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Transit Infrastructure Security Working Group

Anti-Vehicle Barriers for Public Transit

Abstract: This recommended practice describes anti-vehicle barriers (AVBs) for transit passenger facilities to enhance the security of people, operations, assets and infrastructure.

Keywords: anti-vehicle barriers, barriers, bollards, design considerations, site survey, standoff distance

Summary: Public transit operates in inherently open environments. It provides ease of access and gathers volumes of people in confined spaces to provide passengers with efficient and convenient transportation. These unique attributes make public transportation vulnerable to adversarial targeting and threats. For these reasons, a sound understanding of anti-vehicle barriers will enable agencies to implement an approach to more effectively manage the risks of their environments. This document describes AVBs for transit passenger facilities, providing information on their specific uses, capabilities and placement considerations.

Scope and purpose: This document provides background information on AVB systems, details the systems available, and describes the specific use and capabilities of AVB systems. It outlines the AVB selection process to present options for the best systems to use in specific environments. It also offers considerations to aid in the placement of the systems once the proper barrier is chosen.

This document represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely transit operating/planning agencies, manufacturers, consultants, engineers and general interest groups. The application of any recommended practices or guidelines contained herein is voluntary. APTA standards are mandatory to the extent incorporated by an applicable statute or regulation. In some cases, federal and/or state regulations govern portions of a transit system's operations. In cases where this is a conflict or contradiction between an applicable law or regulation and this document, consult with a legal advisor to determine which document takes precedence.

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4 Introduction

- 5 This introduction is not part of APTA SS-SIS-RP-009-12, Rev. 1"Anti-Vehicle Barriers for Public Transit."
- 6 APTA recommends the use of this document by:
 - individuals or organizations that operate transit systems;
 - individuals or organizations that contract with others for the operation of transit systems; and
 - individuals or organizations that influence how transit systems are operated (including but not limited to consultants, designers and contractors).

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Anti-Vehicle Barriers for Public Transit

1. Anti-vehicle barrier overview

Adversaries may use a vehicle, either on its own or laden with explosives, to carry out attacks against people, operations, assets and infrastructure in the transit environment. To reduce the risk from these threats, the design and placement of anti-vehicle barriers (AVBs) should be considered.

AVB systems differ in and are differentiated by their composition, capability and style. They are constructed of metals, concrete and other materials for durability to resist energy of vehicular penetration, and they may vary in style from being several feet in length to cylindrical in shape. Cylindrical shaped vertically installed AVB systems are referred to as bollards. Bollards vary in their construction and functional design, but they have many of the same capabilities as horizontally installed barriers—that is, to control vehicle access to an area. A security risk assessment will identify the need for and placement of an AVB system.

After selection, but before placement, a site survey should be performed to include the analysis of the site's existing features. The checklist in Appendix A is provided as a guide to completing and documenting a site survey.

1.1 Categories

AVBs are primarily classified into two categories, active or passive. Active barriers have moveable components, and their systems can be operated manually or mechanically to allow or restrict vehicle passage. Both active and passive barriers are often used to protect a critical asset from vehicle intrusion and serve as a way to delineate or channel vehicle traffic. While AVBs may provide theft deterrence, asset protection, and pedestrian and traffic control, they are primarily used to control authorized vehicle access to an area.

1.2 Stakeholder considerations

The implementation of AVBs serves a meaningful purpose. To the extent possible, AVB application assists agencies in meeting their security program requirements, while maintaining efficient operations. AVB use and design, such as planters and bollards, can be functional for efficient operations and aesthetically pleasing to the communities that host agency properties and operations.

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1.3 Benefits

A security system program that includes AVB applications offers the following benefits to an agency:

- Protects against harmful vehicle attacks or intrusions.
- Provides suitable standoff distance and clear zones.
- Fosters a sense of physical security.
- Creates a sense of ownership by transit users and employees.
- Manages access to authorized areas.
- Controls vehicle access to nonpublic areas.

2. Security risk assessment

Transit agencies should complete a systemwide security risk assessment to determine exposure of the system's people, assets, operations and infrastructure. A risk-based approach that factors threat, vulnerability and consequence should be used to assess transit systems. The findings should be used to select security measures for the protection of people, assets, operations and infrastructure.

For more information regarding risk assessments, consider the following resources:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Transit–Risk Assessment Methodology (PT-RAM) tool
- FEMA Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management (TRAM) tool
- Department of Homeland Security Analytical Risk Management (ARM-IR)
- Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) Threat & Vulnerability Toolbox
- Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Training, Safety Review Program
- Department of Homeland Security National Infrastructure Protection Plan, Transportation Systems Sector

3. AVB recommended practices

3.1 AVB uses and functions

3.1.1 Uses

While AVBs can be used in many ways, their primary function is to control authorized vehicle access. They can be installed at a facility's gates or entrances (vehicle "checkpoints"), around security guard booths, between designated parking areas and buildings, adjacent to high-value facilities or assets, or as a protective barrier around temporary events or activities. Barriers can be passive or active, staffed or unstaffed, and remotely or locally controlled.

3.1.2 Functions

Passive AVB systems such as planters, fixed bollards and modular concrete barriers (otherwise known as K-rails or Jersey barriers) are intended to remain in a fixed position to prevent vehicle access. Active systems such as a pop-up wedge, retractable bollards and drop-arm barriers manage the access of vehicles. **Table 1** and **Table 2** summarize the Department of State (DoS) K-ratings and the Department of Defense (DoD) K-ratings and L-ratings.

TABLE 1DoD Certified Anti-Vehicle Barrier Options

K-Rating ¹	Gross Vehicle Weight (lb)	Vehicle Speed (mph)	L-Rating ¹	Maximum Penetration Distance (ft)	Options
K12	15,000	50	L3	3	AVBs of various K-rating and L-rating combinations are available in the following barrier systems:
K8	15,000	40	L2	20	hydraulic, pneumatic, electric or manual bollards, wedges, or plates; reinforced walls; retractable
K4	15,000	30	L1	50	bollards; cable restraining systems; drop arm; sliding beam; foundation wall; fixed bollards; etc.

^{1.} K-ratings are based on a 15,000 lb gross-weight vehicle impacting a barrier system at a specific speed from a perpendicular direction, with the L-rating determined from the maximum penetration distance of the vehicle past the protected side of the barrier system.

TABLE 2DoS Certified Anti-Vehicle Barrier Options

K-Rating ¹	Gross Vehicle Weight (lb)	Vehicle Speed (mph)	Options ²	
K12	15,000	50	Pneumatic, hydraulic, electric or manual bollards, wedges or plates; reinforced planters; reinforced walls; etc.	
K8	15,000	40	Retractable bollards, cable restraining systems, etc.	
K4	15,000	30	Drop arm, sliding beam, foundation wall, fixed bollards, etc.	

^{1.} The K-ratings for the DoS AVBs are similar to those of the DoD, except that the varied penetration ranges (L-ratings) do not apply. Instead, DoS acknowledges that the penetration of any vehicle's cargo bed must not exceed 39 in. (1 m) past the pre-impact inside edge (protected area) of the barrier system to be certified.

3.2 AVB design

AVBs are either passive (static or non-moveable), meaning they have no moveable parts; or active (operator controlled for access), meaning some parts of the barrier are moveable. They are manufactured and rated to resist different levels of kinetic energy and are also available in different design styles, such as flush or surface-mount wedge, plate or bollards; rolling (sliding) gate; and drop-arm designs. Once an agency has selected the performance design, it should see the APTA recommended practice "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) at Public Transit Facilities" for additional information.

Typical active AVB designs should include the appropriate support equipment, such as backup power; an emergency cutoff switch; adequate lighting and safety options (i.e., alarms, strobe or rotating beacon lights, and safety interlocks to prevent the AVB from being accidentally activated); vehicle sensing loops (on the secure side to prevent activation of the barrier until the vehicle has completely cleared the AVB); safety markings; and signage. All AVB supporting equipment should be located on the secure side of the barrier and should be monitored on a continual basis by video surveillance and an intrusion detection system (IDS) to reduce its potential for being sabotaged, as well as for optimum functionality. Additionally, the area surrounding an AVB should be monitored for security.

Passive vehicle barriers are non-moveable systems. Passive barriers include steel or concrete framed or reinforced earthen barriers; plastic (water-filled) or steel-reinforced concrete modular concrete barriers ("Jersey barriers"); planter-styled security barriers; steel "impaler-style" barriers; concrete or metal bollards; and permanently installed concrete, cinder/concrete block or brick wall-type barriers. In contrast, active vehicle barriers are characterized by their ability to move and can be operated manually or automatically.

The bollard is one of the most versatile components in comprehensive integrated design planning and design execution. The breadth of design styles of bollards renders them an easy candidate to complement building architectural and landscaping designs of a broad spectrum. Bollards can be made from any of the following materials: cast iron, stainless steel, steel/cast iron composite, recycled plastic or plastic covers. Bollards can be active or passive as well.

Detailed descriptions of passive and active barriers are given in **Table 3** and **Table 4**.

^{2.} Regardless of L-rating, DoS certified AVBs perform only to the penetration distance standard of 39 in. (1 m).

TABLE 3Passive (Fixed Installation) Barriers

Barrier System	Description	Utilization	Typical Height and Length	Construction (Material)
Steel/concrete framed/reinforced earthen	Typical steel concrete framework backfilled with soil and topped with sod	Striped, flashing lights, sirens, etc. Used in open areas with plenty of space and when cost is an issue. Can be used to route or direct vehicle traffic circulation.	Height and weight vary depending on application and vulnerability of the structure	Steel or concrete
Plastic (water-filled) barrier	Available in various styles, lengths, shapes and colors	Placed as protective barriers where needed; can be arranged end to end, side by side, or even stacked for increased security	Height: 32–42 in.	Typically, molded plastic filled with water
Concrete modular barriers (K-rails or Jersey barriers)	Available in various styles, lengths, shapes and colors	Used in or along driveways or roads to direct traffic to a checkpoint	Height: 32–36 in. Length: 9–10 ft	Steel- reinforced concrete
Planter-style security barriers	Concrete "shell" backfilled with soil for added protective weight	Prevents vehicle intrusion; protects walkways, fences, guard booths and important equipment and prevents driving around other barriers; can be used to route or direct vehicle or pedestrian traffic	Height and weight vary depending on application and vulnerability of the structure	Steel reinforced concrete "shell"

TABLE 3Passive (Fixed Installation) Barriers

Barrier System	Description	Utilization	Typical Height and Length	Construction (Material)
Concrete or metal bollards	Vertically installed metal (preferably steel) "crash tube" with the lower base extending into the ground; in use in numerous military and commercial applications	Inhibits vehicle intrusion, protects walkways, fences, guard booths, important equipment and prevents driving around other barriers; can be used to route or direct vehicle or pedestrian traffic	Height: 18–60+ in. Diameter: Varies depending on application; typically 8–24 in.	Solid steel or hollow tube filled with reinforced concrete
Permanently installed concrete, cinder/ concrete block, or brick wall-type barriers	A vertically constructed and installed reinforced concrete, cinder/ concrete block, or brick wall	Installed around a security zone or high-value asset requiring protection	Height and weight vary depending on application and vulnerability of the structure.	Concrete, cinder/ concrete block, or brick
Traffic controllers ("tire teeth")	Metal teeth used to cut/shred vehicle tire; either spring mounted to allow safe one-way travel or retractable to allow two-way travel	Prevention of wrong-way traffic flow (parking applications) and deployable to flatten tires if vehicles cross security access point.	Approximately 1 in. wide by 4 in. long teeth are used.	
In-ground rain garden design	Six-foot-wide rain garden designed to be recessed in the ground with a curb gutter on the outside and a 24 in. concrete wall on the inside	Protects pedestrian- gathering areas from vehicle intrusion	Height, width, and length vary depending on application	Concrete, rocks and dirt

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TABLE 3

Passive (Fixed Installation) Barriers

Barrier System	Description	Utilization	Typical Height and Length	Construction (Material)	
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TABLE 4Active (Deployable) Barriers

Barrier System	Description	Utilization	Typical Height and Length	Construction (Material)
Hydraulically deployable metal bollards	Subsurface vertically installed metal "crash tube." Once deployed, part of tube is above surface with the lower part extending into the ground; in use in numerous military and commercial applications	Inhibits vehicle intrusion; protects walkways, fences, guard booths and important equipment; prevents driving around other barriers; can be used to route or direct vehicle or pedestrian traffic	Height: 18–36+ in. Diameter: Varies depending on application; typically 12–24 in.	Constructed of solid tubular steel, can be filled for added strength.
Permanently installed "recessed-mounted" (inground) ramp-style vehicle barriers with chain reinforcements.	These ramp systems weigh between 2500 and 12,000 lb and are installed subgrade and flushmounted in the surface of the road. The ramp barrier system is raised or lowered either manually or automatically (based on access being granted) through use of computer-controlled electrical or hydraulic systems.	As a barrier for the perimeter boundary to stop and/or disable unauthorized vehicle penetration	Width: 1–24 ft Height: about 3 ft	Steel
Ramp-style vehicle barriers (with chain reinforcements)	27 deg. lift angle facing the opponent's direction of approach. Temporary or permanently installed; mounted at grade. These ramp systems weigh between 2500 to 12,000 lb. The ramp barrier system is raised or lowered either manually or automatically (based on access being granted) through use of computer-controlled electrical or hydraulic systems.	As a barrier for the perimeter boundary to stop and/or to disable unauthorized vehicle penetration	Width: 1–24 ft Height: 3 ft	Steel

AVBs should be designed and deployed to restrict entry of unauthorized vehicles into specific facility areas, especially during heightened National Terror Advisory System (NTAS) conditions. AVBs may be significantly damaged after absorbing the full impact of a moving vehicle. The barrier may not be fully functional or operational after impact and may fail if kept in service. To determine AVB serviceability, any AVB sustaining an impact should be inspected. It may require repair, restoration or replacement to remain in service and to maintain its agency certification.

3.3 AVB selection

When selecting a barrier, it is important to begin with a site survey. The site survey should include the relative locations, major dimensions and descriptions of buildings and structures, roads, terrain and landscaping, existing security features, and the property perimeter. Based on the analysis of the aforementioned factors, the proper levels of protection will be determined. Other things to consider as part of the terrain include:

- whether the structure that is going to be protected is downhill;
- whether the road leading to it is straight or curved; and
- whether the building is accessible to an unauthorized vehicle through other means.

It may be necessary to install more than one set of barriers to counter the effects of the momentum of an unauthorized vehicle attempting to breach the perimeter.

There are also other important factors to consider when choosing a barrier system. Those factors include the requirement for barrier system type, installation plans, the required number and placement, aesthetic requirements, local codes, and emergency response procedures. The chosen barrier system should also be compatible with the other security components in place. For example, an active barrier system should not be installed adjacent to an unhardened chain-link fence, because then the fence would become the weakest path.

In addition to a site survey, other factors must be considered during the selection process of an AVB. For example, the likelihood of unintended vehicles entering the designated protected area and the possible risks associated with the chosen style of barrier. Appendix A provides a checklist that incorporates the selection process and the vehicle barrier design and installation requirements.

3.4 Location of anti-vehicle barriers

The location of vehicle barriers can vary based on their design as active or passive and the area they are protecting. Active vehicle barriers are most often placed at facility entrances. They can also be placed at selected interior locations. The exact location of active barriers may vary among installations; in each case they should be placed as far from the critical structure as practical to minimize damage due to possible intrusion explosion. Passive barriers should be located at entry points to manage traffic if traffic flow is restricted or periodic. Passive barriers are most often used for protection of perimeter boundaries. The agency's risk assessment will determine its adequate standoff distance for the proper placement of barriers.

3.5 Anti-vehicle barrier access control

Methods of access control are managed by the use of active barriers. Access control can be accomplished with a staffed guard or remotely through the use of a card or biometric access control devices that will automatically activate the barrier. The barrier can also be operated remotely from a protected location other than the entry control point.

3.6 Barrier alternatives

There are several alternatives to AVB systems. These alternatives can include the following:

- ditches
- heavy equipment tires
- tire shredders
- non-reinforced concrete blocks
- · dump trucks filled with sand
- buses

3.7 Fencing systems

Fences should not be considered as protection against moving vehicle attacks unless engineered for an AVB purpose. Most fences can be easily penetrated by a moving vehicle and will resist impact only if reinforcement is added. Fences are used primarily to provide a boundary by defining the outermost limit of a facility and to assist in controlling and screening authorized vehicle entries into a secured area by deterring overt entry elsewhere along the boundary. Fences also support detection, assessment and other security functions by providing a "clear zone" for installing lighting, intrusion detection equipment and video surveillance. For additional information, see the APTA recommended practice "Fencing Systems to Control Access to Transit Facilities" and National Academies' Press "Security 101: A Physical and Cybersecurity Primer for Transportation Agencies."

4. Training considerations

Most manufacturers recommend operator training for active barrier systems. Operator training prevents serious injury and legal liability, as well as equipment damage caused by improper operations. If a manufacturer does not provide a thorough program for operator training, the agency should develop the appropriate checklist for normal and emergency operating procedures.

5. Maintenance considerations

Many manufacturers provide wiring and hydraulic diagrams, maintenance schedules and procedures for their systems. They should also have spare parts available to keep barriers in continuous operation. The manufacturer should provide barrier maintenance support in the form of training and operation and maintenance manuals. Maintenance contracts and reliability and maintainability data are available from most manufacturers. Maintenance should include inspection, adjustment, cleaning, pressure checks on operational systems and replacement of worn parts.

Check with the manufacturer for a list of current customers deploying its products, and then consider speaking with those agencies to ascertain performance and other service data about the product being considered.

6. Cost-effectiveness

Trade-offs on protective measures may include the following:

- locating the vehicle barrier to provide optimum separation distance
- slowing down vehicles approaching the barrier, using obstructions or redesign of the access route
- barrier open to permit access vs. closed to prevent access
- active vs. passive barriers
- system-activating options: manual vs. automatic, local vs. remote, electrical vs. hydraulic
- safety, reliability, availability and maintainability characteristics

7. Liability

Possible legal issues may arise from accidents that cause deaths or injuries. The agency should consult with legal representation when considering the installation of an active vehicle barrier system to ensure that it is complying with all local, state and federal laws and regulations.

8. Additional design considerations

The following actions are also to be considered when selecting and installing barrier systems:

- If the location of a vehicle barrier is in an area of high-water table, consider using a surface-mounted or shallow profile barrier system. Below-ground barriers can be installed if the required installation depth is above the water table. If the excavation cannot be drained, then water collection could cause corrosion, and freezing weather may incapacitate the system.
- When barriers are installed at entrance and exit gates, also consider installing passive barrier systems along the remaining accessible perimeter of the protected area.
- Protection of individual buildings or zones within the perimeter is generally more cost-effective than
 extensive protection of a large facility perimeter. For example, passive barriers installed in areas
 where vehicles cannot reach, just to complete a perimeter barrier system, are not an effective use of
 security funding.
- Since most types of active barriers can be easily sabotaged, consider installing active barriers only in areas where they can be under continuous observation.
- Barriers should be used to divert traffic or prevent entry or exit. Installation of barriers immediately
 adjacent to guard posts is not desirable because the possibility of injury should be minimized.
 Consider keeping vehicle barriers as far from guard posts as possible.
- Barriers should be installed on the exit side of an access control point as well as the entrance.
- Long, straight paths to a crash-resistant barrier can result in increased vehicle speed and greater kinetic energy upon possible impact. Where this cannot be avoided, installation of a passive-type barrier maze should be considered to slow vehicles.
- Emergency evacuation and first responder emergency access should be considered when designing and installing AVBs.
- Designers should consider permitting requirements by local jurisdictions.

Design passive barrier systems to comply with the requirements of the Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum "Access for People with Disabilities," dated Oct. 31, 2008. The memorandum updates the DoD standards for making facilities accessible to people with disabilities.

Related APTA standards

APTA SS-SIS-RP-007-10, "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) at Public Transit Facilities"

APTA SS-SIS-RP-003-10, "Fencing Systems to Control Access to Transit Facilities"

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Definitions

See apta.org for a complete glossary.

barrier: A natural or human-made obstacle to the movement of people, animals, vehicles or materials.

maintenance: The continued care and upkeep of a space for its intended purpose. It also serves as an expression of ownership.

risk assessment: A formal methodical process used to evaluate risks to a transit system. The security portion of the risk assessment identifies security threats (both terrorism and crime) to the transit system; evaluates system vulnerabilities to those threats; and determines the consequences to people, equipment and property.

standoff distance: The distance maintained between an asset or portion thereof and the potential location for an explosive detonation or other threat.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ARM-IR Analytical Risk Management–Infrastructure Resilience

AVB anti-vehicle barrier

ASTM American Society for Testing and Materials

CPTED Crime Prevention Through Environmental DesignCTAA Community Transportation Association of America

DoD Department of DefenseDoS Department of State

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

IDS intrusion detection systemK-rating kinetic energy rating for AVBsL-rating penetration distance rating for AVBs

NATSA North American Transportation Services Association

NTAS National Terror Advisory System

PT-RAM Public Transit–Risk Assessment Methodology

RTAP Rural Transit Assistance Program

TRAM Terrorism Risk Assessment and Management

TVA threat and vulnerability assessment

Summary of document changes

Document history

Document Version	Working Group Vote	Public Comment/ Technical Oversight	Rail CEO Approval	Policy & Planning Approval	Publish Date
First published		_			Dec. 1, 2012
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Appendix A: AVB selection checklist

The following list incorporates the selection process for anti-vehicle barrier design and installation requirements. Agencies in the process of selecting an AVB should consider review of the information contained in it, answering each question based on the results of its TVA.

AVB selection checklist

- 1. Describe the design basis threat as determined by the agency's risk assessment.
- 2. What is the type, weight, maximum velocity, contents and calculated kinetic energy of the threat vehicle? What type of attack? Single vehicle or multiple vehicles?
- 3. Is there sufficient standoff distance between the planned barrier and the protected structure?
- 4. What is the expected speed of the vehicle?
- 5. Can the speed of the vehicle be reduced (via speed bumps, serpentine approach, etc.)?
- 6. What is the calculated kinetic energy developed by the moving vehicle?
- 7. Have all impact points along the perimeter been identified?
- 8. Have the number of access points requiring vehicle barrier installation been minimized?
- 9. What is the most cost-effective active barrier available that will absorb the kinetic energy developed by the threat vehicle?
- 10. How many barriers are required at each entry point to meet throughput requirements?
- 11. What is the most cost-effective passive barrier that will absorb the kinetic energy developed by the threat vehicle?
- 12. Will the use of aesthetic barriers at some locations be necessary?
- 13. Is penetration into the site a factor?
- 14. If penetration into the site is a factor, is the standoff distance adequate after impact?
- 15. Will traffic flow be affected by the barrier's normal cycle rate? What is the active barrier's maximum throughput rate per day/hour? What is the number of available traffic lanes: one-way only, reversible, width and separation? Is the roadway flat/sloping/crowned, islands, etc.?
- 16. Will the active barrier need to be activated at a rate higher than the normal rate?
- 17. Will the barrier be required to be normally open (to allow traffic to pass) or normally closed (to stop traffic flow)?
- 18. If normally open (allowing traffic flow), is adequate distance available between the guard post and the barrier to allow activation and operation of the barrier?
- 19. Will the barrier be subject to severe environmental conditions? Consider high/low temperatures, rainfall, drainage, snow and frost. Survey the site for subsurface conditions: berms, landscaping, buried utilities, drainage, frost line and water table height. Also consider zoning laws.
- 20. Do passive barriers installed along the perimeter provide equivalent protection to the active barriers?
- 21. Do passive barriers interfere with established clear zone requirements?
- 22. In case of power failure, will the barrier fail open or close? Is there an emergency backup power source? Are there warning/safety signs/signals/strobes/horns to warn of the barriers ahead? Are there semaphore gate arms? Are they in sync with the barrier deployment?
- 23. Is this a temporary or permanent installation?
- 24. Has the agency considered CPTED principles? See the APTA recommended practice "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) at Public Transit Facilities."