

August update

**PARTNERS IN
COMMUNITY
SAFETY**



This is the monthly newsletter from the industry's Community Safety Support Unit, funded on a two-year trial basis from the RSSB-managed research and development programme.

The CSSU works under the wider community safety banner in support of the industry's efforts to tackle railway crime, level crossing safety, personal security and fatalities management.

The unit can also provide support if required to industry partners interacting with the victims of railway accidents.

If you have items for the newsletter please email the CSSU team at suenelsoncssu@aol.com by the 21st of the month to ensure inclusion in the following month's newsletter.

☛ Making Music

An exciting new initiative targeting the key role music plays in young people's lives is being developed by the rail industry. MusicTrax will harness youngsters' interest in music of all kinds - whether listening to it or making it - while at the same time conveying core railway community safety messages through a specially devised website. Discussions are currently underway with the music industry - including recording giant EMI - to make the initiative happen which it is aimed to launch in September.

It is planned the MusicTrax website will feature a competition for music makers - a sort of 'Pop Idol' online - with a chance to record the winning entry. A separate competition will also feature which will be open to all mainland Britain secondary schools to enter a music track from school performers whether in a band orchestra, ensemble or choir.

Northern Rail, the UK's largest community train operator, is to sponsor a 'win an iPod' competition through a simple quiz with a condition of entry being to listen to music maker entries and casting a vote. Other features being planned include music articles, reviews, e-zines, advertising of music events and activities in local areas, links with official music download sites and free mobile phone ring tones.

MusicTrax - which has been endorsed by the industry's National Railway Crime Group - fits the rail industry's two-pronged education approach of curricular-based activity and diversionary tactics such as Network Rail's No Messin'! initiative. It also fits the Department for Education and Skills Music Manifesto policy which encourages music of all genres to be a core activity for young people.

There is also an opportunity for the music industry to reflect its corporate social responsibility policies (e.g. promoting the legal downloading of music) by linking to a worthwhile community safety education campaign as promoted through the industry's www.trackoff.org website.

As the initiative develops there will be several opportunities for industry players to exercise their corporate social responsibility through sponsorship of events and activity and we will be writing to industry partners setting out opportunities for them climbing aboard from September. For further information contact suenelsoncssu@aol.com

☛ Making Millions

The cross-industry Railway Crime Working Group is to produce a one-industry filming protocol following concerns raised about Millions, a new 'family' film which features railway images at odds with the messages contained in the industry's education programme.

The group is working with Network Rail, train operators and the Heritage Railway Association to draw up a protocol that all parties can adopt. In doing so it will draw on the best of what already exists and consolidate in a one-size-fits-all approach.

The move comes as in a climate where more and more the industry is seeing the railway being used as a backdrop for adverts and music DVDs as well as featuring in storylines for TV programmes and films. Much of the imagery and messages are inappropriate as they suggest that trespass and horseplay or worse is acceptable. These negative messages run counter to the aims of the industry's education programme and it is this element in particular that is to be addressed in tightening up existing protocols to produce a cross-industry approach.



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☛ Rail graffiti vandal jailed

A graffiti vandal who was jailed for three and a half years after causing damage estimated at £250,000 on scores of trains and bridges also faces civil action from Network Rail to recover clean-up costs. Robert Lee, 23, became obsessed with spreading his "RIBS" tag and asked friends to photograph him beside his work. Lee, of Kennington, south east London, admitted criminal damage at Middlesex Guildhall Crown Court and asked for 51 other offences to be considered. On his release from jail Lee will also be issued with an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) banning him from the railway for five years.

Network Rail is launching a civil action against Lee to recover costs after he caused £74,000 worth of damage to company property. Lee was caught after scrawling his tag on property across Waterloo, Vauxhall, Lambeth, Wandsworth, Putney and Barnes over a period of 10 years.

- In another case a graffiti vandal has been jailed for six months, after being caught on camera spraying his 'tag' on a Tube train. Robin Knell, 23, pleaded guilty to the graffiti and as well as his sentence will be subject to a four year ASBO banning him from entering any railway sidings. He has 61 previous convictions for similar offences.

☛ Don't be a loser...

Inspectors targeted fare dodging hotspots in a crackdown which saw 128 people named and shamed in a month. Central Trains is carrying out a publicity humiliation drive where those convicted of avoiding payment will have their details listed on posters on the network.

So far more than 500 people have been named and shamed, with the latest monthly figures showing dodgers paying out a total of £23,895 in fines, costs and compensation. Those convicted also have their details printed on posters at Birmingham New Street and their nearest local station.

As part of the campaign swoops were carried out at Stourbridge and Snow Hill with a total of 151 people being issued

with a penalty fare. They were given 21 days to pay their £20 fine or face court action.

The Don't Be a Loser - Buy a Ticket campaign, launched at the end of March, has to date seen £83,073 collected in fines, compensation and costs.

☛ ...Buy a ticket

Attempts to con Northern Rail out of less than £40 in fares brought fines and costs amounting to £5,000 for fraudsters.

The culprits came from all walks of life including legal secretaries, bank clerks, a welder and even a risk analyst. Ages ranged from 20 to 56 with those netted in the sting also including an accountant and a teacher.

Northern's revenue protection inspectors carried out the exercise to identify passengers who bought short fares - tickets for a shorter distance than they actually travelled. In some cases the fare difference was as little as 10 pence. In court a total of 41 defendants admitted fare evasion resulting in £2,500 in fines, £2,740 costs and £39 in fares. This represented a total of £5,275, an average of £170 for each defendant and a criminal record.

☛ Rail and road target missile vandals

The rail industry's experience with the problems of missile throwing is being harnessed by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) in a bid to gain better understanding of the issue.

TRL says there is clear evidence of children and youths throwing objects at moving traffic - a phenomenon acutely familiar to train drivers across the rail network.

The Highways Agency has commissioned TRL to carry out research to investigate the problem as it affects road traffic and in doing so researchers will be talking to a wide range of people with a specific interest in the topic, including the rail industry, public transport organisations, the HSE, police, social workers and Highways Agency staff and contractors.

The final stage of the project will be to interview offenders who have been caught

throwing missiles at traffic in a bid to discover the motivation for such behaviour.

Through RSSB the rail industry has already supplied TRL with information and data to help them on their way. The outcome of the TRL research may well have parallels with the railway so the project is being watched with keen interest.

Contact Pat Wells at TRL on 01344 770476 or enquiries@trl.co.uk for more information.

☛ Trespass signs research

Work has now begun on an RSSB research project on behalf of the industry to identify how to give a more effective focus to current anti-trespass signs.

The familiar 'Do Not Trespass' roundel depicting a walking figure with a red line slashed through it is can be found by the thousands across the network. But although the placement of the signs fulfils a statutory requirement some believe them to be ineffective in keeping people - particularly young people - off the railway.

The idea for the research came from the mother of 15 year old Tyler Deacon of Leicester who was killed by a train while trespassing in December 2003. Dot Deacon believes more hard-hitting signs displayed at known trespass locations may help keep youngsters off the track.

Now the research project, being undertaken as a joint venture for RSSB by Halcrow and Human Engineering will seek to discover whether she is right.

The project will seek examples of danger signage good practice from around the world, but the crux of the study will be a series of focus groups involving young people to test their reaction to stimulus material.

The input of key stakeholders including Network Rail, the British Transport Police, train and freight operators as well as the general public will also be an essential part of the project. For more information contact project manager Nicola Forsdike at forsdiken@halcrow.com or the CSSU at suenelsoncssu@aol.com

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☛ **Darlington inquest into boys' deaths**

Two boys killed by a train on Good Friday at Darlington, Co. Durham, had been drinking in a group of more than 20 youths before they died, an inquest heard.

Lee Mullis, 14 and Stuart Adams, 15 both had alcohol in their blood equivalent to more than double the drink drive limit, having drunk the equivalent of four pints of beer.

Driver Andy Scott who was driving the three-car TransPennine Express from York to Newcastle told the inquest he caught sight of someone running in a crouching position straight in front of the train. *"It all happened in a second. There was nothing I could do."*

British Transport Police officers had interviewed 28 children after the tragedy who had been with Lee and Stuart that night. They told how the two boys had been 'messaging around' on the tracks. Others in the group shouted warnings as the train approached but it hit the pair before they could react.

The inquest jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

Coroner Andrew Tweddle said: *"There is no evidence in this case that the boys were playing chicken, however it is quite clear they were messing about on the railway line. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the dangers of children playing or messing around on the railway. Death is really a very likely outcome."*

☛ **Nuisance scramblers scuppered**

A 30 hectare field north of Iver railway station in Buckinghamshire experienced regular invasions of motor cycle scramblers for more than five years. Local residents regularly complained about the noise which even drowned out the sound of the trains travelling from London to the South West every 20 minutes. Then the rail industry, British Transport Police, Thames Valley Police and South Bucks Council joined forces to combat the problem. A 2 metre high fence was erected

and notices served on the culprits. Now the nuisance has disappeared. The partnership forged to tackle the problem resulted in the council setting up a response protocol between all parties to target illegal scramblers trying to get on the land and any other sites in South Bucks. Now the council is trying to secure a suitable off-road facility with proper training to keep illegal scrambling at bay. For more information contact Olu Sokoya or John Whittington at South Bucks District Council, tel: 01895 837200.

☛ **Caught in the act... 1**

A quick-witted driver took a photograph of vandals who put palisade fencing and a shopping trolley on the line in front of his train as it travelled through Birmingham. The signal in front of him had reverted from green to red because of the obstruction and although shaken by the incident the driver managed to get the offenders on film then handed it over to the British Transport Police.

☛ **Caught in the act... 2**

Three youths walking in the four foot narrowly missed being hit by a train near Princes Risborough. But they didn't bargain on the driver jumping down from his cab and managing to detain one of the youths who was then handed over to the police at the next station. Film from forward-facing cameras on the unit showing the youths on the line is now in the hands of the police too.

☛ **Royal Ascot a winner**

Although an extra 45,000-plus people used York railway station during Royal Ascot week in the city only 35 offences were reported to the British Transport Police ranging from public order, thefts and violence against the person. On average 13 offences are committed at York each week demonstrating that despite the massive additional influx of station users, trouble involving racing revellers was kept to a minimum.

☛ **Connecting communities**

More than 500 women police officers from around the world will gather in Leeds in

September for the 43rd annual training conference of the International Association of Women Police. The theme of the conference is Connecting Communities and over a period of four days training sessions will explore the community safety arena through physical and human connections. The conference is supported by the British Transport Police and West Yorkshire Police. Speakers from the rail industry will be taking part and outlining community safety and railway crime issues. The industry alliance, Partners Against Railway Crime (PARC) is sponsoring the conference's first training day on September 12th and will be hosting an exhibition highlighting the industry's community safety agenda. For more information go to www.iawp2005.org

☛ **Riding shotgun**

The bus company Stagecoach, plagued by vandals in Moss Side, Manchester, has found a solution: it has given some of the biggest and most-feared boys free passes on condition that they police the buses. Attacks, damage and robbery were costing the company £4,000 a week. Now it is a thing of the past, said The Times newspaper on July 26th.

☛ **Keep in touch...**

If you want to be added to this e-newsletter's mailing list send your details to suenelsoncssu@aol.com

☛ **Canada's Direction 2006**

The industry's annual Risk Management Forum held in Nottingham on 20-21 July was attended by more than 220 people from across the rail industry who welcomed Gary Drouin from the Canadian community railway safety partnership 'Direction 2006'. Gary told how the Canadian initiatives were contributing to substantial reductions in level crossing misuse and trespass.

If you would like to learn more visit www.direction2006.com.