

BUSINESSSAFE

BusinessSafe is designed to aid businesses in protecting the safety and well-being of Florida's residents and visitors from threats. BusinessSafe provides private sector partners with open source information, analysis and resources to help protect their businesses and communities.

Florida Fusion Center 23-023

February 2023, Issue #97

BusinessSafe Sector Highlight – Mass Transit and Passenger Rail

The mass transit and passenger rail sector is one of seven subsectors of the overall transportation sector. The sector consists of publicly available transit services in the form of motorbus, light rail, commuter rail, and paratransit services. According to the latest available figures from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in 2016, nearly 17 million residents, close to 80 percent of the total population, live within total urban transit service areas. There are currently 37 urban fixed route transit systems operating in Florida, including five rail systems. According to the 2016 FDOT figures, the systems operate 15,521 route miles and carried nearly 251 million annual passenger rides. Mass transit has an important impact on the economy, with 50 percent of trips being to or from the workplace. The mass transit and passenger rail sector has major interdependencies with the energy and information technology sectors.

Criminal Activity

- **Cyberattacks**

With technology such as on-board Wi-Fi, GPS tracking, autonomous vehicles, contactless payments, and more being added to mass transit, the entry points for cyber criminals increase. Criminal actors may attack transit systems for multiple reasons: to access personal information for employees or passengers and then demand a ransom payment; to access the information stored on the smart fare cards to change available funds and ride for free; and a report from the Mineta Transportation Institute predicts future attacks may also target the GPS systems to take control of autonomous vehicles.

[Transit is Seeing More Cyber Threats, Many Agencies Aren't Ready](#)

[Valley Regional Transit: Cyber Attack Against VRT Put Personal Information at Risk](#)

[RIPTA Paid Hackers \\$170K in Ransomware Attack](#)



Florida Fusion Center
(800) 342-0820

FLBusinessSafe@FDLE.state.fl.us

Author: FL8563 Approval: FL8900, HSEC:1, 2, FSIN:1.1, 1.10, 3.1.3, 3.13, FFC:1, 2.1, 4.2, 6.8

- **Component Theft and Vandalism**

Wire theft, mainly copper and fiberoptic, is an attractive item for thieves due to its light weight and high resale value. Theft of these wires can cause transit delays due to their critical use in controlling mechanisms like rail-crossing signals and the safety crossbars. Railway vandalism, such as removing railroad spikes and removing railroad ties to change track spacing, may be used by criminal actors to aide in cargo theft or to facilitate other crimes.

[RTD says A Line train running again after replacement of wire stolen from tracks](#)

[Fiber optic cable theft halts Spanish bullet train service](#)

[Train robberies and rail track theft were up 74% last year](#)

- **Trespassing on Rail tracks**

It is illegal to access private railroad property anywhere other than a designated pedestrian or roadway crossing. Trespassers are most often pedestrians who walk across or along the tracks as a shortcut to another destination. Additionally, some trespassers attempt to commit suicide via train.

[Pedestrian death on Ocala train tracks has been classified as accidental](#)

[After 57 deaths, Brightline in Florida pleads with people to stop dangerous crossings](#)

[Man commits suicide by walking in front of Brightline train in Delray Beach, police say](#)

Other Threats to the Sector

- **Natural Hazards**

It's possible for flooding to affect both bus lines and rail lines, which may cause delays and damage to equipment. This damage may lead to altered routes, higher fares, and increased maintenance costs, among other issues. According to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), there were 216 wildfires in January 2023. The FDACS fire danger index shows that three of the urban rail lines in Florida fall within the high and very high categories for the potential for a fire to start and require suppression action on any given day. Depending on their severity, wildfires may cause delays or damage to the wooden crossties of the track.

[Miami-Dade County Suspends Transit Services Due to Hurricane Ian's Impacts](#)

[Heavy Rainfall Affects Public Transit Across North Texas](#)

[Wildfires Disrupt Amtrak, Freight Railroads in the Cascades](#)

[Northern California Wildfires Damage BNSF's Rail Infrastructure](#)



Florida Fusion Center
(800) 342-0820

FLBusinessSafe@FDLE.state.fl.us

Author: FL8563 Approval: FL8900, HSEC:1, 2, FSIN:1.1, 1.10, 3.1.3, 3.13, FFC:1, 2.1, 4.2, 6.8

Resources

- The [Federal Transit Administration](#) (FTA) provides a list of trainings, certifications, and other resources for those working in the mass transit and passenger rail subsector.
- The Florida Department of Transportation offers an outreach program titled [Be Rail Smart](#) with campaign tool kits and an outreach events calendar.
- [Operation Lifesaver](#) is a non-profit focused on rail safety that offers quick facts, state statistics, safety presentations, and materials.
- Visit [StopRansomware.gov](#) for information and resources related to protecting your organization from ransomware attacks.
- For more cyber safety information or to schedule a free cybersecurity awareness training class, visit [SecureFlorida.org](#).



Florida Fusion Center
(800) 342-0820

FLBusinessSafe@FDLE.state.fl.us

Author: FL8563 Approval: FL8900, HSEC:1, 2, FSIN:1.1, 1.10, 3.1.3, 3.13, FFC:1, 2.1, 4.2, 6.8