



REVIEW



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IMPRESS

The EU co-funded project IMPRESS (**IMP**roving **R**ailway **sE**curity through awarene**SS** and training) aims to improve the protection of stations and trains by developing security training and awareness programmes for all stakeholders in rail stations and on trains.

It focuses on the 'immediate responders' from the railway environment, or those who are most likely to be the first to prevent or react to a security incident. This includes rail staff at stations and onboard trains, security staff, staff from station shops, and cleaning staff as well as other service providers.

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REVIEW

As part of the IMPRESS dissemination strategy, a media monitoring was carried out by the UIC Security Department on the topic of rail security from 1st December 2024 to 28th February 2025.

Based on keyword searches performed on X, LinkedIn, Google news & AP News, the following pages summarize the relevant news items found for the following threats:

Theft, Aggression, Fraud, Trespassing, Vandalism, Security Measures, Terrorism, Hoax, Sabotage, Gender-based Violence, Knife attacks & Armed Attacks.

It also describes news item of relevance to rail security culture and recent publications.



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GENERAL THEFT

SHEETS HAPPEN: TRAIN THIEVES CAUGHT (INDIA)

Railway staff caught passengers attempting to steal bed sheets and towels from train coaches in Prayagraj (India) on 18 January 2025. A viral video captured the moment as employees discovered the theft during luggage inspection, sparking online discussions about passenger misconduct and railway property protection [1][2][3].

SECURITY INVESTMENTS AMID RISING THEFT AND VANDALISM (BRAZIL)

The Port of Santos is increasing security investments due to a surge in theft and vandalism, particularly targeting freight trains. Criminal organizations have been stealing high-value cargo, leading to significant economic losses for railway companies. In response, operators like Rumo (Brazil) are enhancing private security measures and collaborating with local authorities to combat these crimes [4].



TRESPASSING

Dangerous Trespassing Trend (Australia)

Queensland Rail is warning against a dangerous trend of trespassing on train tracks in South-East Queensland (Australia). In 2024, there were 3,845 incidents and 197 near misses, slightly up from 2023. Hotspots include Wynnum North, Wynnum Central, and Loganlea. Queensland Rail urges people to avoid tracks and seek staff help for dropped items, as trespassing is illegal with a \$322 fine and poses significant security risks [5].





METAL THEFT

£100k Theft Derails Preston-Bolton Railway Services (UK)

On 28 December 2024, a significant cable theft caused major train service disruptions between Preston and Bolton (UK). Thieves stole valuable high-voltage power cables from the railway line, leading to suspended services and replacement bus operations. Network Rail reported substantial financial losses and is collaborating with British Transport Police (BTP) to investigate the incident [6].

Cable Theft Brings Lille's TER Trains to a Standstill (France)

Thirteen copper cables, totaling hundreds of meters, were stolen from SNCF (France) property on 27 February 2025. The disruptions lasted throughout the day, with services gradually resuming in the afternoon. Two individuals were arrested as part of the investigation, but they were released due to lack of evidence. The investigation continues to identify the perpetrators of the theft [7].





TRAINING

MULTI-AGENCY TRAINING PREPARES PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION (USA)

Law enforcement agencies, including the Federal Air Marshal Service, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and Virginia State Police, conducted a joint training exercise to enhance coordination and response capabilities for the upcoming Presidential Inauguration. Coordinated by the Amtrak Police Department, the exercise, carried out on 18 January 2025, focused on strengthening interagency collaboration and maintaining high security standards for the national event [8].

U.S. AND CANADA UNITE FOR PASSENGER RAIL SECURITY TRAINING (CANADA)

A joint Transport Security Administration (TSA) and Transport Canada exercise in Niagara Falls (Canada), on 22 January 2025, brought together 15 agencies to simulate and prepare for potential transportation security threats. The comprehensive training focused on scenarios like reservation system attacks, social media threats, suspicious baggage, and active shooter situations, emphasizing cross-border collaboration and proactive security strategies for passenger rail networks [9].

ARMED ATTACK

Dublin's Rush Hour Disrupted by Weapon Scare at Connolly Station (Ireland)

A security incident unfolded at Dublin's Connolly Station (Ireland) on 8 January 2025, involving a passenger on the Sligo-Dublin train carrying a suspected firearm. A man in his 50s was arrested at the scene, prompting Garda Armed Response Units to deploy. The station was temporarily evacuated, and the suspect's firearm was seized. No direct threats were made to passengers during the incident [10].





GENERAL SECURITY

Persistent Security Challenges Hinder Rail Operations (South Africa)

South Africa's rail sector faces ongoing security issues, including vandalism and theft, which compromise operational efficiency. In 2023, the country recorded 278 derailments and 687 collisions, with security-related incidents decreasing from 8,643 to 7,420 but operational failures rising to 2,496. The Railway Safety Regulator (RSR) highlighted the theft of overhead cables and rail components as a major concern, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, which accounted for 36% of railway incidents. The human toll is significant, with 85 deaths and 181 injuries reported [12].





BOMB HOAXES

HELD IN GOA FOR BOMB THREAT HOAX (INDIA)

A 40-year-old laborer was arrested in Goa (India) for making a bomb threat against the Chembur Police Station in Mumbai, which turned out to be a hoax. On 9 February 2025, the Bandra Railway Police received a call threatening to blow up the station. The call was traced to Goa, where a police team arrested the man, who was found to be under the influence of alcohol at the time he made the call. A bomb detection squad searched Chembur station but found no explosives [13].



BOMB SCARE HALTS TRAINS (GERMANY)

A bomb threat at Magdeburg Central Railway Station in Germany on 6 January 2025 prompted immediate evacuation and service suspension. After thorough investigation, authorities deemed the threat false and reopened the station that evening. Rail disruptions persisted as services resumed normal operations [14].





KNIFE ATTACKS

AGAINST PASSENGERS

An off-duty, reserve Gendarme Intervenes as Armed Man Spotted on Train (France)

An off-duty, reservist gendarme and a railway security agent intervened to subdue a knife-wielding man on a train from Lille to Calais (France) on 27 February 2025. The 37-year-old suspect, reportedly from East Africa and subject to a deportation order, was making threats while brandishing the weapon. The agents convinced him to put away the knife and restrained him without causing injuries. The suspect was handed over to police at Hazebrouck station and taken into custody. Authorities have not ruled out terrorism as a motive [15].

23-Year-Old Man Attacked with Cutter Over Friendship Dispute (India)

A 23-year-old man was attacked with a cutter near Ghansoli station in Navi Mumbai (India) following a dispute over friendship on 27 February 2025. The victim sustained injuries, and a case has been registered by the police. Investigations are underway [16].

12-Year-Old Charged in Connection with Stabbing Death (Australia)

A 12-year-old girl has become the sixth person charged in connection with the death of Jack Westren, 25, which occurred near Shellharbour Junction train station (Australia) on 28 January 2025. She faces charges of affray and assault occasioning aggravated bodily harm in company. Two individuals have been charged with murder, while three 13-year-old boys face related charges. Police are investigating if Westren, who had disabilities, was lured to the location via social media. The girl has been granted bail and is due in a children's court on 25 March 2025 [17].

Man Convicted of Attempted Murder of BTP Special Constable (UK)

A man has been convicted of attempting to murder a British Transport Police special constable at Preston railway station (UK) on 28 February 2025. The officer was stabbed in the neck during a targeted attack but has since recovered and returned to duty. The perpetrator, who used a kitchen knife, was also found guilty of possessing a bladed article and is scheduled to be sentenced on 14 April 2025 [18].



AGAINST STAFF AND PASSENGERS

Fatal Stabbing Outside Nagano Station (Japan)

A stabbing incident outside JR Nagano Station in central Japan resulted in one fatality and two injuries. The attack occurred on 22 January 2025 evening when a man armed with a knife targeted three people waiting at a bus terminal near the station. Hiroyoshi Maruyama, 49, died from his injuries, while a 37-year-old man and a 46-year-old woman were also injured. The suspect, identified as 46-year-old Yusuke Yaguchi, was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder. Authorities believe the attack was random and Yaguchi has remained silent during questioning [19].





SABOTAGE

BIKE CHAIN FOUND ON ITALIAN RAIL LINE (ITALY)

A bicycle chain found on a power line near Padua has led to a criminal investigation for possible sabotage of Italy's rail network on 18 January 2025. Ferrovie dello Stato (FS) warned that the chain could have caused significant damage, prompting calls for Transport Minister Matteo Salvini's resignation [20][21].

STONE PELTING SHATTERS HOWRAH-TATANAGAR EXPRESS (INDIA)

Miscreants pelted stones at the Howrah-Tatanagar Steel Express near Jamshedpur (India), damaging window panes on two coaches. The attack occurred around 9 PM on 21 January 2025, narrowly missing passengers. Railway authorities have launched an investigation [22].

CAMBRIDGE SMASHED BY "INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS" ACTS (UK)

In January and early February 2025, a series of vandalism incidents occurred around Cambridge railway stations (UK). Perpetrators used catapults to smash train windows, resulting in six reported attacks. Ball bearings were found near the tracks, indicating a deliberate attempt to cause damage. No injuries were reported, but authorities have increased patrols in the area to prevent further incidents [23][24][25].

RAILWAY SABOTAGE CONCERNS RISE (INDIA)

Kerala (India) has seen about 100 reported railway sabotage attempts over the past decade. Following recent incidents, including the Mysuru-Darbhanga Bagmati Express incident on 12 February 2025, Southern Railway now mandates sabotage investigations at all accident sites due to concerns raised by findings like unfastened bolts and nuts [26][27][28][29].





SECURITY MEASURES

Controversial Public Transport App Removed (France)

The "Akha" app, which allowed users to report ticket inspector locations in public transport, has been removed from app stores following legal action by Île-de-France Mobilités (IDFM). The app was accused of facilitating fare evasion and compromising staff safety and security. IDFM successfully cited French Transport Code regulations to have the app deleted, as part of efforts to maintain public transport security ahead of the 2024 Olympics [30].

High-Tech Hunt: Drones Deployed After £100k Cable Heist (UK)

Network Rail (UK) has initiated drone patrols after £100,000 worth of cables were stolen from an electrification project in the Lostock area. British Transport Police (BTP) are investigating the incident, with Network Rail working to prevent further cable thefts during the holiday period [11]

Tamil Nadu Police Increase Railway Station Patrols After Train Assault (India)

Following the sexual assault and attempted murder of a pregnant woman near Katpadi Junction, Tamil Nadu's Government Railway Police (GRP) has intensified security at major railway stations. Measures include increased platform patrolling, regular checks in ladies' compartments, installation of Facial Recognition Systems (FRS) to track repeat offenders, and new CCTV cameras at under-monitored stations. Women traveling alone are urged to seek assistance, with police assuring immediate response to distress calls [31].

New Decree Enhances Transport Security by Banning Dangerous Objects (France)

France has implemented new regulations to enhance public transport safety. The rules prohibit carrying dangerous materials or items resembling weapons, and vaping is now forbidden in public transport vehicles and spaces. Violators face fines and potential confiscation [32].





AGGRESSION

UDINESE FANS ARRESTED AFTER TRAIN AMBUSH (ITALY)

Eight Udinese fans were arrested after a group of about 50 ambushed a train carrying Venezia supporters, injuring six fans and three police officers. The attack, involving flares and batons, occurred at Basiliano station (Italy) after a Serie A match on 2 February 2025. The arrested individuals face charges including assault and railway obstruction. The match was designated high-risk due to prior incidents. Both clubs condemned the violence [33].



ARRESTED UNDER NOT DISCLOSED CIRCUMSTANCES (UK)

A man was recently arrested in connection with an incident onboard a train at Chester Station (UK) on 26 February 2025. The details of this incident are not fully disclosed, but it led to the individual being taken into custody by the authorities [34].

ARRESTED FOR VANDALIZING AND ASSAULTING STAFF (INDIA)

A 34-year-old man was arrested in Bhubaneswar (India) on 9 December 2024 for vandalizing Level Crossing Gate-192 near Sarakantara and assaulting a railway employee while reportedly intoxicated. The accused has been handed over to the Government Railway Police for further action [35].





VANDALISM

Two Arrested for Vandalism and Assault at Bandel Station (India)

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) in Bengal (India) apprehended two individuals for vandalizing a booking counter at Bandel railway station and assaulting an on-duty RPF constable on 27 February 2025 [36].

Graffiti Vandalism Strikes C2C Train at Laindon Station (UK)

On 9 December 2024, a c2c train at Laindon station near Basildon (UK) was discovered covered in graffiti, prompting an investigation by the British Transport Police (BTP). The vandalism was reported around 5 AM, with multiple train carriages defaced. BTP is actively seeking information from the public to aid their inquiries into this act of criminal damage [37].

Paris Train Station Shooting: Police Wound Suspect with Fake Gun (France)

French railway police shot and wounded a man at the Gare Austerlitz in Paris on 3 February 2025. The man was allegedly spray-painting swastikas and carrying a fake gun. The incident is under investigation [38].

Security Concerns Rise as Paddington Bear Train Vandalized (UK)

Great Western Railway (GWR) has issued a security warning after a train featuring Paddington Bear was vandalized with graffiti on 7 February 2025 [39].





SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

MAN CHARGED FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT (AUSTRALIA)

A 37-year-old man was charged with aggravated sexual assault and armed robbery after allegedly attacking a 15-year-old girl near Lidcombe Railway Station in Sydney (Australia) on 11 February 2025. He allegedly lured her to a car park, produced a knife, stole her phone, and sexually assaulted her. He was arrested and denied bail [40].

GENDER VIOLENCE ON INDIAN TRAINS SPARKS URGENT SECURITY CONCERNS (INDIA)

A series of disturbing incidents on Indian trains has raised concerns about passenger safety, particularly for women. A porter was arrested for allegedly raping a 55-year-old woman at Mumbai's Bandra Terminus on February 2, 2025. In another incident, a drunk man was arrested for harassing a 26-year-old woman on the Okha Vivek Express on February 11, 2025. Additionally, a pregnant woman was assaulted and pushed from a train near Jolarpet on February 9, 2025, resulting in a miscarriage [41][42][43][44][45][46][47].

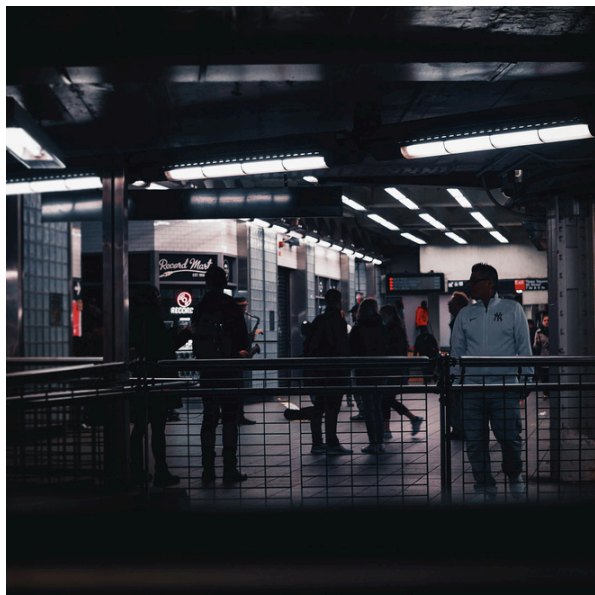
TRAIN MANAGER JAILED FOR SEXUALLY ASSAULTING TEENAGER (UK)

A former train manager, Nicholas McMurray, has been sentenced to seven years in prison for sexually assaulting an 18-year-old woman on a train from Cardiff to Swansea (UK). McMurray, who worked for Great Western Railway, assaulted the woman after asking to check her ticket on 28 February 2025. He was found guilty of sexual assault and assault by penetration at Swansea Crown Court and was placed on the sex offenders register for life [48][49][50].





FRAUD



HABITUAL TRAIN FARE DODGER MADE TO PAY BACK £12,000 (UK)

Chiltern Railways (UK) recovered £12,000 from a serial fare dodger who committed 736 offences, including fraudulent reclaims, knowingly underpaying fares, and railcard abuse. In 2024, Chiltern Railways' economic crime unit investigated 8,064 cases, recovering over £1 million in lost revenue, alongside £114,000 from 2,156 penalty fares [51][52][53].

TERRORISM

14-Year-Old Arrested for Planning Attack at Vienna Station(Austria)

Austrian authorities arrested a 14-year-old boy on 10 February 2025, for allegedly planning a terrorist attack at Vienna's Westbahnhof railway station. The suspect, an Austrian of Turkish descent, was radicalized online and is linked to the Islamic State (IS). His arrest followed tips about extremist content he posted on TikTok, leading to a search that uncovered extremist literature and plans for violent acts [54][55].





RECENT SECURITY EVENTS



19TH UIC WORLD SECURITY CONGRESS (FRANCE)

The 19th UIC World Security Congress, co-organised by SNCF and UIC, took place in Paris on 2-4 December 2024. The event focused on "Railway security: between everyday journeys and major events challenges," bringing together over 130 delegates from various regions. Key discussions included the importance of passenger and staff security, lessons from the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, and the integration of innovative technologies like AI and drones to enhance security. The congress emphasized international cooperation and the development of visionary solutions for future railway resilience [56].

GLOBAL RISKS TO THE EU

The 'Global Risks to the EU' (RISK-EU) survey, involving nearly 400 experts and conducted by the EU University, Institute paints a sobering picture of the challenges ahead.

Russian aggression tops the list of concerns, with experts particularly wary of a ceasefire in Ukraine that could favor Moscow. The potential withdrawal of U.S. security guarantees is seen as equally alarming, highlighting Europe's continued reliance on transatlantic ties. Cyberattacks on critical infrastructure and large-scale migration from Africa and the Middle East round out the high-risk scenarios.

Moderate risks include the emergence of pro-Russian governments in countries like Moldova and Georgia, as well as Chinese aggression in the South China Sea. The survey also notes ongoing instability in the Middle East, with little hope for a durable ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

These findings underscore the need for the EU to develop robust, proactive strategies to address hybrid warfare, geopolitical tensions, and emerging security challenges [57][58].





**REVIEW
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