

MEDIA RELEASE

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TASMANIAN DRIVERS URGED TO LOSE A MINUTE NOT THEIR LIFE AT LEVEL CROSSINGS

Public awareness of the potential impact on train drivers and emergency services workers, and changing driver behaviour at level crossings are the key messages in 2013 for Rail Safety Week.

Speaking at the Rail Safety Week launch, Minister for Infrastructure, and Police and Emergency Services David O'Byrne stated that drivers overlooked the impacts on train drivers at a level crossing incident.

"These are Tasmanian's who are just trying to go about their daily work, like the rest of us – yet in an instant their world can be turned upside-down, through no fault of their own.

"The same can be said for our emergency services personnel, who are usually the first on the scene of these entirely preventable accidents.

"A level crossing accident is horrific in its own right, but the fact that it's entirely preventable – through simply following the rules – makes it even worse.

TasRail CEO Damien White said it was time for Tasmanian drivers to take level crossing safety seriously.

"TasRail has 248 public level crossings and every one of them is the site of a potential accident if motorists try to race a train.

"While the number of actual accidents thankfully remains quite low, the number of 'near hits' for the past 12 months remains unacceptably high at 113.

"Of this, our records show that sedans, utes and light commercial vehicles have the highest incidences of 'near hits,' with 65, 14 and 13 instances respectively.

TasRail have installed CCTV at one of the key level crossing hot spots in Granton, which enables evidence to be provided to the police so offenders who fail to stop can be prosecuted.

For more information or comment:

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