B.2 Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro Rail Safety Community Outreach

In 1999 the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority launched its Metro Blue Line (MBL) Grade Crossing Safety Awareness Program to address pedestrian and vehicle incidents on the 22-mile, 22-station Los Angeles/Long Beach MBL light rail system.

The community outreach campaign, along with law enforcement, engineering modifications and legislative initiatives, are the vital components of the grade crossing safety awareness program. Focused on improving safety on the alignment that has 104 at-grade crossings, the community outreach campaign has its challenges with this transit system that travels through one of the most densely populated residential and industrial corridors of Los Angeles.

The goals of the community outreach campaign are two fold:

- Promote train safety awareness along the communities of the MBL corridor.
- Help prevent pedestrian and driver collisions on the MBL.

The MTA’s strategy to accomplish these goals rests heavily on direct and recurring contact with students especially since the MBL corridor is within blocks of 50 schools in Los Angeles, Compton and Long Beach. Thus, the strategy is:

- Educate students, teachers and administrators at the schools on train safety and, through the students, influence families and neighborhoods to practice better safety habits along the tracks.

The target audience consists of over 318,000 students within the Los Angeles Unified, Compton, and Long Beach School Districts, and 100,000 resident members of various civic groups and organizations, and senior/community centers.

The objectives that the MTA will accomplish to implement this strategy are:

Objective One - Provide weekly on-campus train safety presentations for elementary, junior high and high school students.

-- Reinforce the on-campus safety presentations with follow-up contact with students by way of the following initiatives:

--- Holding 50 annual train safety writing/drawing contests.
--- Hosting 36 annual Metro Rail safety tours
--- Providing interesting souvenirs and give-aways displaying safety slogans/messages.
--- Participation in monthly school functions such as Career Days and Parent/Community Meetings.

Objective Two - Provide train safety information to families and residents at 24 annual weekend community events, health clinics, safety/security festivals and neighborhood fairs. Some annual events include
Objective Three - Partner with other public agencies, businesses and the school districts on monthly joint-projects to promote better safety practices.

-- California Highway Patrol
-- Southern California Grade Crossing Safety Team
-- McDonald’s Corporation
-- Los Angeles Unified School District
-- Los Angeles Housing Authority
-- Operation Lifesaver
-- Los Angeles Galaxy Soccer Team

Objective Four - Work special short-term projects as necessary to address specific safety issues. Examples of such projects include:

-- Illegal left turn bill boards along Washington Boulevard
-- Safety advertising in Long Beach theatres
-- Rail operator safety blitz
-- Officer on the Train event

Objective Five - Recruit and maintain a base of 30 volunteers to implement the community outreach campaign activities. Elements of this objective are:

-- Training by Operation Lifesaver
-- Partnering with Rail Road companies, school districts, law enforcement and the private sector to identify qualified volunteers
-- Recognition of volunteers through annual awards luncheon

Objective Six - Publicize and promote successes of the community outreach campaign.

-- Quarterly internal reports to management
-- Employee newsletter
-- School district publications
-- External media interviews
B.3 The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority

September 21, 2001

Ms. Gerri Hall, President
Operation Lifesaver, Inc.
1420 King Street, Suite 401
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Ms. Hall:

This is in response to a letter dated August 23, 2001 from William W. Millar, President, APTA, requesting copies of materials for grade crossing public safety education. The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) provides light and heavy rail service. Our heavy rail line (Red Line) operates on a controlled right-of-way, thus there are no vehicular grade crossings. Our light rail lines (Blue, Red and Waterfront Lines) have twenty-three vehicular grade crossings on the 15.3 miles of double track.

The following contains a brief summary of some of the materials and programs the GCRTA has developed for grade crossing public safety education:

August, 1999: Posters were developed by the GCRTA on the topic of grade crossing safety and placed in the light rail vehicles.

July, 1999: Pamphlets were developed by the GCRTA on the topic of pedestrian and vehicle grade crossing safety and placed in the light rail vehicles.

November, 1999: GCRTA staff presented information to an after-school program to increase rider safety awareness. The topic of pedestrian grade crossing was covered at these presentations.

July, 2000: An article on the topic of grade crossing safety was published in "The Connection", a Shaker Heights, Ohio publication. The majority of the GCRTA grade crossings are in the suburb of Shaker Heights.

August, 2000: An article on the topic of grade crossing safety was published in "The Sun Press", another Shaker Heights publication.
August, 2001: GCRTA staff met with approximately 300 junior high school students and parents to discuss rail safety, which included information on grade crossing safety.

Most of the information for the GCRTA presentations on grade crossing safety was obtained from the Operation Lifesaver program. In June, 2001 six GCRTA employees representing Transit Police, Rail Training and the Safety Office attended training to become presenters of the Operation Lifesaver program. The GCRTA has found Operation Lifesaver to be a valuable resource on the topic of grade crossing safety.

I have included with this letter copies of the posters, pamphlet and articles previously mentioned. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (216) 566-5252.

Sincerely,

Judy L. Lincoln
Director of Risk Management

JLL/ley

Enc.
B.4 Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Jane Swift
Governor

Kevin J. Sullivan
Secretary and MBTA Chairman

Robert H. Prince, Jr.
General Manager

September 21, 2001

Mr. William W. Millar
President
American Public Transportation Association
1666 8 Street NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. Millar:

In response to your request for information pertaining to our Grade Crossing and Right-of-way Public Safety Program, attached please find a copy of the 2000 Operation Lifesaver States’ report to the Nation that we contributed to.

In addition, I included, for your information, sample newspaper articles, photographs of some of our activities such as billboards, station signage, O/L presenter classes, participation in local safety fairs and distributions at grade crossings. You will also find a sample of some of the letters we are receiving in support of Operation Lifesaver.

The MBTA and State have made a substantial commitment to Operation Lifesaver, and we continue to receive a great deal of support from railroad professionals, local, state and public safety officials, our Secretary Kevin Sullivan and General Manager Robert Prince, as well as FRA and FTA officials. Our locomotives with the O/L logo continue to operate out of North and South Stations, and travel throughout our commuter rail system.

Thank you for your interest in our program, and if you have any questions or would like additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Ernest S. Deeb
MBTA Deputy Director & State Coordinator
For Operation Lifesaver

ESD/bjc

Attachments

Cc: Gerri L. Hall/President
Operation Lifesaver, Inc.
1420 King Street, Suite 401
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Ten Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3974
Dear Operation Lifesaver State Coordinator:

We at the Massachusetts Operation Lifesaver would like to share with you some of the other efforts/materials presently being used statewide. In working with participating railroads, FRA, FTA, local and state officials, we have been able to accomplish the following:

- Trained 180 Operation Lifesaver Presenters (primarily police officers)
- Boston Herald ½ page ad space (twice a year)
- O/L logo on a number of locomotives
- Billboard space (24’x48’) three months a year
- A half hour Radio Disney program to be aired nationally
- Rail Safety calendars (2500 distributed to key contacts)
- Emergency Response Exercises (2-3 each year)
- Grade crossing collision investigation courses (2-3 each year)
- Posters at C/R stations and inside coaches
- School bus company posters and rear bus decals
- Distribute over 500,000 pieces of material to hundreds of schools, libraries, etc.
- Local Cable TV Programs and newspaper stories

In addition, we have been successful in securing the support of the Registry of Motor Vehicles for our Operation Lifesaver program. In conjunction with the Registry, we are planning to announce the following:

1. All 192 Driver Education Schools, (360 branch locations) in Massachusetts, as well as 38 participating high schools, will be encouraged to include the Operation Lifesaver Program as part of their curriculum.

2. All School Bus Companies in Massachusetts will be required to display a rear bus Railroad Crossing Safety decal on approximately 9,800 buses.

3. All 38 Registry offices in Massachusetts will display our Grade Crossing Safety Tips Brochures.

We would appreciate hearing from you, to learn more about the successful programs, ideas, and materials you have implemented in your area to help get this important message out.

William Hallene
Chairman of the Board

Ernest S. Deeb
State Coordinator
B.5 Federal Transit Administration

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

LESSONS LEARNED PROGRAM

LESSON LEARNED # September 30, 1997

TOPIC: Commuter Rail Safety - Educating the Public

1. Executive Summary

On September 29, 1997, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) reinstituted commuter rail passenger service on the Old Colony Line. Since 1959 this line has been abandoned as a commuter passenger rail line. For a period of approximately 38 years, residents of the South Shore area have gradually become accustomed to driving across highway-rail grade crossings and accessing the right-of-way without concern for high speed passenger train traffic. Trains along this newly rehabilitated line are capable of traveling at speeds of up to 70 miles per hour.

The Old Colony Line is comprised of nearly 64 miles of rail, with the majority of this being single trackway. The line is divided into three distinct sections, which are designated as the Main Line, Plymouth Line and Middleborough Line. Also within the system are 15 elevated platform stations and 45 at grade road crossings. Of the 45 grade crossings, 28 are located along the Plymouth Line and 17 are on the Middleborough Line.

The MBTA recognized early in the design process that keeping the public informed during the construction phase of the project, and the revenue service phase would require a comprehensive communication plan. This plan was designed to keep the public informed and advised of specific issues relating to railroad construction, pre-operational testing, revenue service operation, and safety awareness. The MBTA created the “Old Colony Communications Office” with the responsibility to reach out to more than 20 cities and towns affected by the new rail passenger service. The focus of this lesson is on the development and implementation of a safety awareness program and how it was executed throughout the project. The MBTA began educating the public utilizing the “Operation Lifesaver” program more than two years prior to the scheduled revenue operation date.

2. Background

“Operation Lifesaver” is a national non-profit organization with chapters located in 49 of the 50 states. This program makes available to any transit property preprinted railroad safety related information and specially trained personnel that can be used to train other individuals to educate various groups and community organizations. The primary focus of the program is to elevate the importance of public awareness regarding the potential hazards at rail-highway grade crossings, and the dangers of trespassing on railroad right-of-way.
During the design and early construction phases, the MBTA was researching how they were to educate the public on railroad safety. The MBTA had to evaluate and determine if they would design their own public education program or utilize an industry standard (prepared and tested) railroad safety awareness program. The choice was to utilize "Operation Lifesaver", and adapt it to meet the MBTA's specific objectives regarding high speed commuter rail service.

More than two years before the start of revenue service, the MBTA kicked off its railroad safety education program. The emphasis on railroad safety has been a two fold approach. First, the MBTA's effort was to train and educate individuals who can share this knowledge regarding rail safety with other groups such as students and community organizations. This group consisted of police officers, fire fighters, school officials, and agency staff. The second step, was the direct public contact through making presentations, mass mailings, preparing and issuing press releases and conducting special safety fairs to share and distribute the educational materials regarding rail safety. In both functions the MBTA has relied upon the readily available "Operation Lifesaver" information to share with the public and use as a basis for their enhanced program.

Individual training was the first step taken by the MBTA to establish a solid foundation for program implementation. Given the magnitude and importance of this effort the MBTA did not want to solely rely on its own resources and personnel to effectively reach out to all the communities along the Old Colony Line. To ensure overall success it was critical that the MBTA form an alliance with the local cities, towns and community organizations. This was accomplished through the "Operation Lifesaver" training classes which were presented to police/fire personnel, school/bus officials, and MBTA/State/AMTRAK personnel. The MBTA has conducted ten (10) "Operation Lifesaver" classes resulting in the training of 80 individuals representing every city and town along the Middleborough and Plymouth Lines. Through these trained individuals over 200 community schools were contacted and over 46,000 students received presentations, handout materials and safety tips. In addition, the Boy Scouts went door to door in one town distributing 4000 railroad safety brochures, while the 4H Club in another community arranged for 50 local businesses to display construction safety posters. In another town the senior citizens center mailed Railroad Safety Brochures to every senior citizens residence. Overall, safety displays and literature were made available to 59 town halls and libraries, 8000 mass mailing recipients, and 300 participating businesses throughout the area.

Special program enhancement features developed and implemented by the MBTA have also contributed to the success of this program. Twenty school bus companies were contacted and given literature to distribute to drivers. Nearly 300 school bus drivers received safety presentations and the MBTA held a special training class at a highway-rail grade crossing utilizing a test train, school bus and police officers equipped with radar guns. The MBTA contacted 33 local driver education schools and assisted in incorporating a "Railroad Safety" course for classroom instruction and behind the wheel training. Ten safety related programs were produced and were aired via local cable TV stations during construction and pre-operational testing, and four months prior to the start of revenue service. In addition, other videos provided by "Operation Lifesaver" and those developed and prepared by the MBTA were aired on local cable TV.
The Old Colony Communications Office has also been instrumental in the distribution and display of approximately 6000 project posters, 3000 construction safety posters and 5000 operation railroad safety posters. Project brochures, newsletters, and safety literature were also mailed out periodically throughout the duration of the project (approximately 250,000 pieces of mail). This office served as the focal contact point for the general public. Any question regarding either the construction activities or testing or start of revenue service such as time schedules and fare structure were responded to by this office. The office assisted in the preparation of weekly press releases to newspapers and town officials concerning the operation schedule for test trains. These test trains became the public's first awareness of the future passenger service and the associated potential danger at a highway-rail grade crossing and trespassing on the railroad right-of-way.

One of the MBTA's specialized programs included nearly 600 fire fighters and emergency response personnel to be trained in Emergency Evacuation Procedures. This exercise also included both local and State Public Safety representatives and hospitals from the various surrounding communities. The MBTA provided commuter rail equipment and a hands-on training session to conduct a staged mock crash involving a train and school bus with 15 victims. Approximately 3 hours of video taping of the mock crash was professionally edited to a 16 minute tape entitled "Abington Emergency Response Exercise 6/01/97". Multiple copies of this video were then made available by the MBTA and sent to all of the fire and police chiefs in each of the communities located along the Old Colony Line. As a follow up, the MBTA has also coordinated simulated emergency response drills in other communities.

3. The Lesson

The MBTA recognized their obligation to communities and made an early commitment and effort to conduct a massive public awareness campaign regarding railroad safety. Railroad safety should be incorporated into the project development design and construction phases. Such efforts are tested during the pre-revenue service time frame and reinforced at the start of revenue service.

During construction at grade highway-rail crossings and individual trespassing within the right-of-way were critical issues the MBTA had to address prior to reinstitution of passenger service. On its own, the MBTA had neither the full complement of resources or personnel to conduct a comprehensive railroad safety training program. However, working in conjunction with the State "Operation Lifesaver" coordinator and other local railroad, public safety and education officials, the MBTA was able to assemble and execute a successful and well received Railroad Safety Education Program. Key elements developed included safety training videos prepared by "Operation Lifesaver", the MBTA, emergency response training involving all levels of State and local representatives, and the preparation and distribution of rail road safety literature.

The MBTA recognizes that railroad safety education of the public is not a one time process but a continual program that must be periodically maintained. Furthermore, as school students advance and staff personnel changes occur with fire/police departments, school administration
and bus drivers it will be necessary to provide periodic maintenance of the safety education program.

4. Applicability

The approach used by the MBTA may be readily applied by any transit agency that has to address the right-of-way trespassing issue and accommodate at grade highway-rail crossings associated with providing high speed passenger rail service.

5. Contact

Mr. Howard Haywood  
Chief of Design and Construction  
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Telephone (617) 222-3118  
Fax (617) 222-1557

6. Reference Documents

MBTA - Videos "Abington Emergency Response Exercise"  
"MBTA Railroad Safety"  
MBTA - Safety Posters: Construction Phase - "Play It Safe"  
Operational Phase - "Play It Safe Always Expect a Train"

MBTA - Printed and Produced: Press Releases  
Project Brochures  
News Letters  
Posters

"Operation Lifesaver" - preprinted educational materials, slides, and videos

Chicago Transit Authority - Video "Be Smart Be Safe"
B.6 New Jersey Transit

October 26, 2001

Ms. Gerri Hall
President
Operation Lifesaver, Inc.
1420 King Street, Suite 401
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Gerri:

As you know, NJ TRANSIT has a well-established public outreach program. Our agency is concerned with the welfare of the people in the communities where it operates trains and works hard to prevent accidents before they occur. In an effort to reduce the number of rail-related incidents along its many commuter lines, NJ TRANSIT Rail Operations has developed an educational program to impress upon students the dangers of being on railroad tracks.

The NJ TRANSIT Rail Safety Department offers this program to schools throughout New Jersey as a free community service. Each year, approximately 35,000 students from over 100 schools in New Jersey receive the program. NJ TRANSIT targets its Railroad Safety Education Program to all schools in New Jersey that are close to one of its many rail lines.

The purpose of the program is to instill a healthy attitude toward safety in children and to point out the dangers they may encounter when on or near railroad property. The Railroad Safety Education Program is customized to suit the needs of school audiences in terms of age, culture, location and the physical characteristics of the rail line closest to the school.

I am attaching a copy of our Rail Safety Education Program along with materials and a description of the films we use. Our program is targeted at our rail system and does not cover light rail topics. Please call me at 973/491-7948 if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Jeff P. Kovacs
Director of Safety Programs,
Compliance and Training.

One Penn Plaza East, Newark NJ 07105-2246 (201) 491-7000
NJ TRANSIT Rail Safety Education Program

The NJ TRANSIT Rail Safety Education program consists of sending a qualified speaker to schools throughout New Jersey to impress upon students the need for safe practices around railroad tracks. Presentations include a discussion on the dangers of the railroad tracks, age-appropriate films, including NJ TRANSIT’s award-winning films Chicken on the Tracks and Dead in Their Tracks and a question and answer period. Accompanying materials include specially designed brochures that highlight key elements of the educational program.

The discussion with children in kindergarten through third grade is informative without being too frightening. Topics include: safe behavior when riding a train, safe behavior when around railroad tracks, catenary wires, electric trains vs. diesel trains and highway–rail grade crossings. The need to stay off train tracks is stressed repeatedly to children in this age group. Audience participation is used as much as possible. Children are often questioned and given the opportunity to provide their own responses.

Children in fourth through sixth grades are given more detail regarding the reasons for staying off the tracks. The discussion is more graphic in nature than programs presented to younger children. The goal is to illustrate the hazards of playing on or crossing the tracks and to educate them about the operation of the railroad. Topics include: trespass laws, reasons for staying off the tracks, high voltage wires, electric trains vs. diesel trains, stopping distances of trains, vandalism and highway–rail grade crossings. Examples of actual incidents are cited and it is pointed out that anyone at any age can become seriously hurt if the safety warnings are ignored.

NJ TRANSIT produced its own video for children in this age group. The film, Chicken on the Tracks depicts children throwing rocks at trains, walking on the tracks and playing games of "chicken" with the trains. While many films end happily, this one shows that the children's actions have dire consequences. At the end of the film two children are struck by a train after being dared to go onto train tracks. The film always incites a lively question and answer session following the film. It is clear from the children's reactions, comments and questions that the film has had its desired impact.

Programs for children in grades seven and above are similar in content to those in the previous group but are different in their presentation style. They are direct and to the point. Graphic illustrations of previous accidents are used. More lecture than discussion is presented. Students are spoken to as adults and are told that they are responsible for their own safety. The main objective is to prevent accidents by discouraging students from being on train tracks.

A safety video (Dead in Their Tracks) aimed at teenagers was developed by NJ TRANSIT. The Rail Safety Department and the Marketing Department work closely to promote this video which depicts teens and their experiences with trains and railroad tracks. Reactions
have been positive and enthusiastic from students, teachers, administrators and parents. Schools throughout New Jersey are familiar with the program. Many schools feel the program is so important that presentations are requested each year as a necessary part of the children's education curriculum.

NJ TRANSIT works closely with individual school principals and teachers to customize the program based on the needs of the community. Often, members of a community see students walking on railroad property to get to and from school. Local police officers and school administrators do their part to warn students of the penalties of their actions. They will then enlist NJ TRANSIT's help in educating the student body by requesting a safety education program.
B.7 Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

September 14, 2001

RE: Grade Crossing Public Education Programs & Materials

American Public Transit Association
William W. Millar, President
1201 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Millar:

Grade crossing safety is of paramount concern on SEPTA’s rail system, as we have in excess of a hundred crossings on our combined railroad and light rail routes. At the present time, Operation Lifesaver is the primary outreach program offered to the public by the organization that focuses directly on grade crossing safety.

We also have an on-going safety campaign in which our safety officers, in collaboration with front line supervisors and transit and local police officers, jointly engage in “safety blitzes.” We target various passenger station locations (many of which are located at grade crossings) that have high densities of pedestrian traffic. The objective of our safety blitz campaign is to increase customer and public awareness of the dangers of trespassing onto track areas, and to actively prevent trespassing from occurring at that particular station location during the timeframe of the blitz. We distribute pamphlets (enclosed) and actively converse with both customers and pedestrians. Our safety blitz campaign has met with much success.

We are always happy to share any safety information with APTA. If you have any specific questions regarding these safety efforts, please contact Mr. James Fox at 215-580-7064.

Respectfully,

James B. Jordan
Assistant General Manager, Loss Prevention

Enclosures (2)

cc: J. K. Leary Jr.
James Fox