

CHALLENGES IN MANAGING RAILWAY SECURITY

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ESTABLISHMENT AUXILIARY POLICE AT MAIN STATIONS



Introduction

Kereta Api Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) is the main rail operator in Peninsular Malaysia. It first started its operations in 1885. KTMB operates KTM intercity, KTM Komuter & KTM Freight. KTM Intercity is an intercity passenger railway service serving cities, towns and villages throughout Peninsular Malaysia. KTM Komuter is an electrified commuter train service catering to commuters in the Klang Valley and the surrounding suburban areas. KTM freight train service handles the movement of goods.

Presently KTMB has a total of 83 stations, with a total network length of 1,699 km. It also has workshops and depots located in strategic cities and towns along its route.

With such an extensive network of stations, workshops, depots and tracks, moving hundreds of thousands of people and millions of tones of goods across the length and breath of the Peninsular Malaysia, it is inevitable that security is a major concern and poses great challenges to KTMB. Managing security in KTMB is of utmost importance as it needs to protect its passengers, goods and properties against any form of theft, vandalism, sabotage and terrorist attacks.

Towards this end, KTMB Security Department needs to have a strong working cooperation and collaboration with the Royal Malaysian Police. This relationship has long been established since KTMB's inception



PARADE TRAINING

Establishment

Prior to the corporatization of KTMB, the overall management of security was placed under the purview of The Royal Malaysian Police. They are being deployed at major KTMB stations, railway yards, KTMB subsidiaries such as Multimodal Freight, KTM Distribution and KTM Park and on board moving trains. Police officers were seconded to KTMB to look into all aspect of railway security.

After its corporatization, KTMB's Auxiliary Police was formed to take over the functions of The Royal Malaysian Police. It was formed in accordance with the Police Act 41/67 "Function & Regulation Of Police 1970". The main objective of protecting KTMB properties and customers against any acts detrimental to its efficient and effective operations remained.

As stipulated under Section 50 of The Police Act 344/1967, the security officers in KTMB are given police powers in discharging their normal duties in the railway premises and compound.

They have the powers to arrest, to detain any suspect and carry out investigations in order to protect KTMB's interests. However, subsequent investigations and prosecution will be carried out by the local police force.

Duties and Responsibilities of Security Department



PISTOL SHOOTING PRACTICE TO ENHANCE SKILL

The duties of KTMB's Auxiliary Police are as follows:

- Providing 24 hours security services at KTMB's Head Office, EMU depots, workshops and other KTMB premises;
- Security services at all the main stations throughout Malaysia including Woodlands station in Singapore;
- Security services at cash handling counters;
- Conducting random on-board checking on intercity and commuter trains;
- Performing inspections and raids where necessary;
- Making arrest and detaining suspects;
- Conducting regular training;
- Maintaining close liaison with The Royal Malaysian Police;

- Maintaining high standard of professionalism.



PATROLLING INTERCITY PLATFORM



Checking Of Stuff & Vehicles

Planning & Implementing Security Strategies



Routine Inspection at commuter Trains Sidings

The following are typically the types of crime that occur in the railway areas;

- Theft of signaling communication cables;
- Theft of rail fastening clips;
- Theft of railway sleepers and rail;
- Theft of passengers belongings;
- Vandalism;
- Extortion;
- Passenger travelling without valid ticket;
- Pick pocketing;
- Hard-objects pelting on coaches;
- Sexual harassment



Routine Inspection At Locomotive Depots



Patrolling On Commuter Platform & Perform Customer Service

Internally, extensive planning is regularly carried out to combat the above crimes. Close collaboration with The Royal Malaysian Police is done as crimes committed are under the direct jurisdiction of the police. Statistically, most crimes occurred in the Klang Valley areas.

Strategies undertaken by the Security Department are as follows:

- Preventive actions such as profiling of suspects and intelligence gathering works;
- Increased patrolling in crime prone areas;
- Carrying out spot checks at stations and railway yards;
- Laying ambush at targeted areas;
- On board patrolling on intercity and commuter trains by uniformed and undercover personnel;
- Introduction of “Ladies Only” coaches to reduce incidences of molesting and sexual harassment;
- Joint inspection with ticket inspectors to check on passengers travelling without valid tickets;
- Regular patrolling of areas prone to hard-objects pelting;
- Safety campaign to educate school children and the public;
- Creating awareness to the scrap iron dealers with regards to scrap iron theft.

In dealing with the crimes committed, both the police criminal procedure codes and the Railway Act 1994 are being invoked.

Challenges



Patrolling Of Container Yard With Fire Arm

Managing the railway security is indeed very challenging. Apart from the traditional crimes faced by KTMB, the act of terrorism is a new and a more potent threat. Additional security planning to counter terrorism has to be put in place. The followings are the strategies taken:

- Liaising and close working relationship with The Royal Malaysian Police, especially The Special Branch, in information gathering and intelligence networking;
- Training on Emergency Response Plan with other departments and other relevant agencies such as the Fire Brigade and Smart Team, apart from The Royal Malaysian Police;
- Hiring of additional qualified and experienced personnel in the areas of counter-terrorism;
- Introducing of random screening of passengers and baggage, and if need be, a total screening and checking;
- Installing security cameras at the main stations and depots.

Due to the extensive railway lines crossing virgin jungles and forest, there is another non-human risk, which is the risk of animals' crossings. History has witnessed that coaches were being derailed upon hitting large animals such as elephants. As such, having strong perimeter fencing along the railway tracks is necessary. Regular patrolling is needed to ensure that the fences are not been compromised.



Checking & Recording In & Out Of Vehicles At Multimodal Freight Container Yard Padang Besar

An Incident Never To Be Forgotten

I have many fond memories while serving KTMB. The following incident is the one those memories.

Way back in 2008, during the 27th day of the month of Ramadan, while on an official duty to supervise the “balik kampung” rush at the Kajang Station, in Selangor, I witnessed something that stays with me until today.

As it was nearing the Hari Raya Aidil Fitri celebration, the train travelling to the East Coast was jam-packed with passengers. The WOW Express train was pulling into the station at about 21.45 hours with coaches already overflowing with passengers. Hundreds more are waiting at the Kajang station to embark. When it stopped, the mad rush began with waiting passengers jostling for seats. The sights and sounds of people scrambling into the coaches coupled with the loud noise of the locomotive was a sight to behold. In short, it was chaotic.

Suddenly, I saw some of my men were frantically running towards the first coach where a lady who was in labor pain. She was lying on the brick bench writhing with pain. We placed her on a stretcher and carried into the station. Immediately, we called for an ambulance. The lady continued to scream. I could see she was in great pain.

The ambulance was nowhere in sight. Everybody panicked. As a senior KTMB personnel in the station at that point of time, suddenly it dawned on me that it was my responsibility to handle the situation. It frightened me. Never in my life had I come close to this kind of situation. My imagination ran wild. What if something untoward happened? What if the child could not be saved? What if the mother could not be saved? What if both failed to go through the ordeal alive? My mind was fully preoccupied with uncertainties.

I could see that the pain she was going through was getting worse. We ordered the swollen crowd out the station. My instinct told me that she could not wait any longer. The ambulance had yet to arrive. In desperation I summoned one of my lady security personnel to attend to her.

I waited anxiously. The lady was breathing hard and I was impressed in the manner my woman security officer handled the critical moment. She was cool and did the needful. We received a baby boy, what an accomplishment! It was a joyous occasion for the husband and his daughter.

Thank God, both the mother and baby were safe. Minutes later the ambulance arrived and both were whisked away to the Kajang Hospital. There was a sense of great relief amongst the crowd. I was extremely relief too. It was a happy ending.

Three weeks later, the new born baby together with his parents attended a small thanksgiving party hosted by KTMB’s management. During the function, the management handed over ‘duit raya’ to our officers involved in the incident. KTMB decided o adopt the baby boy and accorded him the privileges of free train rides until he reaches the age of 18 years old. This was history to KTMB Kajang station.

Conclusion

Though years have passed by, the memorable incident seemed like it was only yesterday. I enjoyed every moment serving this esteemed organization. This organization certainly provides abundant opportunities for aspiring security officers to pursue their career in this field, more so the potentials in terms of technological advances and most importantly, the challenges in meeting the ever rising customers' expectations.

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The information contained here is intended to provide useful information on the topic covered, but should not be construed as legal advice or a legal opinion.