



Railway Mission

Support on
life's journey

Post-Incident Support Report 2022

Photo by the other Kev for pixabay

Post-Incident Support is the care offered and given to railway or police staff following serious incidents such as sudden deaths, suicides or attempted suicides, fatal or non-fatal accidents, homicide or attempted homicide that may have a traumatic or disturbing effect on the health and wellbeing of rail industry colleagues.



Post-Incident Support Report 2022

What is wellbeing?

There is a growing interest in the rail industry in the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of staff.

The benefits of a healthy workforce are manifold, and employers are giving more attention to retention of staff through wellbeing initiatives.

According to the UK Department of Health, "Wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well and comprises an individual's experience of their life; and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values."

Many of the tasks in which railway workers are required to engage can be demanding, especially those that involve the loss or potential loss of life on the railways due to attempted suicides, accidents or sudden deaths, or, on another level, deaths in service of colleagues.

It's imperative, therefore, that a care structure is available to encourage and assist with recovery following times of intense engagement or challenging circumstances.

Chaplaincy support

Railway Mission chaplains are engaged in the professional application of support for all staff as

part of the chain of care provided by rail industry organisations.

Railway Mission is a long-time partner with rail companies and provides a continual service in support of staff.

Chaplains are well positioned to work with staff and to be available to them after having been confronted with difficult situations, with a view to aiding with recovery from the effects of potentially traumatic events.

About the Report

This report is a record provided by chaplains of the kinds of support offered and given to rail staff specifically following rail incidents.

Post-Incident Support is the care offered and given to railway or police staff following serious incidents such as sudden deaths, suicides or attempted suicides, fatal or non-fatal accidents, homicide or attempted homicide that may have a traumatic or disturbing effect on the health and wellbeing of rail industry colleagues.

The report is based on numerical evidence that helps quantify wellbeing support applied to rail staff, but it should be emphasised that the numbers represent people, either as individuals or as groups, so we should recognise that there is a personal, individual element to the data provided.

This report covers incidents followed up during 2022, from January 1 to December 31.

It does not include information on response to Major Incidents, which are covered in our Annual Report.

Completed incident reports

Railway Mission chaplains submit incident report forms with information on kinds of support offered or given to staff.

An incident report is not considered complete until all associated staff have been at least offered support via the various means at our disposal, including face to face meetings, emails, phone conversations, texts, or support offered and passed on via line managers.

Of course, it's not possible to reach every staff member, but we also put out information to rail companies and police on how to contact a chaplain during times of stress or need, with comprehensive information available on our website at www.railwaymission.org.

Reaching out

Rail chaplaincy is both proactive and reactive.

Our primary information on each incident is provided through rail industry reports and proforma which aid in a professional and sensitive approach to each incident.

We are grateful to the rail industry and to British Transport Police (BTP) who acknowledge the value of the support provided through post-incident wellbeing support by Railway Mission chaplains and provide information upon which we can act, including, on occasion, referrals.

As full and part-time chaplains we are able to spend time travelling and getting to know staff when they are enjoying an average day, which helps build connection and positive familiarity for any time life becomes more intense due to incidents.

Who are the support team?

Railway Mission chaplains have, for an extended time, been trusted by British Transport Police, Network Rail and the Train and Freight Operating Companies of England, Scotland and Wales.

Also officially known as BTP chaplains, we have consistently served the railways of Britain since



1881, having developed a strong reputation for professional welfare and care within the industry.

Chaplains provide post-incident support to those who are engaged in the immediate and subsequent response to rail incidents. All support is confidential, impartial and independent.

This support is offered and given to responders, train crew, signal centre or station staff or witnesses following rail incidents.

Occasionally chaplains are asked to support surviving family members by the coroner's office following fatalities. However, our primary support is for the welfare of rail industry staff.

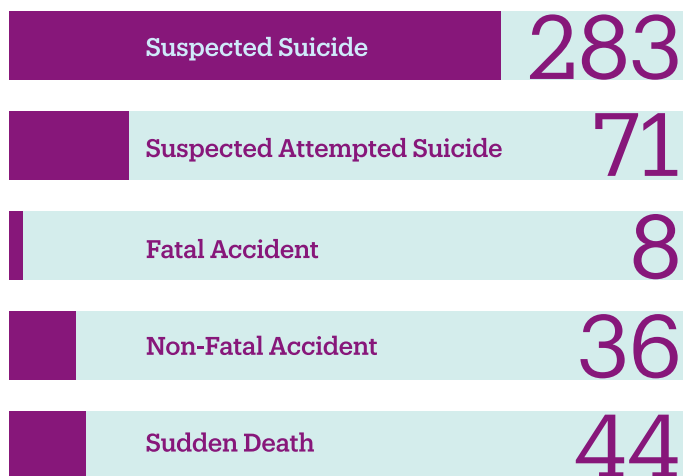
Railway Incidents

It is a sad fact that there are around 350 attempted or completed suicides using rail infrastructure every year.

There are also unfortunate accidents, as well as sudden deaths that contribute to the figures in this data, which means that more than 400 incidents are recorded annually. On rare occasions homicide or attempted homicide is a factor.

Incident coverage

As BTP chaplains, we endeavour to cover every incident, providing support to responders and potentially affected staff.



In recent years, due to vital information provided by BTP and the rail industry, chaplains have been in a position to provide support following every recorded incident.

This illustrates our commitment to supporting staff following rail incidents.

In 2022, 437 out of 439 incidents were recorded that resulted in support being offered or received through the rail chaplaincy on post-incident wellbeing support, a rise of 27 incidents on 2021.

Of these, 283 were recorded as suspected suicides, with 71 as attempted suicides, a total of 354. On top of this, there were 8 fatal accidents during 2022, with 36 non-fatal accidents. 44 sudden deaths were reported. There were no recorded homicides.

2022 Month	F/TOC Train Crew			TOC Station Staff	
	Driver Manager	Driver	On-Board Team	Station Manager	Station S
January	38	38	11	27	
February	34	34	12	26	
March	35	35	15	21	
April	35	35	9	25	
May	31	31	15	20	
June	21	21	7	19	
July	25	25	13	20	
August	26	26	11	26	
September	36	36	19	20	
October	27	27	16	20	
November	29	29	17	21	
December	19	19	10	17	
Year	356	356	155	262	

Only two incidents for the year had no chaplain-provided data for support, although chaplaincy support was offered if not recorded by covering chaplains in these instances, where the local chaplain was unavailable due to illness.

Suicide on the railways

Of significant note is that, in 2022, 71 out of 354 attempts did not result in a loss of life, with many individuals reported to be left with life-changing or life-threatening injuries.

This equates to 20.06% of all suspected attempts, consistent with the figures from previous years.

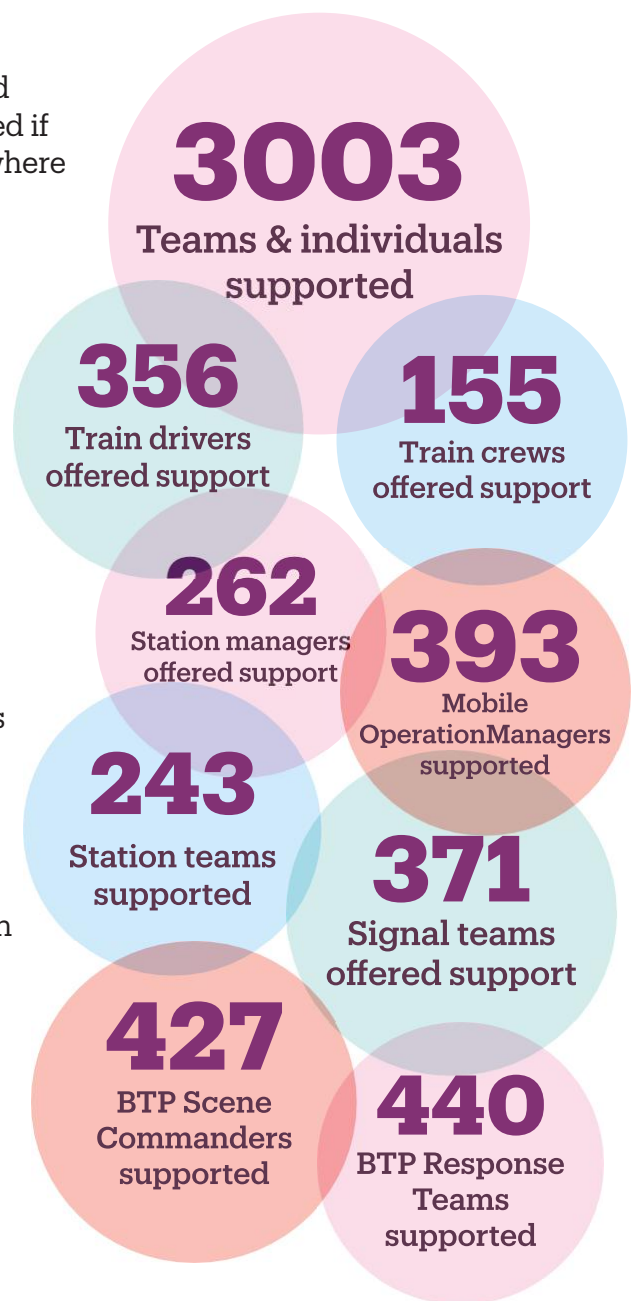
Although the number is down from 2021, when it rose to just under 25%, it remains a fact that around one in five attempts did not result in the loss of a life during 2022.

This demonstrates that even where a suicide attempt has not been completed, there is a significant risk of life-altering injuries as a result of the attempt.

Whether this information can be used as potential deterrent to self harm on the railways or remains a sensitive issue could arguably be part of the conversation in suicide prevention.

Scotland & Wales

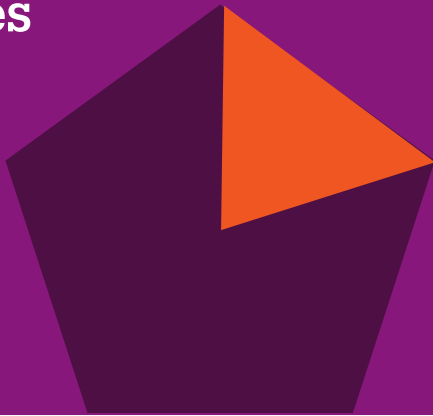
Separate figures for Scotland reveal that of 34 incidents, there were 19 presumed suicides for the year, whilst there were five attempted suicides, with two other incidents recorded.



Staff	Network Rail/TfL		British Transport Police		Total Teams
	T/L/MOM	Signaller	BTP OIC	BTP Response Uni	
21	42	37	44	46	304
22	35	33	38	39	273
21	36	35	38	40	276
25	38	35	39	42	283
18	35	34	34	33	251
19	23	21	29	30	190
20	29	25	31	32	220
24	32	33	36	38	252
19	36	37	42	42	287
17	32	30	34	34	237
20	34	32	36	37	255
17	21	19	26	27	175
243	393	371	427	440	3003

20%

of attempted suicides on the railways are survived, with many resulting in serious or life-changing injuries



This tells us that there was a similar percentage of attempts that resulted in injury rather than death in Scotland mirroring the national average of around 20%.

Wales, however, saw higher rates of negated attempts with five out of 13 resulting in injury. Other incidents such as sudden death or rail accidents involved two persons, a total of 15 incidents dealt with by rail staff and officers.

Accidents on the railways

This report is mainly concerned with the support offered to rail staff following incidents, but the levels of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, during 2022 should be noted.

Fatal accidents were again lower than the previous year, but non-fatal accidents, once more, increased. This could indicate that previously fewer people were out and about due to the pandemic, although it was noted in last year's report that there was an upturn in 2021.

There were eight fatal and 36 non-fatal accidents during 2022. This included three incidents involving mobility scooters that resulted in non-fatal injuries.

Supporting staff

These are figures that remind us that there are times when we have to face up to the reality of death and injury on the railways.

Although these events are always tragic and unwanted, our main emphasis in chaplaincy provision is in providing support to the staff, officers and track workers who are confronted with these experiences, and to aid them through any potential trauma or depression that might result from their impact.

Staff Support 2022

Who receives post-incident support?

We have set criteria for care provision, which involves four sections of support:

The train crew, which relates to the driver via the driver manager, and the on-board crew, through their manager.

Station staff. Where an incident takes place at a station, the train station staff via their line-manager or supervisor are offered support.

Network Rail or Transport for London (TfL) staff; that is, MOMs and Signallers via the Local Operation Managers (LOMs), or Train Operation Managers (TOMs) on TfL, and could include other participants.

BTP Responders, via the Scene Commander and duty officers, plus other officers, including SOCO, Fatality Investigation Teams, Medics, etc.

Railway Mission provides a high level of accountability and confidentiality regarding information.

Teams and Individuals

Our data mostly concerns support for rail industry teams, although individuals are, of course, given support within those teams.

For instance, we offer support for a train driver through their line manager, which means two persons at least have been offered support.

Similarly, we offer support to a train crew via their manager. BTP Response Units may come from a number of stations for an incident. Each team is offered support, usually through their duty officer or scene commander.

During 2022, we offered 3003 teams or individuals support.

The actual individual number is higher, of course, as there could be between two and five or more members to each team, and all will be offered support following an incident they attended.

Some of our data can be identified as referring to individuals. For example, we offered support to 356 driver managers as part of our follow-up procedure.

It is important to note that, whilst we go through the manager to offer support to their team members, the manager is also potentially impacted by the incident.

Management Support

One question for the rail industry to consider remains 'who supports the managers' following rail incidents?

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During 2022, we offered 3003 teams or individuals support.

Mostly, when we ask them what kind of support they receive they will tell us that they deal with the situation either amongst themselves, or 'by getting on with it.'

Chaplains' support is consistently available to all members of staff, so we will always enquire after their wellbeing, and often have extended conversations regarding prior incidents and how they were coming through the effects those incidents had on them at the time.

Responders

We offered support to 427 BTP Response Unit Scene Commanders, and 440 of their teams.

More response teams go to incidents than Officers in Charge of the scene. In London areas, for instance, teams may come from a number of locations to attend an incident.





Again, regarding individuals, we contacted 393 Mobile Operation Managers (MOMs) and 371 Signals teams. MOMs are often the first on scene following an incident and responsible for the infrastructure and dealing with the delicate time during which the area must be cleared and reactivated.

Although signalling teams are not at the site, they too can be affected by incidents. They are often the first contact for drivers when an incident is reported, and receive a description from the driver of what has taken place.

There are other teams at signalling centres such as the CCTV staff who view the incident as part of the process of determining what has taken place.

Although the information about CCTV staff is not recorded in our data, they are part of signals teams operations. CCTV teams also work with BTP to provide evidence.

All of these staff members need wellbeing follow-up. Railway Mission chaplains are available to support rail staff post-incident.

Station Staff

Not all incidents take place at stations, many being line-side.

However, we did support 262 station supervisors following incidents. Some stations are unstaffed,

but we would still make contact with the local area supervisor.

We communicated with 243 staff teams at stations where an incident did take place at staffed stations.

Team numbers vary according to the size of the station, but we will speak to as many staff as possible during a visit, especially those who were on duty at the time of the incident.

Often a supervisor will refer a staff member who was on duty and we will spend some time with them, either at the station during a visit or by phone.

Important checks

Dealing with a serious incident such as a death at the station is rarely what a customer support staff member anticipated when they joined the railways, although they would have been made aware of the possibility during their induction.

These situations can be very affecting so it's important that staff have an awareness that wellbeing support is available.

Whilst BTP Responders and Network Rail MOMs can also potentially be traumatised, they expect to attend incidents as a part of their vocation, and have a level of preparedness or experience in dealing with them.

All rail operators and responders have debrief processes and wellbeing teams who are

responsible for the care of their staff members and officers.

Railway chaplaincy is another, independent, strata of available support that many find invaluable, especially in regard to the independence of the service.

Multiple interactions

A single visit may result in more than one engagement with staff members.

It's worth considering that, for example, a visit to a BTP station may involve contact with several officers, and conversations will often go to previous incidents they have attended as well as the one being followed up.

This is a form of intervention as it allows staff to recall situations that may have affected them in the past for which they still require closure at some level. It may even identify a need for ongoing support, either through chaplaincy or through signposted agencies.

The same occurs when speaking to TOC and Network Rail line managers and colleagues of staff members who had some kind of involvement in dealing with an incident in the near or distant past.

One wellbeing session with staff may yield a number of conversations that are helpful to them in coming to terms with difficult incidents they were required to handle at some level.

Being proactive and reactive are keys to successful chaplaincy in wellbeing support.

Contact

Our contact begins with a call to BTP First Contact, then senior TOC or NR Control Duty Staff and stretches through all staff potentially or actually engaged in the incident.

Initial contact is by phone, sometimes via email, and by visits to the various connected response points, depots and stations.

This follow up visit is arranged once the required level of support is established.

All degrees of response are important...

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Railway chaplaincy is another, independent, strata of available support that many find invaluable, especially in regard to the independence of the service.



Valued Support

All degrees of response are important, from phone call to visit, because the wellbeing of each person is paramount to the successful continuation of the railways.

Wellbeing and health have become major considerations that are increasingly being addressed by rail connected organisations. Being able to talk to people with active listening skills is part of the process of recovery for many.

In many cases, if a rail worker knows there is an outlet for their concern that doesn't affect their vocation or career pathway they can be more open with an independent care professional about their situation and, as a result, are better able to function in their job.

Whilst our data indicates a numerical value, there are often far more people who receive or are offered support along the chain, following each incident, whose information doesn't appear here.



Dedicated

Railway Mission remains a dedicated and committed provider of post-incident support.

We endeavour to offer support to as many staff members as we can reach following every incident recorded via the BTP proforma.

We are also available to all staff following an incident via our emergency support line on **0203 887 7000**.

Looking ahead

Railway Mission chaplains strive to cover all railway incidents, and 2022 was no exception, with all incidents receiving a high level of attention.

Our quest is for the wellbeing of staff as they deal with difficult situations. Our reporting system provides the industry with quantitative information on the wellbeing support we provide following potentially traumatic incidents.

This service provision is well recognised by the rail industry, which results in vital partnerships with BTP, Network Rail and the TOCs, including partnership funding and information sharing.

This partnership enables our service and equips our chaplains, providing the availability and tools necessary for consistent professional application of this vital segment of the chain of care and wellbeing for staff following incidents.

As the rail industry in the UK moves towards important changes, including through the establishment of GBR, it is crucial that it

maintains its focus on the wellbeing of staff. This includes supporting agencies that provide professional support.

Wellbeing investment

In the long run, the financial support of independent, professional agencies concentrated on wellbeing and care provision allows rail companies to focus on maintaining the movement of people on their infrastructure.

The figures in this report are important, but they can never replace the real life interactions between wellbeing support teams and those with whom they interact following incidents.

This includes chaplaincy, which is an independent, impartial, confidential service utilising professional wellbeing support for all rail staff in England, Scotland and Wales.

From the perspective of Railway Mission, it has always been a privilege to serve the many faceted railways in this capacity as a vital support service to rail staff, and remains our goal into the future.

Data compiled by Area Managers Andrew Hall & Stephen Rowe from reports submitted by Railway Mission chaplains.



Six ways to support Railway Mission chaplains

1

Cheque or Postal Order

A one-off or regular donation by Cheque or Postal Order sent to: Railway Mission, Rugby Station, Rugby, CV21 3LA.

2

Standing Order

A one-off or regular donation through your bank. Email our Administrator for more information: office@railwaymission.org.

3

Web Donation

A one-off or regular donation through our website. Visit www.railwaymission.org, and click on the Donate page, where you will find easy-to-follow directions.

4

Wills & Legacy

To include us in your will, our charity name is Railway Mission, our charity number in England & Wales is 1128024, and in Scotland is SCO45897.

5

Gift Aid as an extra

Railway Mission can claim 25% from HMRC on donations made by UK taxpayers who are signed up to Gift Aid at <https://www.gov.uk/donating-to-charity/gift-aid>.

6

Payroll Giving*

Because every donation is taken from your gross pay, every pound you give will only cost you 80p, or only 60p if you are a higher rate taxpayer.



*For more information on Payroll Giving, go to:

www.railwaymission.org/donate

Scan the QR-Code to go to our Donate page online





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0203 887 7000

Railway Mission

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when I needed
someone to talk to**

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