

**ALL ABOARD, THE TRAIN IS HERE, THE TRAIN IS HERE!
HIGH-SPEED RAIL SYSTEM**

by

**Dennis M. Troxell Jr.
California Highway Patrol**

March 2, 2012

COMMAND COLLEGE CLASS 50

The Command College Futures Study Project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue of relevance to law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future; rather, to project a variety of possible scenarios useful for strategic planning in anticipation of the emerging landscape facing policing organizations.

This journal article was created using the futures forecasting process of Command College and its outcomes. Defining the future differs from analyzing the past, because it has not yet happened. In this article, methodologies have been used to discern useful alternatives to enhance the success of planners and leaders in their response to a range of possible future environments.

Managing the future means influencing it—creating, constraining and adapting to emerging trends and events in a way that optimizes the opportunities and minimizes the threats of relevance to the profession.

The views and conclusions expressed in the Command College Futures Project and journal article are those of the author, and are not necessarily those of the CA Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

ALL ABOARD, THE TRAIN IS HERE, THE TRAIN IS HERE!

High-Speed Rail System

Introduction

The year is 2012 and we are close to the possible start of construction on one of the biggest ventures the United States has ever faced. In 2008, California voters passed proposition 1A, the funding for the California high-speed rail (HSR) system. The Proposition to create a “Safe, Reliable High Speed Passenger Train” approved the sale of bonds by a margin of four percentage points (ENS, 2008). The project’s cost is estimated at \$43 billion, funded primarily through transportation bonds, federal grants and private participation (Meier, 2011). Interestingly, with all the groundwork laid thus far, the role of law enforcement is still unclear.

Issues of personnel and equipment requirements, jurisdictional boundaries, and the technology needed to police an HSR system are questions we must answer. The impact on law enforcement will be enormous, complicated much more so in the absence of well thought-out development planning. Although the “green light” has not yet been given for construction, now is the time to consider the police issues related to such an undertaking, and to seek answers ahead of the appropriation of funds.

Personnel and Equipment requirements

Now is the time to consider the critical issue of the financial impact and funding plan for local, county, and state law enforcement agencies. The current California HSR Authority business plan indicates that numerous roads, including major highways will be shut down completely or modified in some way (CHSRA, 2011). Not only will the needed law enforcement personnel from local, county and state agencies resources and

equipment, but how much of our primary duties will suffer due to this massive undertaking? For instance, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) will have a huge undertaking with the reconstruction on segments of State Route 99. Not only will additional personnel and equipment be needed to handle construction operations, the public will still expect the normal scope of CHP duties along the full length of SR99.

According to a California HSR Authority report (CHSRA, 2011) dated December 12, 2011, the Fresno to Merced route will have a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 42 road closures, depending on the varying HSR alternative design options (CHSRA, slide 12, 2011) selected. By knowing what to expect, resources can be added throughout the planning stage to fully engage in the project. Once a plan was finalized for police participation, the agencies responsible could allocate resources for the numerous road closures, traffic congestion and emergency response delays. Of course, from the billions of dollars for the project, a certain portion will be allocated to the affected LE agencies. Unless and until law enforcement articulates what that portion should be, the amount allocated could fall woefully short.

During the actual construction, policing agencies along the HSR route will deploy additional personnel just to handle vehicular traffic congestion. A significant source of this congestion is actually welcomed; it represents commute traffic of those who are employed by the project. A report by the California High-Speed Rail Authority indicated the construction phase will “generate 600,000 construction-related jobs over the life of the project” (2011). The construction phase would certainly help unemployment in many California Counties. “At stake could be thousands of jobs building the first section of high-speed rail line between Madera and Bakersfield -- a region selected by the Obama

administration to benefit from more than \$3 billion in federal stimulus money and other transportation funds because of its high unemployment rate” (Sheehan, 2012).

So with more jobs come thousands of more workers, materials, and big machinery. We can assume the impact placed upon our local citizens day-to-day will be an inconvenience. The law enforcement communities will be responsible to ensure safety and security for the many different entities involved in the construction. Beyond for the costs for deployment, though, is the need to specify the manner in which the various law enforcement entities will administer the relationships amongst the differing jurisdictions.

Jurisdictional Issues

Many CA police agencies will be touched by this project. The exact number of police agencies is unknown because all the HSR route changes have not been finalized. All affected agencies will need to come together to organize and analyze what emergency equipment, personnel, and jurisdictional boundary issues need to be resolved. Also, agencies may need to update or rewrite the manuals on how to respond to localized emergencies. When the actual construction begins, one might imagine public safety communication centers will have to be reprogrammed to indicate closed roadways within the affected jurisdictions. The responsibility and dissemination of public information regarding closed roadway closure and alternate routes will require partnering amongst county, city, and state roadway maintenance agencies. These examples are just the tip of the iceberg regarding the full scope of jurisdictional conflict resolution needed before the first shovel of dirt is turned. This work will need to continue during, and even beyond the end of the construction project.

One way to consider how to manage police issues for the HSR is to project forward

a decade when the system is fully functional. The state legislation will have passed laws, most probably to identify a single agency in charge of governing the laws on all HSR property. Such an agency could function like today's Bay Area Rapid Transit Police Department with the jurisdictional responsibility of a state agency. It could also be an extended function of the Highway Patrol. By having one agency with primary jurisdiction, resources, personnel and equipment would be allocated to provide the highest amount of safety, service, and security for the HSR system. Of course, to create such an agency will require a substantial effort by the jurisdictions affected by HSR. No matter what form the police administration of HSR might take, the technologies used will be a critical factor in its success.

Technology

In April 8, 2011 an expert panel met to discuss policing issues related to the HSR system. The panel noted possible community concerns about terrorism and the need for a plan to address Homeland Security issues. This is consistent with the view of experts in that field. According to Brian Jenkins, director of the National Transportation Security Center of Excellence, "When terrorists attack high-speed rail systems, they seem to prefer to derail trains. Technology, particularly on high-speed rail systems, will cause train operations to cease if a bomb detonates and causes catastrophic destruction prior to train arrival" (Kaiser, 2011).

The panel specified that the agency with primary law enforcement responsibilities must possess a strong homeland security understanding, and that most already have that expertise in a post-9/11 world. In today's world we must not limit our worries to planes flying into buildings, but also be aware of terrorist attacks on train systems. According to

Gerstein (2010),

"Since 9/11, 793 deaths worldwide have resulted from terror attacks on rail systems, both urban and inter-city (non-conflict zones only). This includes 191 deaths in Madrid when ten bombs exploded in 2002, 39 in London in 2005 as part of a coordinated attack that also claimed 13 bus riders, and 209 dead in 2006 in Mumbai. In contrast, only 42 deaths have been aviation related, with 36 of these occurring this past month in Moscow when an explosive device was detonated in the international arrivals hall, an area of the airport that was unsecured in Moscow and which is unsecured in the US as well" (Gerstein, 2010).

Extending from Gerstein's thoughts, the HSR will require the best anti-terrorism technology available. Considering technologies now emerging, imagine the future HSR system with the world's best security system. All HSR stations include futuristic Terrorist Advance Warning System (TAWS) devices to detect criminal activity before any acts of violence occur. All LE personnel are trained by the best from around the world to detect and catch terrorist and criminals before they act. Other methodologies and technologies would also be deployed to protect the public.

These devices could include Adrenaline Data Collectors, Pulse Readers, Face Recognition Cameras, and Vented Hazardous Material sniffers. To help envision how technology might help protect the HSR, imagine a scenario where...as one walks into the HSR station, they place their hands on the spoke of a turnstile that automatically reads the customer's pulse. These spokes are ultra sensitive and can read through a person's gloves. The pulse readers will activate an internal alarm of those readings that are unusually high indicating a "fight-flight" adrenaline level and prompt cameras to follow the individual. Facial recognition will start work to identify the person. These same cameras continually scan passengers entering and exiting the station, cross-referencing any hits with state and national databases of persons of interest. Anyone identified as

wanted are tracked until HSR agents can make contact and stop their activity. A final layer of security could be a system of floor vents, collecting samples and searching for possible detection of explosive and other dangerous hazardous materials. Once the technologies are selected, the final piece to effective management of the system is to clarify the role played by law enforcement.

Law Enforcement's Role

Californians will experience a new culture of travel by obtaining one of the most advanced technological infrastructures this nation has ever experienced. The lead police agency to manage the HSR system can take lessons from East Coast and other foreign cities that historically have relied on railways as their primary means of transportation. The Federal Railroad Administration has numerous laws to which the California HSR must comply. HSR has the potential to influence a new culture of policing for local, county, and state law enforcement agencies. This enormous project will require a massive source of funding, but the LE aspect will require a massive source of leadership to guarantee the policing portion is successful. Our LE leaders must get active and start planning and implementing for tomorrow.

A senior official from the CHP's Office of Special Representation stated the CHP is evaluating the possibility of being the lead agency, but that consideration is on hold until final approval is granted to approve construction of the HSR system (A. Brown, personal communication, January 17, 2012). Because of the size, training, and its jurisdictional boundaries, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) might be the most sensible solution to become the primary law enforcement agency with law enforcement authority over the California HRS system. If they are, their work would require a

comprehensive strategic plan to articulate the revised duties and tasks of the CHP to provide safety, service and security for the entire HSR system. That plan, once implemented, can help deliver an indispensable function to the public that will be one of the CHP and the California HSR's greatest successes.

Conclusion

Only if the paying customers feel safe, secure, and receive an indispensable service, will they continue to use the HSR. By the year 2015, a smooth operational HSR system will be in construction, a product of years of developing a strong comprehension for additional personnel and equipment, encouraging the highest technological equipment, and getting all internal and external stakeholders on the same page when it comes to jurisdictional responsibilities. The success of this high-speed rail system depends on how well this long-term investment can be protected, hence providing a higher level of consumer confidence that will produce passengers by the millions.

Reference

- Cantatore, Alex, Turlock Journal.com: Farmers Voice concern over High-speed rail route. Retrieved from the Internet on January 10, 2012 at <http://www.turlockjournal.com/section/12/article/10655/>
- California High-Speed Rail Authority (2011). Jobs. Retrieved January 8, 2012 from <http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/assets/0/152/159/0150b8aa-a61b-4aeb-9c18-6223d8fe429f.pdf>
- Environment News Service (ENS) 2008, Californians Approve High-Speed Rail, Nix Fake Clean Energy Props. Retrieved on November 22, 2011 from: <http://www.ennewswire.com/ens/nov2008/2008-11-05-092.asp>
- Gerstein, J. (2010, January 28). Politico: Obama - No shoe checks on high-speed rail. Retrieved on February 25, 2011, from: http://www.politico.com/blogs/joshgerstein/0110/Obama_No_shoe_checks_on_highspeed_rail.html.
- Kaiser, Kim (2011, August 11). Mass Transit Internet Site: High-Speed Rail Security Needs a Different Approach than Commuter Rail. Retrieved on November 20, 2011, from <http://www.masstransitmag.com/article/10317151/high-speed-rail-security-needs-a-different-approach-than-commuter-rail>
- Meier, J. (2011, February 15). Lexology: California High Speed rail set to take off. Retrieved on February 27, 2011, from: <http://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=8d75eac6-9188447f-ad3c-c75306000fd6>

Sheehan, Tim., (2012, January 11). Proposal seeks high-speed rail jobs for people

From high unemployment areas. Retrieved January 11, 2012 from:

<http://www.bakersfield.com/news/local/x1275887589/Proposal-seeks>

[high-speed-rail-jobs-for-people-from-high-unemployment-areas](http://www.bakersfield.com/news/local/x1275887589/Proposal-seeks-high-speed-rail-jobs-for-people-from-high-unemployment-areas)