

MEDIA BRIEF – THE ADVOCATE

8 July 2014

TasRail has renewed its plea for livestock owners to register active stock crossings that cross that rail corridor. The announcement comes after a spate of incidents where livestock has been moved across the track without notification to TasRail's Train Control centre.

Statistics for last financial year show unauthorised stock crossing incidents occurred at a rate of more than one a month (15 in total).

Of significant concern, there remain active stock crossings across the rail network that have not been registered with TasRail. Due to the obvious danger this creates, TasRail is urging all stock owners to contact TasRail to have their crossing formally licensed. The main objective is to establish safe communication protocols between Train Control and landowners taking stock over the rail.

Actions taken by TasRail in recent months include:

- TasRail is progressively identifying landowners likely to require passage across the rail corridor.
- TasRail has already formally written to some 90 landowners to explain the requirements for stock crossings on the rail network. Requirements include confirmation of the location of the stock crossing and registration of the stock crossing via a licence issued by TasRail.
- As an incentive TasRail is offering landowners a fee amnesty on new and updated crossings which represents a saving of \$600. Once a licence is granted there are no ongoing fees.
- TasRail will review the returned licence application forms to record stock crossing information and establish the crossing locations are safe with adequate sight distance to view rail traffic. Stock crossings that are not deemed to meet TasRail's minimum sight distance requirements or other safety requirements will need to have these requirements addressed or relocated to a safer location.
- Once registered landowners are required to contact TasRail Train Control on 03 6335 2556 and give their contact details and location when they intend to move their stock. Train Control will provide the caller with details of planned rail movements on that section of track for the next three hours, noting that scope exists for trains to run ahead of or behind schedule. Provided a sufficient window exists to safely cross, the callers are then free to cross. TasRail will also notify the relevant train driver to expect livestock in the vicinity.
- TasRail initiatives to highlight this matter include editorial in the publication Proactive Agricultural Safety and Support Inc. (distributed Statewide in the Tasmanian Country Newsletter) and also manned an information booth at Agfest in May to highlight this issue and create greater awareness.

- Landowners are urged to contact TasRail's Coordinator of Property and Development Services on 6227 5212 for further information or to commence the licensing process.

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In short - animals being moved across the railway line without notification to Train Control present a very real risk of a train collision, or worse, a train derailment. It is crucial for the safety of people and animals that TasRail is advised of stock crossing locations and times through farmers and business owners registering their crossing with us.

In a related issue TasRail reports that for the 2013/14 financial year there were 165 reported incidents of stock on the rail line and 22 collisions involving animals. TasRail is asking all landowners to ensure their properties are securely fenced. Please ensure that your fences are of sufficient design, condition and strength to ensure animals do not wander into the rail corridor.

A photo opportunity exists at 49 Dunorlan Rd, Moltema where TasRail has signposted an active stock crossing.

ENDS

For more information:

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