MASSACHUSETTS: MBTA Focuses on Suicide Prevention

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The MetroWest Daily News [1]

Massachusetts transit officials and suicide prevention advocates are collaborating on efforts to prevent suicide on the state’s railways. In response to a recent increase in suicide deaths on commuter rail tracks, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) is forming a committee to investigate and explore strategies to prevent fatal collisions with pedestrians. The committee includes representatives from the MBTA, commuter rail operator Keolis, the state department of public health, and suicide prevention and rail safety groups. According to Steve Mongeau, executive director of the suicide prevention organization Samaritans, additional physical barriers and motion detectors to alert train conductors when a pedestrian is on the tracks could be effective prevention measures. The MBTA currently displays contact information for the Samaritans crisis hotline in stations and on trains. “Working with its partners, the MBTA will keep informing the public about inherent risks associated with being on active railroad rights-of-way,” said MBTA spokesperson Joe Pesaturo. “Partnering with Samaritans, the MBTA will continue to display important information around the system, letting people know that help is only a phone call away.”

Spark Extra! Learn more about suicide prevention efforts in Massachusetts [2].

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