



**ITEM ID:** 2024-143-0

**TRANSMITTAL DATE:** March 1, 2024

**MEETING DATE:** March 8, 2024

**TO:** Contracts, Operations, Maintenance, and Safety Committee

**FROM:** Frank Castellon, Chief System Safety, Security and Compliance Officer  
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**SUBJECT:** System Safety, Security, and Compliance (SSSC) Department Activities - Update Q1 and Q2 FY24

**Issue**

Staff is providing a summary of the Authority's safety, security, and compliance activities for Q1 and Q2 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024.

**Recommendation**

Receive and file.

**Strategic Commitment**

This report aligns with the Strategic Business Plan commitment of:

- **Safety is Foundational:** We will stay on the leading edge by deploying new technologies and processes to enhance the safety and security of our riders, our fellow employees, and the communities we serve. Law enforcement services provide safety and security to the Metrolink commuter rail system and its passengers.

**Background**

The Authority's mission is to provide safe, efficient, dependable, and on-time transportation service for the southern California region. The System Safety, Security, and Compliance (SSSC) Department works to optimize the agency's safety and promote a positive safety

culture in the workplace through education, engineering, and enforcement, as well as auditing and inspecting for safety and regulatory compliance. Using a data-informed approach, the department utilizes leading and lagging data indicators coupled with management experience, research, and professional expertise to understand current trends and make decisions about the use of Agency resources in areas of focus.

Additionally, the SSSC Department tracks and evaluates inspections conducted by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and other regulatory agencies. These inspections apply the general and permanent rules published in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Transportation (Title 49 CFR Part 200-299) to oversee agency compliance and assess penalties for violations against freight and commuter railroad agencies. The FRA conducts inspections and audits agencies' records to monitor and enforce railroad safety regulations specified in Title 49 CFR. The Authority places paramount importance on safety and regulation compliance.

The primary mission of the Authority's law enforcement services is to ensure public safety onboard the trains, to coordinate enforcement with the cities along the Authority's right-of-way (ROW), and to assist with the Authority's fare enforcement and physical security program.

## **Discussion**

### **Strikes Incidents**

In Q1 and Q2 of FY24, there were a total of 53 strikes (11 pedestrians, 25 trespassers, and 17 vehicles) compared to a total of 38 strikes in Q1 and Q2 FY23 (5 pedestrians, 23 trespassers, and 10 vehicles), an increase of 39%. In our continued effort to mitigate system-wide strikes, staff, and our Los Angeles County Sheriff's Metrolink Bureau are working to implement the following mitigating measures:

- Request local police agency to increase patrols in the high strike areas,
- Deploy mobile close-circuit television to detect and respond to trespassers,
- Increase grade-crossing enforcements in high strike areas,
- Continued to conduct risk assessment following a strike to determine possible root-cause,
- Continued to encourage the reporting of trespassers to Metrolink Security Operations to identify high risk areas,
- Continued to conduct community outreach, and
- Homeless encampment cleanups.

The SSSC Department outreach continues to address strikes on our system that fall under the category of suicides and deliberate acts. Staff has developed and deployed suicide prevention training for frontline employees, contractors and law enforcement to learn how to spot the warning signs of a person that may be in crisis and contemplating ending their life. In Q1 and Q2, 30 suicide prevention courses were provided by department staff with a total of 497 employees trained.

With the expansion of service on the Antelope Valley Line in Q2, Public Safety outreach has coordinated assessment efforts with various governmental and non-governmental groups in proximity of SCRRA tracks to aid in raising awareness of increased service. Public Safety outreach also continues to engage with groups near the Santa Ana River Floodway, and Van

Nuys Pedestrian Bridge to reduce trespasser strikes and promote community awareness.

### **Vandalism Incidents**

System-wide, we encountered nine reported vandalisms related to wire thefts. Staff and our Los Angeles County Sheriff’s (LASD) Metrolink Bureau are working to implement the following mitigating measures:

Increased LASD patrols,

- Additional patrols conducted by private security,
- Partnered with local police agencies to request for additional patrols,
- Partnered with Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Major Crime Unit to provide additional resources (Assist with case analysis, filings, operations support, and detective work,
- Distributed flyers to local police agencies and business regarding wire theft incidents,
- Developing a “Tiger Team” made of Metrolink Operations, contractors, LASD, and Allied Universal Security to focus on mitigation measures, and
- Conducting joint undercover operations between LASD and local police agencies.

### **Conductor Assaults**

In an effort to deter unruly passengers and prevent assaults on train conductors, SCRRA staff continued to collaborate with LASD, Allied Universal, and Amtrak to increase law enforcement and security presence in areas where data analysis suggested unruly passengers were more likely to be present. In FY24 Q1 and Q2 there were five assaults on conductors between July 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023. Two of these resulted in an injury, and none of these resulted in a lost time injury. In all, the Authority averaged .67 assaults per month systemwide in FY2023 compared to 1.33 assaults a month from July 2023 through December 2023.

### **Increased Law Enforcement Presence on the Platforms, Trains, Grade-Crossings, and Right-of-Way**

The safety of our patrons and employees is our priority. In January 2023, the Department began meeting bi-weekly with our law enforcement and Amtrak partners to discuss security concerns and review statistical data. The purpose of these meetings is to direct enforcements where it is most needed. As a result of these meetings, we have increased our law enforcement presence on the platforms with fare enforcements, riding trains, grade-crossing details, and right-of-way details (Table 1).

The increased of law enforcement presence at Metrolink stations include, but not limited to, Los Angeles Union Station, San Bernardino Downtown Station, El Monte Station, Riverside Downtown Station, Lancaster Station, Downtown Pomona Station, Lancaster Station, and Burbank Station. train riding and grade-crossing details.

| Law Enforcement Activities | Q1 & Q2 FY2023 | Q1 & Q2 FY2024 |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Train Rides                | 413            | 1,174          |
| Platform Fare Enforcements | 3,312          | 3,788          |
| Grade Crossing Details     | 1,371          | 1,308          |
| Right-of-Way Details       | 5,485          | 6,090          |

## **Rule Violations and Reportable Injuries**

FY24 Q1 and Q2 saw a total of 14 rules violations compared to 10 in Q1 and Q2 of FY23, a 40% increase. Nine of the rules violations in FY24 Q1 and Q2 occurred within a maintenance or layover facility. The Safety, Security, and Compliance Department has taken a conservative approach to rules violations and oversight of SCRRRA contractors. The root cause committee continued to conduct investigations and make recommendations to mitigate future incidents and across various contractors. Q1 and Q2 Root Cause Analysis investigations found the following violation primary contributing factors:

- Loss/lack of situational awareness
- Unclear Communication
- Complacency
- Failure to verify safe removal/establishment of protection.

During the Q1 and Q2, there were nine total FRA reportable employee injuries, which is a decrease of 40% compared with the number of injuries reported in Q1 and Q2 of FY23 which had 15 reportable injuries. Of the reported injuries, three were attributed to Amtrak, four to LASD, one to Allied Security, and one SCRRRA employee. While none of the reportable injuries have been catastrophic, management remains committed to working closely with our contractors and contract managers to mitigate future occurrences.

The investigation of suspected rule violations and reportable employee injuries is a critical part of our operations in our proactive efforts to preventing future incidents. As such, a comprehensive Root Cause Analysis is conducted with the railroad departments responsible for contractor oversight and the contractor/employee involved. Throughout this process, the SSSC Department collaborates with management to identify any contributing factors that may have led to such incidents and work together to recommend measures aimed at preventing and mitigating future occurrences. Once the investigation is complete, corrective actions are promptly implemented with a requirement of written confirmation from the contractor of adherence to the Authority within 30 days. This practice not only promotes a safe work environment but also helps to ensure that our agency is in compliance with established regulatory and rulebook guidelines.

Compliance staff contribute to the effort to reduce injuries and rule violations by conducting systemwide safety inspections, investigating and conducting root cause meetings, attending contractor safety committee meetings, review incident trends, follow-up on corrective actions taken by SCRRRA Staff and contractors, and conduct audits for regulatory compliance on SCRRRA departments and Operations contractors. During Q1 and Q2 FY24, Compliance was staffed with three of four Compliance Officer positions, and has undergone the hiring and training process to fill those vacant positions. The compliance team conducted 225 Safety Inspections, held 19 root cause meetings and led 12 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 270 audits for regulatory compliance.

To combat the increase in rules violations, in Q2 the Compliance staff in collaboration with Operations staff implemented additional video review to include all contractors who move locomotive equipment. Contractors who move equipment include Alstom, Amtrak, and TASI. Additionally, Compliance staff has increased their focus observations on maintenance and layover facilities.

In Q2, Compliance staff conducted additional outreach to ensure affected contractors were

aware of the increase in passenger service along the Antelope Valley Line.

The SSSC Department proactively addresses workplace injuries and rule violations by conducting a quarterly Workplace Safety Campaign week aimed at enhancing employees' safety awareness and reinforcing the importance of maintaining a secure work environment.

The Q1 campaign took place from August 21-August 25 and featured the following key safety messages:

- Why We Work Safely
- Completely Prepared for the Job
- SMS Pillar of Safety – Safety Management Policy
- Empowerment
- Heat illness

The Q2 campaign took place from November 13-November 17 and crews discussed the following key safety messages:

- SMS Pillar of Safety – Safety Management Policy
- The Importance of Reporting
- Investing in People
- Proper Escalation
- Fourth Quarter Spike

Throughout the two weeks, 2754 contacts were made through 336 face-to-face and virtual meetings with employees and contractors.

## **Training**

The System Safety, Security, and Compliance (SSSC) Department continued its commitment to promoting a culture of safety awareness throughout our organization and beyond by providing training for employees, contractors, and external stakeholders, including law enforcement and fire agencies. In Q1 and Q2 of FY24, department staff conducted multiple training courses aimed to raise awareness of potential workplace and emergency response hazards and provide participants with the necessary tools to avoid them.

Of note, in November, SSSC Staff with the help of the Operations Department and Customer Experience Department, coordinated an annual 239 Emergency Simulation Drill at the Arrow Maintenance Facility (AMF), where first responder Law Enforcement and Fire Department personnel were familiarized with the Arrow DMU train equipment and then engaged in a simulated Active Shooter drill aboard a DMU train staged at AMF.

Overall, the department recorded 193 classes in Q1 and Q2, during which 2,557 participants were trained. This number represents the combined attendance of employees, contractors, and external stakeholders who took part in the department's training courses.

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Approved by:

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Officer

**Attachment(s)**

[Presentation - SSSC FY24 Q1 Q2](#)