

News Release



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AMTRAK, TSA AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT NATIONAL PASSENGER RAIL SECURITY EXERCISE Operation RAILS SAFE increases security at stations and onboard trains

WASHINGTON – During today’s morning and evening commutes, Amtrak Police, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) personnel and law enforcement officers from federal, state, local and rail police agencies around the country are being deployed at passenger rail stations in an exercise of expanded counterterrorism and incident response capabilities.

The multi-force security surge across is not in response to any threat or incident. Rather, today’s deployment is part of Operation RAILS SAFE (Regional Alliance Including Local, State and Federal Efforts), a coordinated exercise involving activities such as heightened station patrols, increased security presence onboard trains, explosives detection canine sweeps, and random passenger bag inspections at unannounced locations.

“Joint security exercises like Operation RAILS SAFE are designed to make it harder and harder for terrorists to use their preferred strategies to attack our stations, trains, and passengers,” said Amtrak Police Chief John O’Connor. “Operation RAILS SAFE will further enhance the readiness and communication capabilities of hundreds of police and security officials stationed in some of the busiest rail passenger areas in the U.S.”

Today's Operation RAILS SAFE exercise is the first to simultaneously encompass multiple regions of Amtrak’s national system. It illustrates the ongoing cooperation among police departments in States, cities, villages and towns with their partners in Amtrak, commuter rail and mass transit systems, and TSA. The deployed police officers will provide a visible security presence, on alert for and ready to investigate suspicious persons, activities and items.

The exercise will be reviewed to identify lessons learned as part of a continuous improvement approach, including evaluation of requirements and tactics for effective response to any future threats or incidents within the railway system.

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About Amtrak

As the nation's intercity passenger rail operator, Amtrak connects America in safer, greener and healthier ways. Last fiscal year (FY 2009), the railroad carried 27.2 million passengers, making it the second-best year in the company's history. With 21,000 route miles in 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian provinces, Amtrak operates more than 300 trains each day—at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph)—to more than 500 destinations. Amtrak also is the partner of choice for state-supported corridor services in 15 states and for several commuter rail agencies. Visit Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information.

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