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NJOHSP

OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND PREPAREDNESS

NJOHSP Announces Multi-Agency ‘Operation NJ CONECT’ Amtrak Rail Safety Exercise

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HAMILTON, NJ – The New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness partnered with Amtrak, NJ TRANSIT, the New Jersey State Police, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, and numerous local law enforcement agencies during the “Operation NJ CONECT” rail safety exercise at multiple train stations on Amtrak’s New Jersey line on July 10.

“I cannot begin to stress the importance of securing our transportation hubs due to New Jersey’s sizable commuter population and proximity to two major cities,” **said Jared M. Maples, Director of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness**. “Operations such as this one demonstrate the commitment of the State’s law enforcement partners to promote preparedness and build resiliency in the transportation sector.”

This joint exercise promoted cooperation among law enforcement agencies on rail lines and improved capabilities to respond to actual emergencies. Officers performed counterterrorism and incident response exercises at passenger train stations along Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor rail system.

“Safety is Amtrak’s top priority — whether it is on a train, at a station, or on our right of way,” **said Amtrak Police Department Chief Neil Trugman**. “We will continue to work with our partners to ensure the safety of our customers, employees, and infrastructure.”

The exercise included heightened platform patrols, explosive detection canine sweeps, increased security on trains, and a visible proactive law enforcement presence throughout the railway system.

“Working side by side with our local, county, State, and federal law enforcement partners is critical to protecting the transportation network,” **said NJ TRANSIT Police Chief Christopher Trucillo**. “This joint deployment is a clear example of how law enforcement agencies are united throughout the State in the counterterrorism mission.”

As part of the exercise, law enforcement officers and officials interacted with New Jersey commuters to promote the State’s larger, year-round “See Something, Say Something” campaign that encourages reporting suspicious activity and proves invaluable to initiating investigations and preventing potential attacks.

“Security has always been a top priority for NJ TRANSIT,” **New Jersey Department of Transportation Commissioner and NJ TRANSIT Board Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti** **said**. “We are proud to work with

the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security, Amtrak, and our law enforcement partners to ensure the safety of our railways and to emphasize the need for vigilance from the riding public.”

Operation NJ CONECT took place on Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor service in New Jersey from Newark Penn Station through Metropark Station in Woodbridge/Iselin to Trenton Station.

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The New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP), a Cabinet-level agency, was created in 2006. The Director serves as the Governor’s Homeland Security Advisor, and is responsible for leading and coordinating the State’s counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and emergency preparedness efforts while building resiliency throughout the State across all levels of government and the private sector. NJOHSP oversees and distributes discretionary State and federal homeland security and emergency preparedness funds on behalf of New Jersey. More information about NJOHSP can be found at www.njhomelandsecurity.gov.