Measure Name: Planning for events with increased traffic

Definition: Planning for events with increased foot or vehicle traffic—including public gatherings, roadwork, or construction—through risk assessment and mitigation.

Tags:

Type of Incident:

- ☐ Non-Motorized Users Only
- ☐ Motor Vehicles Only
- ☒ Both

Intervention Strategy:

- ☒ Data: application and planning
- ☐ Education: outreach and messaging
- ☐ Enforcement: policy development and rulemaking
- ☐ Engineering: technological and physical deterrents

Type of Problem:

- ☒ Non-Motorized Users Violating Warning Devices
- ☒ Motor Vehicles Violating Warning Devices
- ☒ Vehicle ROW Incursion
- ☒ Vehicle Congestion
- ☒ Blocked Crossing
- ☐ Vehicle Hang-up

Measure Category:

- ☒ Risk Assessment
- ☐ Policy and Enforcement
- ☒ Collaboration, Training, and Education
- ☒ Public Communication
- ☐ Physical Barriers
- ☐ Detection and Lighting
- ☐ Infrastructure Modification
- ☐ Post-Incident Management
- ☐ Warning Devices

Description

Large gatherings and events can cause an uptick in both foot (including bicycles) and vehicle traffic around grade crossings. Some individuals may use the train as a mode of transportation, while others may just be passing near the tracks to get to their destination. Roadwork and construction projects can also increase activity around the tracks at crossings. Having more people in and around crossings increases the opportunity for unsafe activity in the area with the potential to become distracted. It is therefore important to develop a plan with the community for ways to mitigate risks and ensure safety.

The goal of this measure is to foster a shared sense of responsibility in reducing trespass incidents at grade crossings, to include rail carriers, law enforcement, and other community stakeholders located around the railroad tracks. FRA's *Community Trespassing Prevention Guide* [1] outlines a problem-solving model for trespass prevention—Community, Analysis, Response and Evaluation (CARE)—that includes recommendations for collaborating with community stakeholders. The CARE model provides a structure to help stakeholders understand and address a specific trespass problem and develop solutions and evaluate their effects; this can also lead to other projects and safety benefits for the community. One important component of the CARE model is maintaining open lines of communication. Understanding roles and responsibilities of all parties while creating and implementing a plan for events with increased traffic is critical for its seamless execution.

Each public event or special circumstance may require a unique action plan tailored to its size and location, the time of year, the time of day, and other factors. Identifying potential trespass access points and safe access points can be useful for managing increased vehicle and foot traffic. Other measures can also be helpful, such as enacting speed restrictions for train traffic during the event or positioning additional community members or law enforcement to keep individuals from crossing in unsafe areas. In places where the special event impacts roadways by increasing congestion with foot or vehicle traffic, changes in the train schedule may be advised to clear out the area before adding another transportation mode into the location [2].

Additional search terms: *CARE model, coordination, crowds*

Advantages

- Collaboration and risk assessment is relatively low-cost and mostly requires time for stakeholders to design the plan. However, details in the final plan may be associated with additional costs.
- In-house rail staff can be tasked with designing the plan and supporting the railroad's role during large-scale events.
- This measure takes a proactive approach to ensure safety around the tracks for special events and other circumstances with increased travel by vehicle or on foot within the track area.
- Planning for events with increased traffic can help facilitate relationships between stakeholders, which can lead to additional safety-related benefits to the community and the railroad. [4]

Drawbacks

- It can be difficult to build consensus among multiple stakeholders throughout the planning process. [3]

Notable Practices

- Consider documenting a plan of action for managing increased traffic in and around the track area. Allow flexibility to tailor the plan for future events and circumstances.
- Clearly designate roles and responsibilities for everyone involved, including individuals involved in initial planning, communication, and implementation.
- Holding trains outside of crossings can reduce the chances for a blocked crossing. [4] This procedure could result in delays if traveling by train and should be announced to the public when implemented.

References

[1] 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.

[2] Federal Highway Administration. (2007). *Managing Travel for Planned Special Events Handbook: Executive Summary*.

Abstract: This Managing Travel for Planned Special Events Handbook: Executive Summary is written to communicate new and proven institutional and high-level operational techniques and strategies for achieving a coordinated, proactive approach to managing travel for all planned special events in a region in addition to facilitating successful and cost-effective management of specific planned special events.

This technical reference provides a working knowledge of the techniques and strategies that practitioners may use to successfully: (1) plan for and operate a particular planned special event or (2) manage all planned special events in a region. In tum, individual managers and decision makers gain an understanding of the collective tasks to develop and implement solutions for managing travel during a planned special event. Transportation operations vary during a planned special event and identifying issues and advance planning activities to use can lead to the successful travel management for a planned special event.

[3] daSilva, M., & Ngamdung, T. (2014). Trespass Prevention Research Study-West Palm Beach, FL. Technical Report No. DOT/FRA/ORD-14/19. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation, 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.

Related Measures

- Collaboration with local government and communities
- Public messaging to enhance grade crossing safety
- Safety patrols to deter grade crossing violations

Images

- No image available