

MEDIA RELEASE

13 February 2004

TRAIN NARROWLY AVOIDS INCIDENT AFTER ATTEMPTED SABOTAGE AT LONGFORD

TASRAIL is calling for public assistance after yet another potentially deadly attack on a train today.

Last week saw a multi-million dollar ballast regulator newly arrived from the US shot at with the cabin window pierced 5mm into 15mm bullet proof glass on the State's West Coast.

Now a train bound for the State's South has been the victim of what could have been an explosive and fatal incident 500m from the Longford bridge.

At 2.06pm a 3m piece of unused rail had been dragged on to and propped up on the rail line at a 45 degree angle facing the oncoming train.

The train was unable to stop in time and hit the rail head-on.

Luckily the rail deflected off the train's front guard. But train control said it just as easily could have pierced the cabin or gone under the train and pierced the fuel tank.

"This recent spate of potentially deadly incidents are unnerving for our people and I don't believe are reflective of the broader Tasmanian community," TasRail chief executive Damien White said.

"When you look at the number of level crossing incidents, the air rifle attack and the number of people on the tracks and jumping off rail bridges in recent weeks it paints a disgraceful picture and one which we are appealing to all Tasmanians to help us change before someone gets killed."

The two drivers on board were shaken by the incident but luckily unharmed. Police remained at the scene late yesterday afternoon and are investigating each of the recently-reported incidents.

Call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 with any information.

END

For more information:

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