

ITF Survey on Workplace Sexual Harassment and Violence for Women Transport Workers in Rail and Road

Background

1. Transport workers are vulnerable to physical and non-physical violence because of the jobs they do. Both women and men suffer from these factors, nevertheless women are vulnerable in different ways, both because they often handle customer relations and therefore are in the 'front line' of dealing with irate and aggressive passengers, and because working alone or at night as well as travelling to and from work at night can mean they are in danger from sexually motivated attacks, robberies and attacks by drunk passengers or members of the public. Unfortunately, some of these risks come from within the workforce and need specific targeting by unions.

"Women are at much greater risk of certain types of victimisation at work. ... A British union has found that women train drivers have experienced constant sexual harassment, making their lives "a misery". It has also been reported that women road transport workers in Latin America often face employers who try to force them to have sexual relations, while those who refuse are forced to work night or very early morning shifts or in distant locations from home. Other reports claim that in South Africa and Mexico (among other countries), rape of women road transport workers is very common."

ILO Sectoral Fact Sheet – 'Transport: Sector-specific information on violence and stress', October 2003
<http://ilo-mirror.library.cornell.edu/public/english/dialogue/sector/themes/violence/transp.htm>

2. The ITF Inland Transport Sections' campaign to encourage workplace activity to confront the issues of violence at work in public transport was launched on 28 April 2009 under the slogan "Unions say NO to Violence" in conjunction with the annual ITF International Railway Workers' Action Day.
3. Women road transport and railway workers are encouraged to participate in the Sections' ongoing activities on work-related violence. Therefore, as part of activity for the 2009 Action Day, the Inland Transport Sections developed a short survey to record the views of women road transport and railway workers on the issues relating to sexual harassment and violence in the workplace.

Methodology

4. The survey – which was available in English, French, Russian and Spanish - was sent to all ITF unions in the Railway Workers' Section and Road Transport Workers' Section, as well as road transport and railway members of the ITF Women's Network, ITF Educators' Network and ITF HIV/AIDS Network as Circular No.55/Rt.08/Rw.07/2009 on 17 April 2009 in electronic (online survey via the ITF web area on violence in urban transport: <http://www.itfglobal.org/urban-transport/notoviolence.cfm>) and paper form.
5. The survey looked at whether women road transport and railway workers had experienced violence or sexual harassment at the workplace and the type of violence; whether the incident(s) had been reported and what the outcome of this was; whether the employer had a specific reporting policy; and whether the union had a specific campaign on this issue.
6. Road transport and railway unions were encouraged to hold workplace meetings to conduct the survey of other women members in their workplace and to discuss the issues. A number of the replies were therefore received in bulk in paper format from unions after such activities. Two unions (Svenska Transportarbetareförbundet, Sweden and Norsk Lokomotivmannsforbund, Norway) submitted summaries of their findings. Some replies were received from individuals (primarily via the web-based survey).

Demographics of the respondents to the survey

7. The response to the survey was good with replies from 23 unions in 19 countries, representing women across the urban passenger transport sectors from bus and taxi drivers and light train operators to accounts clerks and customer service agents
8. There were 144 individual replies. Two unions (Svenska Transportarbetareförbundet, Sweden and Norsk Lokomotivmannsforbund, Norway) submitted summaries of their findings. These summaries were based on information from 21 replies in Norway and 21 replies in Sweden, making a total of 186 individual replies. Two unions – in Congo DR and Mauritius – provided general comment on the survey topics.
9. Women in both clerical/administrative and operational jobs from both the road transport and railway passenger transport sectors replied to the survey. Specific occupations that were listed by respondents included:

Rail operator	Ticket seller	Office assistant / worker
Customer services	Bus operator / driver	Psychologist
Social worker	Architect	Dentist
Chef	Maintenance planner	Train dispatcher
HR / Trainer	Revenue protection officer	Retail travel advisor
Engineer	Sector planner	Controller
Manager	Light train operator	Taxi driver
Accountant	Documentation clerk	

10. Women of all ages responded to the survey. Of those women that indicated their age:
 - 6% were between 21-25;
 - 15% were between 26-30;
 - 43% were between 31-40;
 - 21% were between 41-50;
 - 17% were aged over 51.
11. Unions from 19 countries participated in the survey – Argentina (3 replies), Bangladesh (2 replies), Bermuda (1 reply), Brazil (11 replies), Congo DR (general comment), Ethiopia (1 reply), Great Britain (41 replies), India (3 replies), Japan (5 replies), Luxembourg (1 reply), Mauritius (general comment), Mexico (16 replies), Norway (21 replies), Palestine (1 reply), Spain (14 replies), Sweden (46 replies), Tanzania (10 replies), Uganda (6 replies), Venezuela (4 replies). All ITF regions were represented apart from North America.
12. When analysing the information received from unions, it is important to note some limitations, for example, the interviews provide information based on individual opinions or experiences and represent a sample of workers in that role. Whilst the interviews were anonymous, some respondents may have chosen not to answer all the questions. Where incidents of violence were reported to have taken place, it is not clear whether these incidents occurred when the victim was in the occupation they are currently in and/or when the cases that were reported took place (and so reporting procedures may not have existed at the time of the incident or were different). Also, whilst a large number of interview sheets were returned to the ITF, it is important to note that almost half of these were from two countries (Great Britain and Sweden). The data therefore presents an overview of women road transport and railway workers' experiences of violence in the workplace, rather than a snapshot of a particular time or occupation.

Key Findings

a) Incidents of violence and sexual harassment

13. Women were asked to indicate whether they had been subject to unwanted or insulting gender-based language or comment, social pressure, harassment or sexual innuendo, inappropriate touching, unwelcome advances or even attacks from managers/supervisors, other workers or the public. Women who indicated they had experienced such an incident were invited to record a brief description of what had happened.
14. Whilst the majority of respondents (57%) indicated that they had not experienced such an incident at work, a significant number of women – almost half the respondents (42%) – said they had experienced an incident(s) at work. Some of those who said they had experienced an incident, also referred to numerous incidents having taken place.

Violence against women – what is it?

It was not until 1993 that a generally agreed definition emerged in the shape of the UN's Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (resolution 48/104, 1993). The 1993 definition says that: "Violence against women means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

Sexual harassment is a serious problem and can take many forms including inappropriate suggestions, insulting gender-based language or comments, inappropriate touching, unwelcome advances or even attacks.

Pornography is often used as a means of sexual harassment; others report on unfair promotion through sexual favours. An allegation by a woman member made against a male colleague resulted in pressure from other workers in the workplace on the woman to withdraw the charge; another case of a woman making a complaint resulted in her being threatened with dismissal. Even in union residential meetings male trade union leaders make sexual demands.

Extracts from the Report of the ITF Africa Regional Women in Rail Seminar, October 2007

15. In terms of the different types of violence that women reported having experienced, these included: verbal insults and threats (including gender stereotyping and assumptions); inappropriate advances (verbal, whistling, letters); inappropriate touching; being ignored by colleagues / gossip; intimidation from managers; physical attacks; bullying and stalking.
16. Women reported that incidents had been carried out by colleagues, managers and passengers/members of the public; and by both men and women. Incidents of violence and sexual harassment were often clearly visible but they could also be 'hidden' (psychological intimidation or presented as part of everyday work). Some cases of violence cause danger to passengers, members of the public, and thus the community at large.

Examples of incidents of violence and sexual harassment at work given by women replying to the survey:

"Comments from my line manager regarding 'women's work'; and refusal to allow me to attend courses that aren't really for girls. [He] Also refers to me as a secretary (I'm not) and asks me to sit on his lap."

"Sexual innuendo from a group of first class guys (one felt my bottom). Another incident where a standard class passenger was shouting and took a picture of me (he was upset that he was late)."

".. it was very difficult when it happened, because I did not expect the attitude of the person who worked with me and suddenly, the behaviour had changed, and [they] began speaking obscenities and stating that [they had] sexual desire for me. I was very embarrassed, because I am married and I told him to stop ... it was horrible, I took my stuff and I was crying a lot, thinking about how to return the next day to work with this person."

"Whilst driving I had my breasts groped, a passenger threaten to rape me, a passenger threaten to shoot me and other incidents too numerous to mention. I had my bottom slapped in front of witnesses by a senior manager. I have endured insults from day one (only lesbians want to drive buses). I accept that where I am now, I am one of only three women in staff and some innuendo is inevitable"

"I had just stated working after my secondary school. This manager would always call me and tell me that he wanted to see me, being young I didn't know what he meant. So one day as I was walking home he drove past me, stopped the car and told me to enter at which I refused, the following morning when I went to work, I received a charge sheet to explain why I arrived late which was not true"

"Passengers often try to get away without paying and often use swear words and sexual language"

b) Reporting

17. There were two groups of questions relating to reporting of incidents of violence.

Reporting incidents that have occurred:

18. The first group of questions followed on directly from the question about whether the person had experienced an incident of violence in order to find out whether the incident had been reported; if not, why; and if it had, what the outcome was.
19. Where an incident of violence and/or sexual harassment had taken place, there was a fairly equal split as to whether the incident was reported or not. 57% said they had reported the incident and 41% said they had not.
20. Various reasons were given as to why the incident was not reported. These included: not wanting to make the situation any more difficult as the victim had to continue working in the same job; not feeling confident or sure of the process; feeling that it was not appropriate to follow-up the incident in such a way (either perceived or from being informed directly that this was the case); the fact that it was behaviour that happened on a daily basis and so was considered 'part of the job'. In some cases, the incident had been dealt with by the victim or a colleague and so it was felt that there was no need to report it formally.

Examples of reasons why women did not report incidents of violence:

"Because of job security and I was still new at the place of work. The man was also my supervisor"

"Out of fear of suffering more attacks and of being ignored at work"

"It happens so often that only if there is a physical or direct threat will [I] report it."

"In those days, sexual harassment was not highlighted in society. Such a comment was made on a routine basis. I didn't know whom I should report it to."

21. For those incidents where action was taken to report what had happened, unfortunately, the majority of outcomes as a result of reporting the incident appeared to be negative (in particular where the incident was by a colleague or manager). For example, the abuser got promoted; the victim was told they would be sacked; the report was not taken seriously and instead lingered at the bottom of the in-tray; the victim was told action would only be taken if there was proof; management sided with the abuser; there was no response from management and so nothing was done; information about the report and investigation was made public accidentally; a complaint was lodged against the victim; fear on the part of management to intervene; retaliation from colleagues. There were also cases of negative outcomes where the reporting related to an incident by a passenger or member of the public – for example, one woman shared her experience of how she had reported an incident of assault from a drunken passenger who tried to grab the steering wheel but when she refused to carry the passenger the following week, her supervisor, despite her clear explanation as to why she had taken this action, took the decision to remove her from the bus. She felt that she had no backing and that the reaction would be the same in any further instances. In a couple of other cases (of verbal abuse by passengers), women said that nothing was done in response to them reporting the incident.
22. In some cases, however, there were some positive outcomes. These included the transport police being involved; the abuser receiving a warning or being transferred to another department; the holding of a briefing for all staff; compensation; legal action that prohibited further contact.

“Unfortunately, many women omit the violence they suffer at work. When we investigate, many women deny the incident or say they do not want to discuss the issue, few women tell us their story. The fear and the shame to be exposed prevails.” *CNTTT, Brazil - ITF Violence Survey 2009*

Existence of employer policies

23. The second group of questions was more general to find out whether the women knew whether their employer had a reporting policy that enabled complaints of sexual harassment and bullying to be investigated and action to be taken to stop such behaviour. If no policy existed, women were asked to share information on what other options were open to workers to help stop sexual harassment and bullying, and also whether there had been any attempts to obtain a proper procedure from the employer to correct inappropriate behaviour.
24. Around a third (33%) reported that there was no employer policy. 13% did not know if there was a policy or not and 3% did not answer the question. Many who said there was no reporting policy were also negative about the existence of other options and/or attempts to get a policy. A few respondents did refer to the role of the union as an option that was available to workers to address the issue.
25. Those women who indicated that there was an employer policy referred to the existence of policies, procedures and information material. In some countries – for example, Japan and Luxembourg – there was wider support with the provision of counselling and psychiatrist support.

In Luxembourg, the railway company has developed a ‘security incident report’ (Constat Incident Sûreté), which provides, inter-alia, for full guidance and support for the victim during the process of submitting an incident to the police and then to court. From the information that is supplied, statistics can be gleamed. The company has also put in place protection screens to protect railway

workers against any aggression. These measures have been implemented following a joint company and union safety committee.

*Fédération Chrétienne du Personnel des Transports (FCPT-SYPROLUX), Luxembourg –
ITF Violence Survey 2009*

c) Union campaigns

26. Women were asked to comment on whether their union had an active campaign to overcome the issues of workplace sexual harassment and violence, and to provide some details if such a campaign existed.
27. A significant number (42%) stated that there was no union campaign on the issue and a further 7% said they did not know whether there was a union campaign on the issue and 11% did not reply to the question. 42% said there was a union campaign (however some women who said there was a campaign were not sure of the details).
28. Examples of types of union campaigns and activities on violence and sexual harassment included: participation in ITF campaigns; education workshops and discussion with workers; dialogue with municipal governments; meetings with the transport companies; and the existence of union advice booklets and union charters on the issue.

Conclusions

29. Violence is still an issue which affects women transport workers and occurs in every region. Incidents range from verbal insults and threats; to inappropriate advances and touching; physical attacks; intimidation and stalking. Cases of violence and sexual harassment can be carried out by colleagues, managers, passengers and members of the public. Women in all sectors of public transport, whether they be in administrative roles or operational functions have experienced violence and/or sexual harassment, and many reported having experienced several incidents. Although about half of respondents who had experienced an incident said they had reported it, the majority of outcomes as a result of reporting an incident appeared to be negative. Furthermore, almost half of respondents reported that there was no employer policy or they did not know whether one existed. Worryingly, a significant number said there was no union campaign on the issue or they did not know if one existed.
30. Aside from how violence and sexual harassment is dealt with in the workplace, often violence against women can be an issue which is not highlighted in society and furthermore, gender-based violence reflects and reinforces inequalities existing between men and women, which has a direct and detrimental impact on a woman's access to paid work and as a consequence on her income and on society as a whole.

It is difficult for sisters to express themselves with freedom on this topic even though there is much workplace violence, however [we] believe that through work for confidence we can achieve that all workers say ENOUGH to violence. In railways there is violence from the passenger to the worker.

Unión Ferroviaria, Argentina - ITF Violence Survey 2009

31. Breaking the silence and speaking out about violence against women is the first step in recognizing and raising awareness about this issue. What needs to follow is strategic and coordinated union action. Trade unions are in a strong position to challenge gender based violence in the community as well as at work. The mobilisation of transport workers is essential to stop work-related violence. By standing together, transport workers taking part in a small local action or activity will do so knowing that they are part of a visible global campaign. This will help ensure that union demands are heard. Unions can then enter into

negotiations to put preventive measures into practice. Taking action to address these issues will mean better protection for all – for women and men transport workers as well as the travelling public.

“The survey results are only an indication of the situation, however it confirms many of our suspicions. This is a very important topic which we believe is somewhat neglected as our drivers do not report these incidents, to the employer, the union or the police. This is not regarded as a priority amongst the employers and many did not know whether the union organises any kind of campaigns in this topic or not. This is something we have to take into consideration and try to improve.”

Svenska Transportarbetareförbundet, Sweden - ITF Violence Survey 2009

“It is extremely important to value women in union fights because women play an essential role in the development of a country, society and business, we must, therefore, ensure that women workers with a strong fighting spirit are taken into consideration, given authority and receive the respect they deserve. Changing mentalities when it comes to male gender is going to be a difficult task as well as making men accept women in those activities which, for a number of years, have been exclusive to men who do not take into consideration our female colleagues when making decisions, suggestions and have questioned their intellectual capacity.”

FENTRAFEVE, Venezuela - ITF Violence Survey 2009

/October 2011

Note: The information contained in this report includes the data taken from the survey replies (including union comments) as well as examples taken from other publications, including ITF publications and meeting documents, in order to illustrate the different points that are made. Sources are indicated throughout the document.

Annex 1. Participating Unions

Country	Union
Argentina	Unión Ferroviaria
Bangladesh	Bangladesh Railway Employees' League (BREL)
Bangladesh	Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation Workers' Union
Bermuda	Bermuda Industrial Union (BIU)
Brazil	Federação Nacional dos Trabalhadores Ferroviários (FNTEF)
Brazil	Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Transportes Terrestres (CNTTT)
Congo DR	Syndicat des Travailleurs Libres (STL)
Ethiopia	Transport & Communications Workers' Trade Union Industrial Federation
Great Britain	National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT)
Great Britain	Transport Salaried Staffs' Association (TSSA)
India	Transport & Dockworkers' Union, Mumbai
Japan	All-Japan Municipal Transport Workers' Union (TOSHIKO)
Luxembourg	Fédération Chrétienne du Personnel des Transports (FCPT-SYPROLUX)
Mauritius	Transport Corporation Employees' Union
Mexico	Alianza de Tranviários de México
Norway	Norsk Lokomotivmannsforbund
Palestine	General Union for Transport Workers
Spain	Federacion Estatal de Transportes Comunicaciones y Mar - UGT
Sweden	Svenska Kommunalarbetareförbundet
Sweden	Svenska Transportarbetareförbundet
Tanzania	Communication & Transport Workers' Union of Tanzania - COTWU (T)
Uganda	Uganda Railway Workers' Union
Venezuela	Federacion de Trabajadores Ferroviarios de Venezuela (FENTRAFEVE)

Proposed Action Points

1. Over the last few years, the ITF Inland Transport Sections has been looking at ways road transport and railway workers' unions can tackle violence as part of its ongoing campaign on violence at work. Here are some ideas on how unions can tackle the issue, which the Inland Transport Sections have been developing as part of its campaign and which are backed up by the findings of the survey.
2. We would like to receive your feedback – please let us know your thoughts about the different action points.

Information

3. Research and information will deepen our understanding of the problem, and the information can be used to decide on the goals and strategy for our campaigns against workplace violence. Hold a workplace meeting to discuss the issues with workers around you. Talking about the issue and worker experiences immediately makes the problem visible. A worker at the centre of the problem can also be best placed to assess the risks and suggest solutions.

Unions in action – India

The Southern Railway Mazdoor Union carried out a survey in 2009, which led them to launch a workplace violence campaign. Workers' representative Uma Devi carried out the survey of workers at a number of local railway stations in the Chennai region. The activity took place as part of an ITF anti-violence seminar held in Mumbai. The female workers were identified as especially vulnerable. Members of the public were quickly turning violent when there were problems with the services. One female clerk was attacked because of late-running trains, and stones were thrown at the ticket office window. The customers turned into a mob, ransacking the office, stealing the money and physically threatening the booking clerk. Another reservation clerk was attacked when carrying the day's takings to the cashier's office. The police did not offer support, but treated him as a suspect and tortured him. The union had to intervene to help. This union's small survey worked because it quickly identified the issues, found solutions and is now the basis of a joint campaign, thanks to excellent leadership by one workers' representative. The union leadership is supporting the workers' campaign and hopes it will achieve genuine improvements for workers.

'Violence at Work' - Transport International 4.2009

4. Develop a union campaign on violence at work. Order copies of the ITF booklet and leaflet on violence in public transport and use them to develop education and campaign activities around the issues in your workplace as well as for collective bargaining. Show the ITF film at educational seminars and workplace meetings. Use the set of ITF handouts with case study examples of union activities and campaign stories on violence at work from a worker perspective to discuss the issues and help identify solutions (www.itfglobal.org/urban-transport/notoviolence.cfm).
5. Develop your own union materials – such as union guides and charters – on all aspects relating to violence and sexual harassment including how to tackle violence at work.

Unions in action - Thailand

In 2006, women transport workers in Thailand campaigned to put an end to sexual harassment in the workplace. The workers, represented by several Thai ITF-affiliated unions spanning civil aviation, rail

and road transport, organised a series of activities over two months, designed to highlight the issue of sexual harassment. Campaign activities included a women's seminar in Bangkok, the distribution of leaflets and T-shirts to raise awareness of the issue and presentations to union board meetings, during which case study examples of harassment were shared.

ITF News Online, 15 November 2006

6. Keep in touch with the ITF Inland Transport Sections and report transport workers' experiences of workplace violence, as well as best practice cases in dealing with the issue. This will help to deepen our understanding of the problem and continue to build a strong campaign and strategy.

Education

7. Education by unions on what violence is and on workers' rights is key. The issues need to be spoken about in common language in order to change existing behaviours and attitudes that violence and harassment are normal.

Unions in action - India

Women members of the Indian road passenger transport union, Maharashtra State Transport Kamgar Shanghatna, have been encouraged to become more active in the struggle to improve their working conditions at their employer. They have been facing a lack of facilities, including toilets, and were frequently the target of sexual harassment by passengers as well as male colleagues. However, following an education programme aimed at women, which sought to raise awareness of women's rights, violence and harassment, health and safety, legal issues and HIV and AIDS, women became more vocal. Through the union, they demanded that management look into their problems. After four years of lobbying, the managing director and president of the corporation agreed to establish a state level committee of women road transport workers. The committee has visited various depots, workshops and offices, where it has been dealing with the practical problems faced by the women workers.

Making a difference – Women transport workers in the 21st Century (ITF 42nd Congress)

Organising

8. The struggle to stop work-related violence can only go forward with the organisation and mobilisation of transport workers. By joining a union, women can end their isolation and find a forum in which their problems can be discussed and united action taken. It is important that the information that is gathered is fed into organising campaigns aimed at recruiting women members and that structures to support and represent women union members are established, including for example support networks, women union organisers, Women's Officers and Women's Committees.

Campaigning

9. Union campaigns can help to make the issue of violence and sexual harassment at the workplace visible and also assist in raising public awareness about the problem as well as being an important part of lobbying and negotiating campaigns. Organise your activities to support other transport worker action campaigns, such as the ITF Road Transport Action Week, ITF Railway Workers' Action Day, International Women's Day on 8 March, and the UN Day for Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November. However, as indicated by the findings of the survey, it is essential that the union members are aware of the campaigns and fully involved in their preparation and implementation. There is no point developing union campaign activities on the issue, if the workers and members are not aware of the campaign.

Unions in Action – ITF Campaigns

The Indonesian Railway Workers' Union (SPKA) organised their activities for the *ITF Railway Workers' Day in 2009* on 21 April in commemoration of Kartini Day - Kartini was an Indonesian heroine who fought for women's emancipation. The commemoration ceremony was organised entirely by the women workers and included activities such as a stage play and quiz. During the day the ITF survey on workplace sexual harassment and violence for women workers in rail was distributed. In his address to the event, the President Director stated that women workers should be given the same opportunity to be elected as the union's highest officials.

As part of activities for the *ITF International Road Transport Action Week in 2009*, the National Brotherhood of Teamsters Union of Liberia called on the government through the Ministry of Labour to promote non violence at workplaces, to introduce measures to stop the sexual harassment of women workers and young female workers, to help eradicate the epidemic of HIV/AIDS, and to highlight the problem of police harassment and intimidation.

Women representatives from railway unions in Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore marked the *UN Day for Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November 2009* at an ITF/FES South & South East Asian Railway Seminar in Singapore by holding placards spelling out the message "No to Violence" and reading out statistics and facts relating to violence against women to their fellow participants. Men and women participants at the seminar joined together to declare "No to Violence!". Participants also wore the ITF white ribbon to show their commitment to this message.

Lobbying

10. Make sure that violence in the workplace is on the health and safety agenda and the public are informed that aggression and abuse to staff will not be tolerated. Establish dialogue with local, national and regional government representatives in order to gain agreements on violence in the transport sector as well as national legislation that helps to eradicate violence in the workplace.

Unions in action - Bulgaria

In 2009 FTTUB engaged in organising round table discussions to raise awareness for the importance of the issue of violence against women working in the public transport sector. Furthermore FTTUB tried to encourage women to report cases of violence. Secondly, in 2009 FTTUB launched a questionnaire to identify cases of violence against women on the workplace and the measures undertaken by employers and trade union representatives. Thirdly, an agreement between FTTUB and the mayor of Sofia was signed regarding the violence against women in the transport sector. This agreement resulted in (1) the development of a methodology to gather information on cases of violence against women, (2) awareness raising campaigns, (3) consultations for women suffering violence and/or harassments. This agreement initiated the same procedure for two national railway companies in Bulgaria.

Insecurity and the feeling of insecurity in public transport – the implementation of the European Social Partners' Joint Recommendations signed by ETF, UITP, IRU and supported by CER and CEEP of 2003

Negotiating

11. Negotiating measures for preventing workplace violence and protecting workers is an important part of tackling violence at work, and any solutions must be recognised in collective agreements with employers. Unions must demand solutions and improved work conditions (including preventative and protective equipment and staff training on how to handle violent situations). However, as the findings of the survey show despite the existence

of legislation protecting workers from violence and harassment and procedures for workers to report cases of violence and sexual harassment, in reality, there is often a fear of reporting such cases. Adequate, clear, transparent, efficient and safe reporting mechanisms are therefore important, as well as the inclusion of confidential procedures as part of this process. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that those responsible for receiving and investigating reports of gender based violence and/or sexual harassment are properly trained to handle them with appropriate sensitivity and for their role to be recognised in workplace procedures. Ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the risk of violence as well as mechanisms and procedures that are established to address and prevent violence at work is also essential.

Unions in Action – South Africa

In 2006, SATAWU negotiated a sexual harassment policy with the Transnet Group (covering rail, ports, rail engineering and pipelines). At the union's request, the company management agreed that training of managers and shop stewards would be conducted throughout the group.