OVERVIEW OF THE SECURE STATIONS SCHEME

What is the Secure Stations Scheme?

The Secure Stations Scheme is an opportunity for Britain's rail companies to improve security at their stations and display to their customers their desire to reduce crime. Recognising the public's fear of crime at stations, the Scheme provides an incentive to station operators to improve security and provide reassurance to passengers and staff.

This national Scheme covers all rail and underground networks which are policed by the British Transport Police [BTP]. It establishes standards of good practice and accredits individual stations which have worked with the BTP and other local partners to implement security measures.

What are the accreditation criteria?

There are four accreditation criteria:

the **design of the station** must conform to standards judged by the local BTP Crime Reduction Officer to prevent and reduce crime and improve passenger perceptions [see Guideline no 2];

the **management of the station** must enable you to take steps to prevent crimes, respond to incidents, and communicate effectively with passengers [see Guideline no 3];

crime statistics for the station over the twelve months prior to the inspection must show that you are **managing crime** [see Guideline no 4]; and

a survey of users must show that, on the whole, **passengers feel secure** when using the station [see Guideline no 5].

The Scheme recognises that security can be improved both through physical design measures and through management practices. Many stations are old and were designed without personal security in mind. In such cases operators will need to make whatever improvements are possible (through, for example, lighting and signage) and take steps to

manage the problems that remain.

The design of a new station or a major refurbishment will provide an opportunity to incorporate good practice in the features of the physical environment. Even so, management practices which give priority to preventing crime and providing a reassuring environment will be crucial to ensuring that the station is - and remains - secure.

Benefits to the operator

- reduced crime levels which, in turn, mean reduced costs in terms of repairing vandalism, cleaning graffiti, and staff time off as a result of assault, for example;

- increased passenger numbers which, in turn, means increased revenue;

- a boost in public confidence which, in turn, will be reflected in improved status;

- good local publicity for the rail company, arising from the issuing of the certificate and any local ceremony to mark the event;

- the possibility of levering in investment from other agencies (such as the local authority) to improve the station approaches and immediate environment; and

- the professional satisfaction of adopting acknowledged good practice.

Costs to the operator

The main cost of the Scheme to the operator will be in the design and management improvements which need to be made to bring the station up to standard. The size of this task will obviously depend on how far the station fell short and how difficult it will be to make the changes. Some stations will meet the standard with little or no additional expenditure; while others will require major investment. The Guidelines suggest a range of measures, some more costly than others.

What is involved?

In the first instance make your own assessment of whether a station meets the standard, using the enclosed Design and Management Audit. If you identify a problem either with a design feature or an aspect of management, use **Guidelines 2 and 3** for some ideas as to what you might do, and liaise with your local BTP Crime Reduction Officer (CRO) to

prepare for the independent assessment.

The local CRO will also help you to identify the crime figures which you will need to supply in your application (see **Guideline 4**).

Guideline 5 explains how to find out how passengers feel about personal security at your station.

When you and the local CRO agree that the station may meet the accreditation criteria, the BTP Independent Accreditor will formally accredit the station. When successfully accredited, you must send the completed **Record Sheet** (endorsed by the independent accreditor) and **Application Form** to the Department for Transport for processing and confirmation of your accreditation. The Application Form states which documentation you need to send to the Department for Transport (DfT) - at the address shown on the Form.

DfT will confirm your successful accreditation and send you the Scheme award, in the form of a certificate signed by the Chief Constable of the British Transport Police which can be displayed at the station and advertised in your publicity materials and station signage, and a publicity pack. DfT will also notify your station's local MP of the accreditation.

The certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue. A certificate can be withdrawn during this time if there is a clear breach of the standard. After the two years the operator may apply for a new certificate, following the same procedure.

If the local CRO finds that the station does not meet the accreditation standard, they will specify what needs to be done and advise you on the 'working towards accreditation' award process. Details of this process can be found in **Guideline 7**. Achieving the 'working towards accreditation' award will entitle the station operator to use this in their publicity. Once the local CRO and BTP Independent Accreditor are satisfied that full accreditation has been achieved within the timescale agreed, the enclosed Record Sheet and Application Form can be completed and submitted to DfT.

You may have a station in a high crime and socially excluded area which, despite your efforts to improve the design and management of the station, continues to have a crime rate adversely affected by the neighbourhood it serves. To help you overcome this obstacle and to move to the accreditation standard, **Guideline 8** provides examples of successful measures to reduce crime and improve personal security that have been introduced at similar stations. You will need to discuss with the Local CRO how best to apply these measures to your station.