

Railroad Security

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS

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Summary

Effective rail security entails a multi-faceted, cooperative, and unified approach marked by constant vigilance that taps a wide range of capabilities in the private and public sectors to assure preparedness and respond to security threats. America's railroads work hard every day to meet this objective through regular drills and exercises, security training programs and awareness initiatives, and information sharing. Effective security enhancement can only happen if all stakeholders are aligned in common purpose, which is why railroads work closely and cooperatively with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and other agencies and directorates within the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of Defense, the Department of Transportation, Transport Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and state and local law enforcement agencies to ensure America's railroads remain the most productive, safest, and most secure in the world.

The Railroad Industry's Terrorism Risk Analysis and Security Management Plan

- In the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, top railroad officials and law enforcement and security experts developed the industry's **Security Management Plan**. The plan is a comprehensive blueprint of security enhancement and risk mitigating actions, aimed at responding effectively to threats and incidents of concern. It was put into effect by January 2002.
- The industry's plan applies a unified, risk-based, and intelligence-driven approach to rail security. Its four alert levels call for increasing security measures, both physical and cyber, driven by intelligence assessments and analyses of developing threats and related indicators of concern.
- The railroad industry's security plan has not been designed to be put on a shelf and occasionally taken down and dusted off. Rather, **it is a living document, evaluated and enhanced continuously** through recurring exercises, integration of effective practices, and frequent consultations with government and private security experts **to ensure maximum sustained effectiveness in the face of evolving security threats**.
- Today more than 130 railroads, including all railroads that transport security-sensitive materials through high-threat urban areas, have integrated the rail industry security plan into their respective networks and operations.
- The **Rail Security Working Committee**, comprised of senior law enforcement and security officials, manages the industry's overall effort and is the main channel of communication and coordination with government agencies on physical security issues.
- The **Rail Information Security Committee** focuses on cybersecurity. Formed in 1999, many years before the far more recent heightened emphasis on cybersecurity, the Committee is comprised of railroads' chief information security and assurance officers.

- The industry maintains current intelligence priorities with government agencies that focus on attempted terrorist attacks and cyber breaches to inform proactive security measures.
- **The skilled professionals employed by America’s railroads play a vital role in the industry’s layered security approach.** The vast majority of U.S. freight and passenger rail employees receive security training. This training starts as part of orientation upon initial hiring and continues with periodic sessions that focus on sustained awareness, informed vigilance, and timely reporting of concerns. The fact that front-line rail employees account for a substantial share of total reports of suspicious activity in and around rail facilities demonstrates that they are applying the training received.
- Railroads know they must work with the wider community to help ensure rail security. To that end, the mantra “**see something, say something**” extends to every community in which railroads operate. Railroads work closely with local law enforcement, emergency responders, and the public to broaden awareness, address safety and security-related concerns, and enhance preparedness. In 2016 alone, railroads participated in nearly 5,200 security-awareness activities with local authorities and emergency responders.
- The **Security and Emergency Response Training Center (SERTC)** in Pueblo, Colorado, plays a key role in enhancing rail security. It is part of the Transportation Technology Center, Inc., the world’s foremost rail-related research, testing, and training organization. Though primarily focused on rail safety, SERTC also offers realistic preparedness training across surface transportation modes. Tens of thousands of emergency responders and more than 2,200 TSA employees have trained at SERTC.
- **Useful intelligence and security information must be shared in a timely, effective, and consistent manner if rail security efforts are to succeed.** That’s why the rail industry is in constant communication with the TSA, the FBI, Transport Canada, and other government agencies and law enforcement groups. A railroad police officer with top secret clearance serves as the industry’s liaison at the FBI’s National Joint Terrorism Task Force. Industry analysts partner with federal government counterparts in a unique Rail Intelligence Working Group, focused on analyzing potential physical and cyber threats to railroads and delineating effective countermeasures.
- The **Railway Alert Network (RAN)** is the **industry’s intelligence and security information center.** Each day, its staff reviews intelligence and related security information to produce analyses of terrorist tactics, malicious cyber activity, rail-related threats and incidents, and suspicious activity. Railroads use these materials in their security training and awareness programs. This information is also shared with counterparts at other transportation modes and with government security officials in the United States and Canada — affirming the industry’s commitment to a strong public-private security partnership — and is used to support railroads’ security training programs.
- Analyses by TSA, the FBI, and DHS demonstrate that many of the observable indicators of a developing terrorist plot involving railroads occur well away from the final target. Local police officers are more likely to observe those indicators or receive reports about them. That’s why the rail industry has established the **Rail Security Information Portal for Law Enforcement.** The portal shares intelligence assessments, analyses, and advisories directly with partners in local, state, and federal law enforcement.
- Railroads strive continuously to **identify opportunities to improve** in all matters related to security, **driven by initiative, innovation, and investment.**