

OFFICE OF OPERATIONS

NOTICE NO. 21

May 12, 1997

TO: All Personnel, Office of Operations

FROM: Director, Office of Operations

SUBJECT: NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES INVOLVING POLICE ACTIVITY
NEAR RAILWAY RIGHTS-OF-WAY

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

PURPOSE

This notice defines a railway right-of-way and delineates procedures for Department personnel to follow when involved in activity on or near a railway right-of-way.

INFORMATION

Recent events involving Metrolink train operations and law enforcement activity have resulted in the necessity to establish notification procedures. When Department personnel are involved in a training exercise or any emergency or non-emergency activity on or near a Metrolink or any other railway right-of-way, an immediate notification to Communications Division (CD) is necessary.

The Metrolink is a heavy rail commuter train system that travels at speeds up to 70 mph. The railway right-of-way for all heavy rail systems extends 25 feet beyond both sides of the tracks. The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) is responsible for the light rail, Blue Line and Green Line commuter rail systems, as well as the Red Line subway system. The heavy rail line users are Metrolink, AMTRAK, and the railway freight carriers. Some rail carriers have merged with other companies and the controlling agency for some of the railway rights-of-way may be difficult to determine.

In cases when Department personnel are involved in any activity on or near a railway right-of-way, a notification to CD is intended to ensure that train operators can be advised to reduce their speed or divert to an alternate track away from the incident.

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PROCEDURES

* When Department personnel are required to occupy any portion of any heavy rail freight carrier, Amtrak, Metrolink, or MTA operated light rail right-of-way for any reason, they shall immediately notify CD of the following:

- The Department of Transportation (DOT) Number (six numbers and a letter), the name of the railway carrier immediately below the DOT number, and the "800" telephone contact number. This information is located on the control box of the nearest railway crossing site, if one is nearby;

NOTE: The name of the carrier and the "800" telephone contact number may not be on all control boxes, however, the DOT number should be on all crossing site control boxes.

- Location and type of incident;
- Approximate number of Department personnel involved;
- Any hazard or blockage of the right-of-way;
- Estimated duration of time Department personnel will be at the location;
- Any request to slow down or divert an approaching train; and
- When Department personnel have cleared the scene.

NOTE: Communications Division has agreed to immediately notify Metrolink operations or the concerned proprietary operator controlling the railway right-of-way of the above information.

- * Department personnel shall not park their vehicles within 15 feet of any railway tracks.
- * Department personnel not directly involved in the investigation of an incident on or near a railway right-of-way shall not stand within 15 feet of any railway tracks.
- * Investigating officers/detectives required to approach within 15 feet of railway tracks as part of a police investigation, shall only remain in the railway right-of-way for the minimum amount of time necessary to complete their investigation.


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- * Department personnel shall keep in mind the inherent dangers involved in investigations on or near railway rights-of-way and take all appropriate safety precautions. The failure to do so could result in death or serious bodily injury.

If any additional information is required, please contact
Sergeant F. Kennerson, Officer-in-Charge, Transit Liaison Unit,
(213) 922-3568.


BAYAN LEWIS, Assistant Chief
Director
Office of Operations

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