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August 2, 2023

EMERGENCY RESPONDER SAFETY BULLETIN

At approximately 5:55 AM this morning, while attempting to remove a person/trespasser from the tracks (reported as a suicidal emotionally disturbed person), in Easley, South Carolina, on the Norfolk-Southern Railroad, a local Police Officer was struck and killed by an Amtrak Train. The trespasser was not injured.

Our condolences go out to the officer's family, partners and friends and our thoughts are with the Amtrak train crew involved in this incident as well as the emergency personnel that responded to this incident.

While this was a potentially life-threatening situation for the trespasser, the following points are safety reminders for emergency response personnel operating on or about the railroad:

- Know the railroads in your response area, who owns them, who controls train movement and power, who to call to stop trains, and who to call to remove power (if applicable).
- Always expect trains to operate on the tracks through your response area at any time, on any track and in either direction, (daytime, evenings, overnight, weekends, holidays, good weather, bad weather, passenger trains, freight trains and railroad work equipment), regardless of the railroad/rail system that runs through your response area.
- Stop and ask yourself, is this an imminent life-threatening situation? Do I really need to be operating on or about the tracks? Is this something that railroad personnel can mitigate?
 - Law Enforcement Personnel: when chasing someone before going within 15' of the tracks, ask yourself, can the area be secured until we receive confirmation that train movement has been stopped (and power removed, if applicable)?
 - Fire Service Personnel: Can the fire spread? What are the exposures? Can we extinguish the fire/mitigate the incident operating hoses from a distance of 15' or more from the tracks, until confirmation is received that train movement has been stopped (and power removed, if applicable)?
- When not at a station platform, do not operate within 15' of the tracks until **CONFIRMATION** is received, from the railroad that controls train movement, that train movement has been stopped.
- On the Northeast Corridor (in overhead catenary wire territory, 12,000 to 25,000 volts AC power depending on your location), do not operate within 15' of the catenary wire until **CONFIRMATION** is received that power has been removed and the catenary wire has been grounded.
- In 3rd rail territory, unless it is an imminent life-threatening situation, do not operate at track level until **CONFIRMATION** is received that the 3rd rail (750 Volts, DC power) has been de-energized.
- Use caution in **multiple track** territory. Has train movement been stopped on the adjoining track(s)? Is it necessary to remove power on the adjoining tracks (if applicable)?
- Do not enter a railroad tunnel or operate on a railroad bridge until **CONFIRMATION** has been received that train movement has been stopped. These are "Close Clearance" areas.

- Regardless of the type of incident/emergency that you are responding to, **NEVER, NEVER**, go around railroad crossing gates that are down, or if there are no gates, cross the tracks when the warning lights are flashing.
- If operating at a distance greater than 15' from the tracks, let the railroad that controls train movement know that your personnel are out there. They will instruct trains operating on their tracks to look out for your personnel and sound their horns as they approach the area.

NOTES:

1. Even though you receive a **CONFIRMATION** that train movement is stop, provide personnel as spotters, looking in both directions for trains coming towards the direction of the incident, so they can warn your personnel operating at the scene if they see a train heading in their direction.
2. Amtrak uses a distance of 15' from the tracks as a safety zone and we say **do not operate within 15' of the tracks until CONFIRMATION is received that train movement has been stopped.** Other railroads may use other distances (10', 20', 25'). Contact the railroad that owns/controls train movement for the tracks in your response area to find out the distance that they use.

For additional information on railroad safety, training, or if you need a contact for the railroad(s) that run through your response area, please contact Amtrak Police Department Fire Safety and Emergency Response Operations at hearng@amtrak.com.

Stay Safe!