



Freedom of Information request 01/FOI/22/986

I'm curious to know what measures are in place to assist members of the public if they are in crisis and likely to harm themselves.

RESPONSE

This is quite a broad question and it's not immediately obvious how it translates into a request for disclosure of recorded information under FOIA. British Transport Police holds the national policing lead for suicide prevention and mental health and has been at the forefront for many years of initiatives to promote joint working between police forces, local authorities, health trusts, etc to achieve better outcomes in this area.

You can find information about the work that British Transport Police does in this area on page 10 of our [Annual Report](#) ("Safeguarding The Vulnerable"):

"Vulnerable people travel on the railways every day. During 2020/21, our officers and PCSOs intervened in 25,997 cases involving vulnerable people. This included identifying and safeguarding children and young people, responding to people in mental health crisis and dealing with domestic abuse, stalking and harassment.

Due to the increase in vulnerable people on the rail network, the Force invested in an additional 21 staff for our Vulnerability Units and specialist trained officers, including a national Harm Reduction Team to work with those in mental health crisis. This team supports the swift and timely sharing of information and engagement with partners to ensure that an individual's safety, wellbeing and welfare needs are met.

We also continue to invest in additional training and guidance for all our officers and PCSOs. During the year, 700 attended safeguarding roadshows in preparation for a bespoke, force wide vulnerability learning programme which will start later this year.

In 2017, the Department for Transport launched the Safeguarding on Rail Scheme, which introduced safeguarding requirements that industry partners are obliged to fulfil to achieve accreditation. Working with charities such as the Railway Children throughout the year, we made substantial progress with the scheme. We have continued to support the accreditation of a number of train operating companies, enhancing the rail industry's response to safeguarding vulnerable people.

Identifying someone who may be at risk is not always straightforward and those suffering exploitation or abuse need our officers to be alert to their situation and probe beneath the surface to see if there is an underlying cause for someone's behaviour or distress.

'Look Beyond the Obvious' is our internal campaign to reinforce the importance of our officers to use their 'professional curiosity' and experience to identify vulnerable people

and protect them from harm. In February this year, we extended our campaign to colleagues within the rail industry. The tailored 'Look Beyond the Obvious' campaign materials highlighted good practice and those circumstances where rail staff have also looked beyond the obvious and helped us protect people. Our aim is that all rail staff can also recognise the signs of vulnerability and report their concerns to us."

The following links also contain information about the work that British Transport Police does in partnership with other organisations:

National Suicide Prevention Alliance: <https://nspa.org.uk/member/british-transport-police/>

The Samaritans: <https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/workplace/rail-industry-suicide-prevention-programme/working-police-and-health-services/>