Security v/s Safety

How to manage together or in coherence safety and security in the railway transport?

Security and safety are two different concepts in our mind but sometimes confused. Some languages like for example German with "Sicherheit" or Spanish with "Seguridad" have only one word to define these realities.

Security and safety are complementary, particularly in the request of the clients or the public authorities, but different in their causes and in the answers to be provided.

Common aspects

Both safety and security are indispensable to the credibility and the attractivity of the rail transport, first of all to the passengers transport but also to the freight transport

It's the first demand of the client to have a safe and secure transport and it becomes a demand of the public authorities including the judicial authorities that begin to consider the railway companies are responsible for the security of their clients beyond the safety of their clients.

A second aspect is that a security problem can bring about a safety accident Malevolent action on signalling devices, the theft of metals. or a lot of other acts can call into question the safety of the traffic. It is particularly true when drivers don't strictly respect the rules on border crossings

Security and safety policies can be built on a similar structure: importance of human factors, roles of existing or new technologies, necessity of adapted procedures or regulations

Differences

The safety has been the core job of the railways since they exist and nobody will contest it. The security is a new request, a new need faced with attacks against people, goods or fittings. There is a double danger:

- have only punctual reactions instead of to develop a whole strategy, part of the railway activity,
- or develop a complete security strategy instead of work in partnership with the national authorities

A problem of safety can be due to different causes such as technical failures or human behaviour. A problem of security is always due to a negative willing of someone who takes a train as target because it is the symbol of the society, of the State, of the industrial technology....The safety cause will be internal and the security cause will be external to the railways

Another difficulty when it is spoken about security is that the public authorities in charge of police, of daily security of people and goods are the first involved in this topic: so, as railways staff in charge of security we have to define precisely what we have to do...and do only that, and what we have to expect from the public authorities...and verify we get it!