Maintaining public transport safety across Switzerland

SBB Transport Police rely on Hexagon's CAD system to protect a million daily passengers

Swiss Federal Railways (Schweizerischen Bundesbahnen, or SBB) is one of the largest transport companies in Switzerland and is considered a reliable and well-managed railroad. As the backbone of public transportation across Switzerland, SBB has averaged more than 1.3 million passengers daily for the past several years.

Integral to maintaining smooth and safe operations for SBB are the SBB Transport Police control centre and almost 250 SBB Transport Police officers, whose responsibilities include policing trains and stations and maintaining public safety. The control centre, which handles more than 150,000 calls for service each year, deals with incidents and emergencies, as well as planned events, and has relied on Hexagon's computer-aided dispatch (CAD) solution since 2005.

Flexible, scalable solution for a complex environment

While CAD applications for city or regional police, fire and emergency medical services agencies typically cover narrowly defined geographic areas of responsibility,

SBB's solution relies on the flexibility and configurability of Hexagon's CAD to serve the entire rail network across the country. Unlike other emergency services in Switzerland, SBB Transport Police and its control centre are not linked to official emergency numbers such as 112 or 117, but instead have their own number.

The control centre manages all incoming calls for service from SBB-owned infrastructure. Emergency calls from passengers, private security personnel and SBB personnel are usually made via telephone, but security, police and rail personnel also use a mobile app for silent alarms when calling is not an option. And since SBB's network of railways covers the whole country, and most incidents occur on moving trains, SBB Transport Police often collaborate with the regional police who have jurisdiction in the location where a train stops following an incident.

The centre's CAD solution – which is integrated as well with communication, records management and alarm systems, along with interactive dashboards for statistics and analysis – saves time, a valuable commodity in this fast-moving, complex environment. When a call is placed or an alarm activated, location data enters the CAD system in real time, while the mapping component allows for visualisation of assets and other critical data, meaning dispatchers and police can respond faster. Information vital to emergency response, like train carriage numbers, schedules and stops, precise locations of events on trains and geospatial data from the rail network are also available in the CAD system.

"The flexibility and configurability of Hexagon's CAD system is optimal for our operations," said Etienne Stojanovic, product owner at SBB Transport Police. "The complexities of our policing environment are very different from those of other public safety agencies, and we rely on the system to provide us with the situational awareness required to keep passengers and our personnel safe."

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Asset and partner integration for quicker response

The CAD system is not just for emergency events. It is the foundation of the centre's day-to-day response activities as well. The mapping component integrates rail network data like lanes, stations, kilometre marks, rail traffic signals and even ticket machines, which can be visualised on the CAD map. A mobile app developed in-house by SBB (Police App) tracks police units and sends their GPS positions to the CAD system. This results in improved situational awareness and personnel safety, because the control centre always knows where the officers are.

Through the CAD system's embedded operational information system (EIS), the location of an event can be determined, and the responsible public safety partner organisation identified and contacted. For example, if an event occurs at the Zurich Main Station, dispatchers can navigate to the corresponding page in the EIS, identify the responsible agency, in this case Zurich Cantonal Police, and make contact, all within the CAD system. Digitisation of the process and integration of relevant data mean dispatchers save valuable time dispatching resources to where they are needed.

Contact us to learn more today.

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Hexagon's Safety, Infrastructure & Geospatial division improves the resilience and sustainability of the world's critical services and infrastructure. Our solutions turn complex data about people, places and assets into meaningful information and capabilities for better, faster decision-making in public safety, utilities, defense, transportation and government.

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