

Pilot test 7: Societal collaboration to prevent railway suicide



Background

This measure is about collaboration among local authorities in the society to prevent railway suicide.

When there is a threat of suicide a collaborated emergency plan is activated that involves both the infrastructure manager and other societal stakeholders (Police, Resque services, Ambulance, emergency call center, psychiatric care unit). The involved parties go to the site where a threat of suicide have been reported and act to prevent a train-person collision.

The major part of the measure is that the train traffic is adapted to prevent a collision from happening when an unauthorized person is detected in the railway system. Another important part of the measure is that the involved stakeholders go to the identified site to perform the search and rescue.

The temporary traffic shutdown or speed reduction ensures the safety of the person at risk, but also the



Photo: Trafikverket

safety for the police, rescue services and ambulance, the parties responsible for conducting search and rescue.

Evaluation method

The evaluation have been done in two parts. First qualitative interviews with the involved stakeholders were conducted. An the a quantitative analysis of relevant

events in the targeted rail network from were where done from statistics gathered during a seven month period, from June 1 to December 31 2013.

Results and conclusions

Results from the quantitative analysis:

- Most threats of suicide occur after noon and in the evening between 12 am to 12 pm.
- The problem is more common in station area than on the railway line
- 40 of 64 threats of suicide where taken in to psyciatric care
- Of the 40 people that where taken in to care, the estimation is that 4 lives have been saved
- 49 traffic stops and 11 speed reductions where conducted during 64 threats of suicide
- For 60 trains involved in traffic stop or speed reductions, 48 have less than 30 minutes delay.

- Adapted train speed in 60 cases make less delay compare to if 4 fatal accidents have occurred (If it is estimated that the total time lost for each suicide is 480 minutes)

Results from the interviews:

The involved stakeholders (police, resque services, ambulance, emergency call center etc) truly believe that they make a difference and save lives. All the interviewed participants emphasize the importance of a good communication channel between stakeholders at the site to make sure that it is possible for them to work safely in the track area.

Everyone involved strives to have as short traffic stops as possible.

References:

Rådbo, H, Renck, B. & Andersson, R. (2012). Feasibility of railway suicide prevention strategies; a focus group study.

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