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Kick-off for the European Research Project RESTRail “REduction of Suicides and Trespasses on RAILway property”.

(Paris, 15 November 2011). The International Union of Railways (UIC) together with representatives of seven of its members, research institutes, universities and manufacturers, organised an official kick-off, with European Research Project Officer Alexandra-Maria Gurau in attendance, for the European Research Project RESTRail at UIC headquarters in Paris.

RESTRail is a research project funded by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development in the field of transport. It aims to reduce suicides and trespass on railway property incurring service disruption and other consequences by providing the rail sector and decision-makers with an analysis and identification of cost effective prevention and mitigation measures. The project includes both security and safety topics.

According to European Rail Agency data, 66% of all railway fatalities are suicides and, together with fatalities due to trespass, constitute 72% of all fatalities occurring within the railway system. This fact is a growing cause of concern, especially in Europe.

Restrail is led by railways since it is a rail-related topic which aims to answer the concerns of the rail industry. However an essential feature of the project is the involvement of a wide range of relevant professional expert knowledge in the areas of human science and health, law enforcement, emergency services, education and social services, media and communication, road and rail. This will ensure the project output is of practical use to all who can be involved with suicides and trespass.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director-General, underlined that the multidimensional character of Restrail will have a strong impact combining social communications measures such as awareness, dissuasion and/or education campaigns among the general public, and technological and human measures to protect railway premises. He added that even though the rail sector cannot be held responsible for these incidents which are external to its activities, its strong public presence as a social link and as an essential part of land use planning has led to its involvement in developing collective responses to the increasingly frequent occurrences of suicides and trespass.

The first stage of the project consists of identifying the state-of-the-art best practices and research findings in and outside Europe combined with an analysis of factors internal to railways or external such as media communication that influence the occurrence of suicides and trespass. This work will consider hotspots and other high risk access points such as level crossings, station platform ends and bridges.

This is followed by an assessment of existing countermeasures for reducing suicides, preventing trespass and mitigating the consequences on rail operations. Attention will then be given to the development of new approaches particularly those involving soft measures. The project will demonstrate some selected measures in order to evaluate the findings and to develop recommendations and guidelines.

The final outcome will be a toolkit providing practical steps to reduce suicides and trespasses and to mitigate the consequences when an incident occurs.

You can find more information on the Restrail website: www.restrail.eu

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Note to the editor:

RESTRAIL is coordinated by UIC security division and involves:

7 UIC members:

Deutsche Bahn AG (Germany)
FFE - Spanish Railway Foundation
IK- Polish Railway Institute
INFRABEL Belgian railway infrastructure manager
PRORAIL – Dutch railway infrastructure manager
TCDD - Turkish State Railway Administration
Trafikverket - Swedish transport Administration

Research centres and Universities:

VTT - Technical Research Centre of Finland
CIDAUT -Research and Development Center in Transport & Energy, Spain
IFSTTAR - French institute of sciences and technology for transport, development and networks
HMGU - HelmholtzZentrum m  nchen. German Research Center for Environmental Health
KAU- Karlstad University Sweden
UNott UNott - University of Nottingham

Manufacturers:

ASTS - Ansaldo STS (Italy)
MTRS3 - Mass Transit and Railway Security Services & Solutions (Israel)
NICE - Nice Systems Ltd (Israel)