

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***‘Be Rail Safe this Holiday Season’***

At the top of TasRail’s Christmas Wish List is a request for the public to observe its rail safety message – *‘stay alert for trains, always obey level crossing signs and signals, and stay off rail bridges and railway tracks’*.

TasRail’s freight trains will continue to operate throughout the Christmas and New Year period and Chief Operating Officer, Stephen Kerrison is urging the community to stay rail safe this holiday season.

“The Christmas and New Year holiday period is typically a time when many people find themselves on the road travelling to visit family and friends or to take a holiday, so its highly likely that during the course of their travels, Tasmanians will interact with the railway”, Mr Kerrison said. “We don’t want to see anyone’s festive season ruined by impatience or because of a poor decision”.

“It only takes a couple of minutes for a train to pass through a level crossing, but a split-second decision by a distracted or impatient motorist not to wait for the train could be tragic”, Mr Kerrison said. “The outcome will also have a shattering impact on the lives of others, including innocent bystanders, the train driver and other rail staff as well as the first responders from police and emergency services”.

Mr Kerrison suggested that waiting for the train to pass should be viewed as a welcome opportunity for a motorist to indulge in a quiet moment or to involve vehicle passengers or family members in a bit of fun. “Playing a game of guessing the length of the train, the number of carriages, or counting how many lights and decorations are on the Christmas Train, can be an entertaining way to stay safe”.

TasRail is also concerned that too many people – young and old –continue to trespass inside the rail corridor by walking on the tracks or using a rail bridge as a recreational area.

“Railway tracks and bridges are incredibly dangerous places to be without the appropriate authorisation and protections in place”, Mr Kerrison said. “People think they will hear the train approaching and have time to move away, but it’s not always the case. The TR locomotives are relatively quiet and they are hauling more freight - if you happen to be on a rail bridge when the train approaches, there is no emergency exit and the consequences are likely to be fatal”.

“The best way to stay safe and enjoy the holiday season is to make sure you observe rail safe behaviour”, Mr Kerrison said. “Rail staff deserve to have a safe and happy festive season too”.

***For more information:***

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