

<u>Measure Name</u>	Collaboration with local government and communities
<u>Definition</u>	Plan and work with local government and community organizations to increase rail safety.
<u>Tags</u>	
<i>Incident Type</i>	Both trespass and suicide
<i>Location</i>	Both station and right-of-way
<i>Intervention Strategy</i>	Education: outreach and messaging
<i>Measure Group</i>	Collaboration, training, and education

Description

Collaboration with local government and communities involves sharing information and resources to promote safety within and around the rail environment and increasing awareness of rail suicide and trespassing. Collaboration aims to help communities explore opportunities for shared responsibility in reducing rail suicide and trespass.

Potential community collaborators include:

- Rail carriers.
- Local government and urban planners.
- Law enforcement and first responders.
- Mental health facilities.
- Other community groups.

Potential community collaboration topics include:

- Engaging rail carriers, law enforcement, other first responders, and mental health facilities to facilitate prompt intervention and prevent a collision when an individual is at risk in the rail environment [1].
- Discussing the potential for temporary train speed restrictions or shutdowns to ensure the safety of all individuals in the track area [1].
- Directly involving local government and the public to implement countermeasures such as monitoring, detection, and fencing [2].
- Including considerations for trespass and suicide risk in community planning and development (e.g., proximity to the tracks) for schools, elder care, rehabilitation, parking lots, and other facilities.
- Facilitating rapid incident response and resolution through planning and coordination with law enforcement. This may also include developing training or guidance material specifically for responding to train-person strikes (see Additional Resources).
- Facilitating consistent data collection by rail staff and law enforcement at the scene of a collision; this information can be used to better understand rail trespass and suicide and to prevent future incidents. Data may also be used to make preliminary determinations about the probable intent of the individual that was struck (suicide or non-suicide), which can help to inform mitigation strategies.

In 2011, FRA published the *Community Trespassing Prevention Guide*, a document that supports a community-based approach to preventing rail trespass and suicide [3]. The guide outlines a problem-solving model for trespass prevention named Community, Analysis, Response and Evaluation (CARE), which includes recommendations for collaborating with community stakeholders. During 2009-2013, FRA sponsored an evaluation of this model that was conducted in West Palm Beach, FL, along the South Florida Rail Corridor and Florida East Coast Railroad's rights-of-way [4]. Findings show that the CARE model can successfully provide a structure to help stakeholders to understand and address trespass problem areas, as well as develop and evaluate mitigations. The CARE model also led to the establishment of other collaborative projects that had additional community safety benefits. Similarly, Together Railroads and Communities Keeping Safe (TRACKS) is a rail safety education and community outreach program that provides age-appropriate customized trainings to schools, camps, community groups etc., about safe choices at grade crossings and awareness of the dangers of being on or near train tracks [5].

An evaluation of community collaboration was also completed during a seven-month pilot study in Sweden [1]. This study focused on preventing train strikes by identifying and removing at-risk individuals from the track area.

Additional search terms: *CARE model, coordination, partnering, partnership*

Advantages

- Collaboration is a relatively low-cost measure. Costs are primarily associated with the staff's time to participate in meetings for the coordination and development of a plan and follow-on activities [1].
- Existing staff can be designated for tasks associated with this measure.
- Current and potential future problem areas or hotspots along the right-of-way or at stations can be targeted for both trespass and suicide.
- Establishing relationships between stakeholders can create additional safety-related benefits for the community over time [4].
- Collaboration can raise awareness of rail safety implications in other planning and engineering activities, such as traffic mitigation, zoning, and other development [4].
- Collaboration increases local government awareness of the need to address rail trespass and suicide [4].
- This measure can help to increase safety in both the rail environment and the community.
- Suicidal individuals, or those who may become suicidal, are put in touch with the help they need, potentially reducing the number of individuals who consider the rail system as a means for suicide in the future.
- When collaboration includes train speed restrictions or traffic shutdowns, delays tend to be shorter than the typical delay after a train-person strike. In one case, delays were found to be less than 30 minutes [1].

Drawbacks

- It can be difficult to build consensus among large stakeholder groups [4].
 - It may be challenging to maintain engagement of parties outside of the rail industry [4].
 - Representative turnover can be a challenge if new representatives do not share the same agenda as others in the stakeholder group. Delegation to junior staff can also become challenging if they are not given the authority to make decisions [4].
 - When coordinating with mental health facilities and others about individuals at imminent risk for suicide in the rail environment, various states and towns may have differing legal constraints regarding how personal information can be shared [1].
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Notable Practices

- Identify and engage all stakeholders early to help support the effort throughout the collaboration and create a sense of shared responsibility for rail trespass and suicide [4].
- Include stakeholders with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives so that the stakeholder group is better able to represent the interests and concerns of the larger community.
- Clearly identify points of contact for each participating party to avoid confusion [1].
- Clarify roles and responsibilities for everyone involved, including individuals involved in initial planning, communication, and implementation.
- Develop a written plan for collaboration and communication agreed upon by all parties.
- Assemble a formal press release to help support the credibility of the effort and obtain buy-in from local government, as well as foster community support [4].
- Use consistent terminology with a universal understanding to avoid confusion. For example, consistent location information such as GPS coordinates, milepost number, or latitude/longitude format [1].
- When possible, utilize existing efforts that already address safety issues in the community [4].
- Consider developing procedures to ensure the safety of those entering the track area to intervene or respond to an incident.
- Acknowledge different perspectives and sensitivities among the group that may affect participation levels [4].
- If using certain types of media be sure they are inclusive and equitable, considering the ethnicities, languages, age groups, and ability status represented in the target audience and printed in English and any appropriate secondary languages based on the needs of the target population.

References

- [1] RESTRAIL. (2014). *Evaluation of measures, recommendations and guidelines for further implementation: Pilot test #7, [Societal collaboration to prevent railway suicide – TrV & KAU](#)*.

Description: This document describes a pilot test of societal collaboration to prevent rail suicide as part of the RESTRAIL project.

- [2] Gabree, S. H., Hiltunen, D., & Ranalli, E. (2019). [Railroad Implemented Countermeasures to Prevent Suicide: Review of Public Information](#) (No. DOT/FRA/ORD-19/04). Washington, DC: Federal Railroad Administration.

Abstract: The public discussion of railroad safety initiatives can help to improve safety, either directly with the public through an increased awareness, or by encouraging other carriers to consider similar safety efforts. Rail carriers are often quick to promote trespass and crossing safety efforts, however, efforts to mitigate rail suicide are often not discussed. Suicide is unique from other rail safety topics in that it requires more precise language when discussing publicly. Responsible discussion of suicide prevention can increase the availability of information on how to get help, while limiting the dramatization of these events, thereby reducing the likelihood of copycat events. In this report, the authors conducted web-based searches to identify rail-specific efforts to mitigate suicide that have been publicly discussed, either by the carrier themselves or through the media. Generally, there is limited discussion of suicide-specific prevention efforts being undertaken by rail carriers, and the level of detail provided about these efforts varies. In total, 14 carriers and a range of strategies were identified including fencing, signage, detection and monitoring, training of employees and authorities, public and industry events, websites, and media guidelines. Partnerships with suicide prevention groups, both local and national, were most often discussed.

- [3] Federal Railroad Administration. (2011). [Community Trespassing Prevention Guide](#). Washington, DC: Federal Railroad Administration.

Description: This guide outlines a problem-solving model for trespass prevention – Community, Analysis, Response and Evaluation (CARE) – which includes collaboration with community stakeholders that can be applied to a variety of collaboration-based measures.

- [4] DaSilva, M., & Ngamdung, T. (2014). [Trespass Prevention Research Study-West Palm Beach, FL](#) (No. DOT-VNTSC-FRA-14-02). Washington, DC: Federal Railroad Administration.

Abstract: The United States Department of Transportation’s (U.S. DOT) Research and Innovative Technology Administration’s John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center (Volpe Center), under the direction of the U.S. DOT Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) Office of Research and Development (R&D), conducted a Trespass Prevention Research Study (TPRS) in the city of West Palm Beach, FL. The main objective of this research was to demonstrate potential benefits, including best practices and lessons learned, of implementation and evaluation of trespass prevention strategies following FRA’s and Transport Canada’s existing trespassing prevention guidance on the rail network in West Palm Beach, FL, and all of its rights-of-way.

This report documents the results of the implementation of the guidance discussed in this study. The results of the trespass prevention strategies will be analyzed to help determine areas of potential risk, develop solutions to prevent and minimize risk exposure, and implement successful countermeasures in

the future. The ultimate objective of the research is to aid in the development of national recommendations or guidelines to reduce trespass-related incidents and fatalities.

[5] Warner, J. E., Lee, D., Trueblood, A. B., Cline, J. C., Johnson, N. A., & Christjoy, A. (2022). [Strategies for deterring trespassing on rail transit and commuter rail rights-of-way, volume 1: Guidebook](#). Washington, D.C: *The National Academies Press*.

Objective: This guidebook is intended to provide information on strategies to deter trespassing on rail transit and commuter rail exclusive and semi-exclusive rights-of-way, including within station areas outside designated pedestrian crossings. In general, trespassing is accessing rail transit and commuter rail restricted areas without permission or proper authorization, intentionally or unintentionally. The guidebook documents the extent of trespassing in the United States; existing decision-making guidance that agencies can utilize; causes, consequences, and risks associated with trespassing; mitigation countermeasures to reduce trespassing risks; and tools that agencies can utilize to identify possible mitigation strategies for a particular trespassing problem or concern.

Additional Resources

Hedqvist, M. & Rådbo, H. (2013, October 6-11). [Can societal collaboration prevent railway suicides?](#) *International Railway Safety Conference*, Vancouver, Canada.

Description: Every year a number of fatal accidents occur in the railway system. Most of these fatalities are due to suicides. To prevent these unwanted accidents the railway sector needs to take a responsibility for their system and look into what preventative measures that can be taken. Since October 2011 the authors has been a part of the EC project RESTRAIL (REduction of Suicide and Trespass on RAILway property). RESTRAIL is a project with the goal of finding the most effective measures to prevent suicides and trespass accidents. One of the promising measures found in RESTRAIL is about collaboration between local authorities when there is a threat of suicide or trespass in the system. This measure will described how it is in progress in the southern part of Sweden. The participants in the project are the regional police authority, the regional rescue services, the emergency call center, the regional psychiatric health care and the transport administration (Trafikverket). When there is a report to either of the stakeholders of an unauthorized person is in the track area, an immediate traffic shutdown is requested. All of the involved parties are informed and meet up at the scene to perform search and rescue.

Related Measures

- Grade separation
- Identify and monitor hotspots
- Identify funding opportunities
- Incident cost estimation
- Landscaping treatments to restrict access
- Learning from evidence-based practices
- Passenger engagement to identify customers at risk
- Plan for expedited incident response
- Planning for events with increased traffic

Collaboration with local government and communities

- Policy for managing death memorials
- Public messaging to prevent trespassing
- Rail corridor risk assessment
- Rail safety education in communities
- Rail safety education in schools
- Improving the safety of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness
- Safety patrols to deter suicide and trespass
- Unmanned aircraft systems for detection