



A.J.H.M. (John) Laene
Managing Director of RAILPOL

Over the last two decades, many terror attacks have taken place on metro, local commuter trains and long-distance rail services. The threat of future attacks in the field of rail remains high. Transport hubs such as railways and trains continue to represent a high-risk target since the infrastructure and the area around it is open by nature and design. **The mission of RAILPOL, is to strive for a safe and secure rail-transport by establishing cross-border law enforcement co-operation on the main European railway corridors.** RAILPOL is the platform for cross-border law enforcement co-operation to tackle transnational crime and other security issues in the European railway environment. Currently chaired by the French National Police, which took over recently by the Dutch National Police, Railpol counts 22 members and five working groups: Counter Terrorism, Crime and Illegal Migration, Railway Accidents, Public Order and Strategic Analysis.

- Operations

Being an operational association, RAILPOL values operational activities like:

Rail Action Day (RAD) Active Shield, 24 BLUE, RAW (Rail Action Week) and two exercises: RAILEX and RAILINVEST.



Active Shield is an operation of the Working Group Counter Terrorism whose objective is to prevent any threats that could jeopardise the security of travelers. Active Shield is focused on various checks: train stations, passengers, luggage etc. with a focus on explosive detection. The process also justifies extending the control procedures in the left luggage offices.



The 24 BLUE Rail Action Day is the operation set up by the Working Group Crime and Illegal Migration. The Working Group indicates one special topic. Besides that, each country will make its own action plan, based on their own priorities, strategy, problems, and the available capacity of enforcement as well. The items a country can pay attention to, are for instance: petty theft, metal/copper theft, illegal migration/nuisance caused by illegal migrants, drugs, aggression/antisocial behaviour, cargo trains, graffiti/damage/vandalism, control in freight transport.



Another operational activity is the **Rail Action Week** organised by the Working Group Railway Accidents over a week once a year. During seven days the participating countries in collaboration with railway companies are going to do checks focused on preventive safety, railway security, counter-attack measures and checking critical infrastructure against terrorist attacks.

- Exercises

RAILPOL works closely with all railway police authorities and identifies areas where the association could assist frontline police forces. One of the tasks of the Working Group Public Order is to focus on issues relating to policing major events, ranging from sporting events to non-peaceful demonstration. Convinced that each country has to learn from another in this domain, RAILPOL set up RAILEX (Railway Exercise) to give the occasion to different teams to work together on different scenarios like policing football fans, demonstrators but also responding after a terrorist attack. Basically 6 public order units from several countries work together on these scenarios.



RAILINVEST, is the annual exercise about rail investigations in accidents and incidents in the railway environment conducted by the Working group Railway accidents. RAILINVEST is an exercise created in order to work on best practice/ exchange of experience in rail accident investigations but also in analysing and assessing threat scenarios and the general railway security situation in the railway system in Europe.

- **Communication**

The constant goal is to maintain links with our stakeholders and the public and to create a community between the police organisations and the members of RAILPOL as well.

The digital part gathers several tools like: a RAILPOL website and pages on social medias (Facebook and LinkedIn).

RAILPOL also distribute a monthly newsletter to our members about interesting facts related to railway policing.

RAILPOL's promotion video, showing the association and its operational activities, can be found by clicking the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1PlekZQBfA>