specifically aggravate assaults and should result in greater sentencing – including attacks on victims “providing a service to the public”. Now the regional Community Safety Partnership Groups (CSPGs) are adding their own weight to the momentum of the campaign with local focus, working with magistrates in their own particular regions, to raise awareness of the human impact of assault.

Whilst The Sun article itself is unlikely to turn the heads of magistrates in the same way as lobbying by the industry and RSSB, it is a positive development that the media is prepared to support the industry’s position in such a public way.

Matthew Clements, Industry Communications Manager, RSSB. For further information, please contact: matthew.clements@rssb.co.uk

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Touch sentences needed as Level Crossing law breaking reaches five year high



The number of people breaking the law at level crossings is at a five year high, Network Rail revealed recently. Running risks at level crossings should come with tough consequences, and Network Rail is calling on judges and magistrates to stamp down hard on motorists jumping lights and dodging barriers, to act as a clear deterrent.

Last year, over 55 days of delays to trains and passengers were caused by level crossing misuse, costing Network Rail around £1.8million – money that can't be invested into the railway. The real cost to the industry far exceeds this, as it does not include actual damage to trains or tracks or staffing time and cost.

Network Rail chief executive Iain Coucher said: "The toughest consequence of breaking the law at a level crossing is to lose your life – thankfully that doesn't happen very often. But every week we see people who ignore warning signs and lights or drive round barriers at level crossings just to save a few minutes. This behaviour has the potential for massive damage, disruption and death. We think that the judiciary penalties received need to reflect the seriousness of these crimes, and are calling on the judiciary to consider all these factors when handing down sentences."

Network Rail welcomes the changes to the Coroners and Justice Bill, currently going through Parliament, in particular the proposal to establish a new Sentencing Council for England and Wales, with strengthened remit to promote consistency in sentencing practice. It also welcomes the amendment to the Road Traffic offenders Act (1988) to extend the length of the period of a driving disqualification where a custodial sentence is also imposed. Network Rail will be looking to work with Government, parliamentarians and interested parties to see how this important piece of legislation can support tougher action on level crossing offences.

Last year, there were more than 3400 incidents of misuse at level crossings. On average, more than three motorists a week were involved in a near miss, where a train narrowly avoided missing them because they ignored warning signs and lights or weaved round barriers. There were 20 collisions between trains and motor vehicles for those that didn't beat the lights.



Pedestrians were also putting themselves at risk with more than five a week involved in near misses. If a train hits a person at high speed, there is almost always only one tragic outcome. Sadly, 15 people lost their lives at level crossings in 2008.

Network Rail's hard hitting tv and radio advertising campaign, which launched in November 2008, illustrates in graphic detail the tragic consequences of misusing level crossings by both motorists and pedestrians.

Mr Coucher added: "We hope that increased awareness of the dangers of taking risks at level crossings, coupled with tough sentences for those caught breaking the law, will act as a deterrent and help bring down the number of offences and ultimately save lives."

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

News in Brief

Shadow Transport Secretary, Theresa Villiers visited Metro – and met with Metro's Chairman Coucillor Chris Greaves and its Director General Kieran Preston. A positive discussion about what has been achieved in West Yorkshire and future objectives for public transport took place.

South West Trains – is able to offer increased convenience to passengers parking their cars at its stations as well as protect the revenue it collects thanks to its RingGo scheme. Customer turn up and park, then call the number on the car park ticket machine giving their car and parking details and pay with a credit or debit card.

Blackfriars is to undergo major improvement – This will require the Tube station to close from 02 March 2009 until late 2011. Enhancements will include interchange facilities between the Tube and Network Rail, an enlarged ticket hall, plus enhanced customer information and security systems.

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Fraudster order to pay almost £5000 compensation to National Express East Anglia (NXEA)

A 31-year-old man from Brentwood has been ordered to pay almost £5,000 compensation to NXEA after travelling on the line with fraudulent tickets since December 2005. The man, who works as a configuration manager, admitted the offences after he was caught out by a revenue protection inspector (RPI) at Liverpool Street station in May last year. The RPI seized a number of rail tickets from the man that were for much shorter journeys than his daily commute from Shenfield to London. He was reported to police and PCs Ian Waudby and Jill Pocock, of the Area ticket fraud squad, subsequently arrested him. In interviews, the man admitted buying short journey tickets thereby avoiding the bulk of his fare and was recently ordered to pay £4894.30.

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

The Annual Safety Performance Report

Assessment of the safety intelligence that can be derived from the operation of the railway is key in the understanding of risk and determining safety priorities. To assist the industry in learning from this operational experience, RSSB produces the Annual Safety Performance Report (ASPR). This reviews our industry's safety performance over

the calendar year and assesses progress in the Key Risk Areas identified by the Strategic Safety Plan. It benchmarks rail safety in Britain against other transport modes and overseas railways, reviews the way that our industry learns from operational experience, and discusses the European developments that are having an effect on the way safety is managed.

The performance indicators covered include those which measure the effect that public behaviour has on the railway – with particular resonance for community safety practitioners.

The statistics form an important part of the data-to-decision-making process which RSSB manages on behalf of a large range of cross-industry groups – including the Community Safety Steering Group (CSSG), Rail Personal Security Group (RPSG) and Road-Rail Interface Safety Group (RRISG).



Alongside the ASPR, a key safety facts and figures booklet is produced. This is designed as a quick reference to fit in your pocket.

The 2008 edition of the ASPR, and the key safety facts and figures booklet, will be published in late April this year. If you are interested to know more, please email RSSB at aspr@rssb.co.uk.

To see an overview of safety performance for 2008, go to www.rssb.co.uk/safety/spr/spreports.asp.

Some of the main safety performance headlines of 2008 are as follows:

- There were no passenger or workforce fatalities in train accidents - the third year in the last four with no fatalities.
- Five passengers died in separate accidents; two on level crossings at stations, and three at other station locations. This is the lowest passenger fatality total ever recorded.
- Three members of the workforce died in accidents compared with two in 2007.

NB: The above information is provisional and subject to change as more information becomes available. This is particularly true of fatalities involving trespass or suicide due to upcoming coroners' reports. The final figures will be presented in the Annual Safety Performance Report, released in April.

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From 1 February please contact us on the following numbers:

National numbers

Emergency:
999

Non-emergency:
0800 40 50 40

Railnet extensions

Emergency:
004 0999

Force Control Room London
serving London, the south east and East Anglia

054 3366

Force Control Room Birmingham
serving the rest of England, Wales and Scotland

Non-emergency:
1359

First Contact Centre

The control rooms and First Contact Centre are there to serve the industry and public 24 hours a day. Please use the correct numbers and help us to keep emergency lines clear for genuine emergencies.

Future Events:

Event Name	Date	Event Details
The Railway Community Safety Forum 2009 organised by RSSB	Wednesday 18 March 2009 Fully Booked	Venue: National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull, West Midlands For further information: E-mail: community.safety@rspb.co.uk
'Governing through anti-social behaviour' – ESRC Seminar Series Programme	Wednesday 22 April 2009	Venue: Kings College, London For further information: http://www.community-safety.net/events.htm
ACORP Community Rail Awards – Carlisle	Friday 25 September 2009	Venue: Carlisle For further information: http://www.acorp.uk.com/

National Railway Crime Hotline
0800 40 50 40

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