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Rail can do more to tackle impact of alcohol says independent safety body

An industry-wide approach to tackling alcohol misuse on the railway is essential to help reduce deaths at the platform edge, according to the industry's independent safety body, RSSB.

Intoxication was partly to blame for causing two in every three (66%) of the 32 deaths that have occurred at the platform edge in the past 10 years. Research by RSSB has also shown that 40% of passengers assaulted or abused on Britain's railways believe their assailant was intoxicated and on average staff believe that approximately 60% of assaults (of all types) that they had personally experienced were alcohol-related.

RSSB has now issued updated guidance for rail companies to help them manage the risks to personal safety and security from alcohol. Aimed at a range of staff including safety directors and station managers, the '*Managing alcohol risks to personal safety and security on the railway*' guide includes new case studies and links to relevant resources, organisations and websites, to help industry develop a more coordinated approach.

"Alcohol and the railway can be a dangerous combination," said the Chairman of the Platform Train Interface (PTI) Strategy Implementation Group, Allan Spence. "As the safest way to travel, many people use the train to travel to and from their night out. Alcohol consumption can lead to a range of behaviours risking harm to themselves and others, as well as anti-social behaviour and crime.

"This updated guide is built on solid research and details the tactical measures that duty holders can take to reduce the number of accidents that take place at the platform edge.

Our challenge is to protect the health and welfare of passengers who have consumed alcohol as well as protecting front line staff and other passengers from anti-social or criminal behaviour where alcohol is the inflammatory factor", commented Mr Spence.

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Notes to Editors:

For further information, please contact pressoffice@rssb.co.uk or call 020 3142 5653

The updated good practice guide focuses on ten measures that duty holders could deploy to manage the risk presented by the contribution of alcohol to passenger and staff safety and personal security:

- Powers preventing consumption of alcohol in public places and dispersing groups
- Powers for controlling the sale of alcohol and dealing with problem premises
- Existing laws and railway bylaws for managing intoxicated passengers
- Controlling access to the network and reassuring other passengers
- Responding to problems – backing up front line staff
- Training staff in how to deal with intoxicated people and use available powers
- Looking after intoxicated passengers
- Preventing consumption of alcohol on board services
- Restricting the sale of alcohol
- Promoting responsible drinking

Each measure is accompanied by a clear explanation and guidance on how to implement them.

New case studies provide illustrations of how the measures have been implemented.

About RSSB

Through research, analysis, and insight RSSB supports our members and stakeholders to deliver a safer, more efficient and sustainable rail system.

Our vision is to be a centre of excellence, valued by its members and stakeholders as an essential contributor to their success

Our independent evidence based approach is built on strong technical capability, and the enabling of collaborative industry engagement for the benefit of the whole rail system

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