

La Plata Police Department – Emergency Operation Plan

	Title: Train Derailment		Annex: EOP-39	
	Effective Date: March 21, 2014	Review Date:		
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> New	<input type="radio"/> Amends	<input type="radio"/> Rescinds	
Approved by: Chief Carl Schinner			CALEA 5 th Edition	
CALEA Standard: 46.1.2			Pages: 4	

01 PURPOSE: The purpose of this annex is to supplement the *Natural-and-Man-Made Disasters* portion of the Emergency Operations Plan. Used in conjunction with the Town of La Plata Emergency Plan, this annex provides general guidelines for use by first-responders to incidents involving trains. These guidelines are intended to be flexible since no two situations are the same, and to allow first-responders to adapt to rapidly changing conditions.

02 INFORMATION: In the event of any railroad incident, freight, or passenger, on Amtrak or CSX tracks, the Chief Train Dispatcher in Philadelphia and Jacksonville are to be contacted first, depending upon the rail line involved. If the incident involves a passenger train, Amtrak National Operations in Wilmington, Delaware must be contacted as soon as possible. Amtrak can also be contacted through the Amtrak Police control center in Philadelphia.

PHONE NUMBERS

CSX

Police Emergency: 1-800-232-0144
Chief Dispatcher: 1-800-356-9582, x7551

AMTRAK

Police Emergency: 1-800-331-0008
Chief Dispatcher: 1-215-349-2417
Asst. Chief Dispatcher: 1-215-349-2226
Train Dispatcher: 1-215-349-2263
Amtrak Operations: 1-800-424-0217, x2307

03 ASSUMPTIONS:

A. There are approximately 260,000 public, private, and pedestrian at-grade highway-rail crossings in the United States. A motorist is 40 times more likely to die in a crash involving a train than in a collision involving another vehicle. More people die in highway-rail grade crossing crashes in the United States each year than in all commercial and general aviation crashes combined. Nearly 50% of vehicle/train collisions occur at crossings with active warning devices (i.e., gates, lights, bells).

- B.** Trains cannot stop quickly. The stopping distance for an average freight train traveling at 55 miles per hour is a mile or more (or approximately 18 football fields). The stopping distance for an eight-car passenger train traveling at 79 miles per hour is about the same distance.
- C.** The approach of a train triggers active warning devices (i.e., flashing red lights, bells, and gates). They begin operating at least 20 seconds before the arrival of the fastest train on that line. In the event of electrical or mechanical failure, active warning devices are designed to default to the fail-safe or *active* mode.
- D.** One common cause of train derailment is collision with a motor vehicle or other object on the tracks. And, with any collision – with or without derailment – there is always the potential for and risk of hazardous materials being involved.
- E.** Railroad operations in Maryland are under the jurisdiction of one (1) passenger (Amtrak) and one (1) major freight carrier (CSX Transportation). Amtrak trains operate over Amtrak-owned tracks between Elkton and the Anacostia River, and on CSX tracks between Washington, D.C. and Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia. These tracks are under the control of Amtrak dispatchers in Philadelphia and CSX dispatchers in Jacksonville, Florida.
- F.** The train tracks traverse the Town of La Plata. Freight trains traveling through the Town of La Plata may be carrying a variety of chemicals, gases, and substances.
- G.** Depending upon the speed of a train, magnitude of derailment, and cargo or number of passengers aboard, there is the potential for the derailment to become a Mass Casualty Incident involving hazardous materials. A collision between a train and a motor vehicle or object – with or without derailment – presents special challenges for first-responders.

04 PLAN:

- A. TRAIN DERAILMENT:** The derailment of a train poses unique hazards for law enforcement officers and requires an integrated and coordinated response by law enforcement and fire/rescue personnel. Although not a common occurrence, trains can derail for a variety of reasons:

 - 1. Intentional, malicious conduct on the part of one or more persons, including terrorist.
 - 2. Mechanical failure.
 - 3. The result of a collision between a train and a vehicle or object at a grade crossing.

4. The result of a collision between a train and an object on the tracks away from a grade crossing.
 5. A defect in the rails.
- B.** At or near the scene of a derailment, public safety takes precedence. However, supervisors must ensure that the scene is treated as a crime scene until it is determined otherwise.

C. ON-DUTY SHIFT SUPERVISORS SHALL:

1. Be aware that hazardous materials may be involved from the locomotive(s) and/or certain rail cars (especially tank cars) due to spillage, leakage, venting, evaporation, fire, etc,
2. Be alert to placards on any rail cars and refer to the Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Guidebook to determine the nature of the cargo. This information should be relayed to the Communications Unit for responding fire/rescue apparatus.
3. Be aware that there are at least four (4) types of hazards that approaching officers should be alert to: mechanical, electrical, chemical, and fire.
4. Since there is likelihood that diesel fuel or other flammable liquids, chemicals, or gases may have been spilled or leaked, prohibit the use of flares at or near the scene until determined to be safe.
5. Be aware of the phenomenon known as a Boiling Liquid Expanding Vapor Explosion (BLEVE) as it relates to flammable liquids transported in tank cars and other containers. This phenomenon results from a container reaching temperatures well above its boiling point atmospheric temperature, causing the container to rupture into two or more pieces – usually with tremendous force. See EOP 42-Explosions.
6. Consider the need for allied agency assistance (Maryland State Police, Charles County Sheriff’s Department, etc.).
7. Establish a command post near the fire/rescue command post to ensure cooperation, coordination, and communication.
8. Establish a media staging or assembly area. The fire/rescue incident commander will most likely be in-charge of the scene so media inquiries should be referred to the fire department PIO.
9. Ensure notifications of Command Staff.

10. Direct responding officers and assign them accordingly, establishing inner and outer perimeters.
11. Request additional officers as necessary.
12. Quickly but carefully evaluate the nature of any injuries and the number of injured and communicate that information in plain terms to the Communications Unit so that it can be relayed to responding fire/rescue apparatus.
13. Ensure that emergency care is provided for any injured person(s) until the arrival of fire/rescue.
14. Confirm that rail traffic through the area has been stopped and other trains traveling of the same tracks warned.
15. Protect and preserve the scene and surrounding area until the arrival of federal, state, and local officials and investigators (i.e., NTSB).
16. Determine the nature and extent of damage to neighborhoods and businesses from rail cars, flying debris, etc., and deploy officers and resources accordingly.
17. In consultation with the fire/rescue incident commander, coordinate evacuations by officers (as necessary), especially if hazardous materials are involved, keeping evacuees, bystanders, and traffic **upwind and upstream** from the incident.

INFORMATION SOURCES:

Gorton, S.C. Emergency Response to Railroad Incidents.
Jacksonville: CSX Transportation, Inc., 1999

Grade Crossing Collision Investigation. Jacksonville
CSX Railroad 2001

Operation Lifesaver. Highway-Rail Facts and Terms
(Pamphlet). Baltimore, Maryland 2001

Operation Lifesaver. Tips for Law Enforcement Officers
(Pamphlet). Alexandria, Virginia 2001

Operation Lifesaver. Key Safety Tips at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings
(Pamphlet). Alexandria, Virginia 2001

Passenger Train Emergency Response. Philadelphia Amtrak 2001