

ROW Fatality & Trespass Prevention Workshop
St. Louis, Missouri
August 14, 2012

New Jersey Safety Along Railroads Short-Term Action Plan

NJDOT Commissioner
James S. Simpson

NJ TRANSIT Executive Director
James Weinstein



BIG PICTURE

- **1,000 miles of light and commuter railroad tracks.**
- **2,400 miles of freight railroad tracks run through major cities, small towns, residential, commercial areas near parks and schools.**
- **2,034 schools within a ½ mile radius of a an active rail line.**
- **NJ TRANSIT has 312 grade crossings.**



PROBLEM

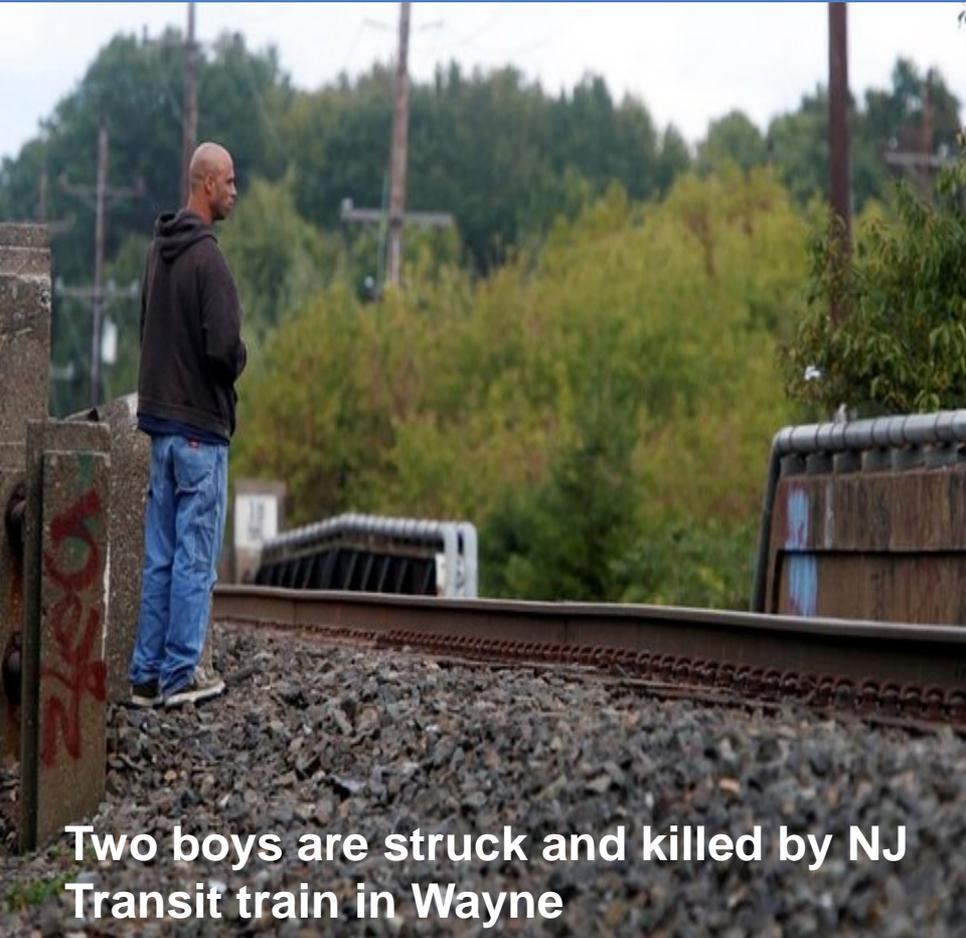
- In 2010 and 2011, there were a total of 81 incidents involving NJ TRANSIT trains at grade crossings or along the tracks in New Jersey, resulting in 51 deaths.
- Of the 51 deaths, 30 were either accidental in nature or undetermined at this time as to whether they were accidental or intentional.
- Of the 30 accidental or undetermined fatalities, 23 occurred along tracks at locations where the public is not permitted.
- 7 of the accidental or undetermined fatalities occurred at grade crossings.



Within 24 hours of each other....



Garfield seventh-grader fatally struck by NJ Transit train



Two boys are struck and killed by NJ Transit train in Wayne



IMMEDIATE ACTIONS BY NJ TRANSIT

- Performed a re-inspection of the rail, light rail and bus systems to look at additional safety measures that be could be put in operation.
- Established a Trespasser Intrusion Program (T.I.P.) where train and rail maintenance crews report trespassing activity.
- Held Focus Groups with middle/high school students and parents on rail safety.



IMMEDIATE ACTIONS BY NJ TRANSIT

- Revamped the Rail School Safety Program to include first-person presentations by NJ TRANSIT Police and Engineers who have been involved with a fatality.
- Created a safety ‘wrap’ for mini-vans used by the NJ TRANSIT Safety Specialists.
- Created Bumper Stickers– “Keep Alert – Keep Alive” - placed on all NJ TRANSIT vehicles.
- Produced a new video for school students.



IMMEDIATE ACTIONS BY NJ TRANSIT

- **Rail Safety Summit with community leaders and community groups to spread the safety message and bring the NJ TRANSIT education program to schools and organizations.**
- **Created a new website marquee for NJ TRANSIT's website with rail safety tips.**
- **Used Social Media to spread the word.**
- **Working with NJDOE and Legislators to explore developing quality education programs on rail safety and get the curriculum in the schools.**



IMMEDIATE ACTIONS BY NJDOT COMMISSIONER

- ✓ *Formed a leadership oversight committee – high ranking decision makers local, county and federal.*
- ✓ *Reached out to subject matter experts (SME's) from local, state and federal agencies*
- ✓ *Formed e-cubed subcommittees of SME's to examine the problem and form the strategies to address the issue.*
- ✓ *Researched best practices from the across the country to ensure that we were doing everything we could to enhance safety.*



How were the actions identified and prioritized?

- Sequestered the subcommittee's in a conference room for 4 hours.
- Each subcommittee discussed and agreed up recommended actions.
- Subcommittee voted on priority actions.
- Priority actions were documented in the action plan.



OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Development of Rail Safety Plus Database

- a) Analysis tool that integrates crash stats, land use/contextual variables such as school/parks, rail lines, at grades crossings, and information on high trespass locations
- b) This will allow for specific targeted actions for design, enforcement activities and education outreach.

Time frame: 6-12 months **(In Progress)**

Responsibility: Transportation Safety Resource Center



OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Formalize Structure Linking NJDOT and NJ Transit

- a) Establish a formal institutional connection linking NJDOT Railroad Engineering Safety with NJ Transit Safety Unit to carry out integrated pro-active initiatives, and to ensure that all NJDOT rail efforts are fully coordinated internally and with NJ Transit.

Time frame: 3 months **(complete)**

Responsibility: NJDOT Commissioner/NJ Transit Executive Director



SHORT -TERM RECOMMENDED ACTIONS



Engineering

- **Pilot Program of Enhanced Engineering Safety Treatments**
 - Partner with FRA to pilot new measures such as signals, gate skirts signage, etc.

Time frame: 1-2 years **(being piloted)**

Lead: Federal Railroad Administration/NJDOT

Engineering

Gate Skirt Pilot Installation- Matawan Station



Engineering

Another Train Coming Sign- Plauderville Station

Photo by: Marco DeSilva – Volpe Center



Engineering

- **Expand Diagnostic Team Program**
 - Expand NJDOT resources and staffing to proactively assess locations in addition to reacting to crash incidences
 - Performed a comprehensive re-inspection of all rail lines to determine if additional safety measures are needed.

Time frame: < 1 Year **(complete-ongoing)**

Lead: NJDOT

Engineering

- **Safe Routes to School Program Infrastructure Integration**
 - Expand project selection criteria for SRTS Program/funding to include proximity to rail crossings or rail lines

Time frame: 6-12 months (2013 solicitation)

Lead: NJDOT

Education

- **Public Education Campaign**
 - PSA's using various media outlets; social media, at stations, schools etc. Transit vehicle wraps etc.
 - Target high risk populations (youth-men 18-25)

Time frame: 1 year (complete-ongoing)
Lead: NJ Transit



Education

- **Enhance/Expand NJ Transit's Rail Safety School Program**
 - Provide additional funding and staffing resources for educational outreach to schools.
 - Explore opportunity to partner with the MPO's and the TMA's to assist with a more expanded outreach.

Time frame: immediate **(complete)**

Lead: NJ Transit

Education

- **Install Educational Cues/Signage at Targeted Rail Crossings**
 - As part of the Diagnostic Team proactive efforts, install clear, well-lit warning/educational signs including placards detailing laws and fines for violations for trespassing and illegal crossings.

Time frame: 1 year- (ongoing)

Lead: NJ Transit

Education

- **Expand Pedestrian Safety/Vehicle Safety Information at Rail Crossings in Driver's Education Manual**
 - Enhance and expand language in the Manual that addresses pedestrian and motor vehicle safety at rail crossings and along rail lines, including warning signs, laws and violations. Ensure that rail safety questions are part of the drivers test.

Time frame: 6-12 months **(draft submitted)**

Lead: Motor Vehicle Commission/ NJ Transit/ NJDOT

Education

- **Integrate Rail Safety Message into NJ Ambassadors In Motion Program**
 - Educational Program with teams of experts deployed to high risk areas to speak with communities about safety for all users (to include rail safety)

Time frame: 1 Year (complete)

Lead: Voorhees Transportation Center/NJDOT



Enforcement

- Target high-risk station and grade crossing locations for enforcement of laws.
- Link the action with PSA's and other messaging that stresses personal responsibility and modeling safe behavior for others.



NO TRESPASSING

You are subject to fines and arrest



PROHIBIDO EL PASO

Usted está sujeto a multas y arresto



NEW JERSEY TRANSIT -PSA



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