

British Transport Police Research Agenda

June 2026



Agenda (1/3)



SO1

We will prevent the most serious crime and protect those who need us most.

1.1 Safeguarding Children and Young People: Exploitation, Online Harm, and Engagement

What profiles, pathways and rail-specific risk factors are associated with children and young people vulnerable to exploitation on the railway, including County Lines involvement and online harms?

How do online harms translate into rail-related risk behaviours (e.g. missing episodes, exploitation or crisis incidents), and what early indicators can support timely safeguarding intervention?

What factors influence trust, reporting and sustained engagement of children and young people within safeguarding and justice processes? [Blueprint link: Year 1 \(Process\): BTP is regarded as a lead Force in targeting offenders who use the transport network to exploit the vulnerable. \(County Lines, VAWG*\)](#).

1.2 VIAWG: Underreporting and Precursor Behaviours

What factors influence whether victims of railway-related VIAWG choose to report incidents, or not report at all?

At what points do victims disengage from reporting, investigation or safeguarding processes, and what drives that attrition?

How do barriers to reporting and retention vary by offence type, victim characteristics and railway context?

What are the predatory behaviours seen on the railway that precede VIAWG/RASSO? [Blueprint link: Year 1 \(Process\): BTP is regarded as a lead Force in targeting offenders who use the transport network to exploit the vulnerable. \(County Lines, VAWG*\)](#).

1.3 Robbery: Series Disruption, Predictive Indicators, Intervention Effectiveness & Suspect Identification

Which operational interventions (e.g. high-visibility patrols, plain-clothes activity, environmental design, offender-focused tactics) are most effective at disrupting robbery series on the rail network?

To what extent do local and community-level robbery patterns predict offences on or near railway infrastructure?

Can journey-path data and surrounding-area crime trends be used to reliably identify and forecast high-risk routes for targeted intervention?

What alternative biometric, behavioural or environmental cues can support offender identification when facial imagery is unavailable? [Blueprint link: Year 2 \(Information\): We used behavioural science insights to shape public messaging and patrol protocols](#).



Agenda (2/3)



SO2

We will accelerate our efforts to reduce disruption, keeping the railway moving.

2.1 Organised Crime, Money Laundering and Metal & Infrastructure Offending on the Railway

How are organised crime groups exploiting financial flows, waste-crime money-laundering networks, and wider criminal enterprises to enable, resource, and profit from metal and infrastructure crime that disrupts the railway? [Blueprint link: Year 1 \(Process\)](#):

Disruption is designed out in collaboration with partners using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. Plus multiple other disruption-related statements throughout blueprint (but none specifically relating to infrastructure offending).

2.2 Trespass: Decision-Making, Risk Perception & Behavioural Responses to Deterrence

How do young people and other at-risk groups perceive and assess risk when deciding to trespass on the railway?

How do trespass and incidents involving persons in crisis vary in terms of decision-making, situational awareness, and responsiveness to deterrence measures?

How are deterrence campaigns understood and interpreted by young and vulnerable people, and what factors shape their effectiveness or limitations? [Blueprint link: Year 1 \(Process\)](#):

Disruption is designed out in collaboration with partners using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. Plus multiple other disruption-related statements throughout blueprint (but none specifically relating to trespass).

2.3 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB): Escalation Pathways, Disruption Risk & Early Intervention on the Railway

How does anti-social behaviour on the railway escalate into more serious or disruptive incidents?

Which types, patterns or locations of ASB are most likely to cause operational disruption or service delay?

What early, proportionate interventions are most effective at preventing ASB from escalating and reducing avoidable disruption to the railway? [Blueprint link: Year 1 \(Process\)](#):

Disruption is designed out in collaboration with partners using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. Plus multiple other disruption-related statements throughout blueprint (but none specifically relating to ASB).

SO3

We will strengthen our visible presence and improve coordination through integrated railway policing and security.

3.1 Police/Security Visibility as a Deterrent on the Railway

What is the impact of visible policing and railway security presence on deterring crime across the railway network?

How can patrols on trains and in and around stations be deployed for optimal impact? [Blueprint link: Year 3 \(Process\)](#): *A partnership approach has strengthened railway visibility and improved coordination.*

3.2 Partner Body-Worn Video (BWV), Detection & Positive Outcomes

What is the relationship between railway-industry use of Body-Worn Video (BWV) and the likelihood of crime detection and positive outcomes for victims? [Blueprint link: Year 3 \(Technology\)](#): *Industry Body Worn Video directly contributes to solved crimes and prosecutions.*

3.3 Railway CCTV Quality/Coverage, Detection & Positive Outcomes

What is the relationship between the quality of CCTV on the railway network and the likelihood of crime detection and positive outcomes for victims?

Which aspects of CCTV quality and deployment deliver the greatest marginal improvement in detection rates and investigation timeliness relative to cost? [Blueprint link: Year 3 \(Information\)](#): *Industry CCTV is further integrated through data sharing agreements and cloud-based storage; & Year 3 (Process): Live operations and investigations are enabled by greater access to CCTV footage through the National CCTV upgrade programme.*

Agenda (3/3)



SO4

We will build a modern and inclusive workforce who are well equipped, well trained, well led and well cared for.

4.1 Leadership Culture, Performance Management and Accountability

What factors influence managers' willingness and confidence to address poor performance and conduct through timely and effective conversations?

How do current perceptions of effective leadership (e.g. approachability, compassion) interact with expectations around accountability, standards and performance delivery?

What evidence-based leadership behaviours, training or organisational levers can help achieve a better balance between empathy and performance management? [Blueprint link: Year 1 \(Organisation\): Our leaders act with courage, motivate others and display our values.](#)

4.2 Digital Recruit Training, Estate Strategy and Female Recruitment

What impact, if any, does retaining a single central recruit training facility – mitigated by increased use of digital learning to reduce time away from home – have on the recruitment of female police officers across England and Wales?

Does increased use of digital learning during recruit training influence early-career retention rates among female officers?

How do location, time away from home and training delivery models affect perceptions of accessibility and attractiveness of policing careers for women? [Blueprint link: Year 1 \(Organisation\): Our training incorporates best practice, learning and community feedback; & Year 3 \(Organisation\): Our estate reflects the needs of a modern policing workforce; & BTP delivers a flexible working approach that ensures operational resilience balanced against our commitment to be a modern and inclusive employer.](#)

4.3 Conflict De-escalation Training, Communication Skills and Return on Investment

What evidence-based conflict de-escalation techniques are most effective for frontline policing contexts?

How can scenario-based training be designed to embed and reinforce effective communication and de-escalation skills for officers and staff?

What measures, beyond reductions in officer injury and public complaints, can be used to assess the impact and return on investment of de-escalation training? [Blueprint link: Year 3 \(Organisation\): Frontline officers and staff are trained to be confident communicators, with professional development in conflict de-escalation, supported by scenario-based assessments.](#)

SO5

We will increase productivity through innovation, data and technology – driving efficiency and effectiveness.

5.1 AI for Crime Prevention and to Support Safer Railways

How can AI complement human judgement to support the prevention and detection of crime across the rail network, including making better use of existing information? How can the use of AI help BTP focus on the most important risks and opportunities, while reducing unnecessary effort and improving consistency over time, without undermining trust, accountability or professional expertise? What ethical, financial, security and governance considerations should shape the responsible and sustainable use of AI within BTP? [Blueprint link: Year 1 \(Technology\): A proof of concept AI matching engine that connects disparate data sources to reduce manual checking and enhance investigative capabilities has been delivered.](#)

5.2 Streamlining and Safeguarding Justices Processes and Engagement

How can digital tools and automation simplify the way evidence is gathered, cases are managed and the public interacts with BTP services? How might processes evolve over time to reduce duplication, delays and administrative burden, while maintaining fairness, transparency and high standards of evidence? What safeguards are needed to ensure trust, data security and accountability in more streamlined systems, and how can improved services strengthen public confidence while remaining proportionate and cost-effective? [Blueprint link: Year 2 \(Technology\): Automation has begun to handle repetitive data entry and compliance.](#)

5.3 Understanding, Anticipating and Predicting Crime Trends

How can different sources of information be brought together to improve BTP's understanding of emerging crime patterns and risks? What early signals or wider social and environmental factors might indicate a shift towards more serious or organised criminal activity on the railway? How can these insights be used to inform proportionate, ethical and cost-effective prevention strategies over time, while respecting privacy, strengthening governance and avoiding bias? [Blueprint link: Year 3 \(Information\): Advanced AI enabled the forecasting of demand and support resource allocation decisions.](#)