

# Media Release

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## Car passengers narrowly escape collision at rail level crossing

Australia's leading rail-based transport company, Aurizon is pleading with the community to stop putting lives at risk at level crossings after a spate of near misses on the rail network in Western Australia.

Head of Safety Danny Harnedy is calling on all motorists to put their safety and the safety of their passengers and our train drivers first before taking short cuts at level crossings.

"We continue to see motorists displaying reckless behaviour at level crossings and disobeying the law, putting the lives of our train drivers and others on the line," Mr Harnedy said.

"On Wednesday night, a vehicle with passengers inside was stopped in the middle of the Lowlands Level Crossing in Mundijong, where fortunately our driver had enough warning to stop the train just short of hitting the car. Had the driver been unable to stop the train, the result would have been devastating.

"Just last month our drivers also narrowly missed a B-Double fuel tanker that illegally crossed the Yarri Road level crossing in Parkeston, West Kalgoorlie.

"The truck driver appeared to blatantly ignore the flashing lights at the level crossing, and had the tanker crossed the tracks seconds earlier the result could have been catastrophic.

"The level crossing at Martin Pelusey Road in Picton continues to be a hot spot with six serious near misses over the past year. Motorists continue to cross the tracks only metres in front of our oncoming trains, and more alarmingly, have stopped on the tracks.

"While it's extremely fortunate that collisions didn't occur in these situations, people need to understand that for every near miss there is a very real and emotional impact for our drivers and their families.

"When our drivers see a vehicle or a person on the tracks, they can't simply stop or swerve to miss them. Even when the emergency brakes are applied, a fully loaded train can take two kilometres to stop, and the outcome can be devastating."

Aurizon's call to action comes as part National Rail Safety Week, rail industry body TrackSAFE's annual community awareness week held in Australia and New Zealand designed to engage the community in safe rail practices.

"We are urging people in all communities to stop taking risks with their lives and the lives of our drivers. If people continue to take risks, it's only a matter of time before the outcome is fatal," Mr Harnedy said.

"Our message is simple. Always approach rail crossings cautiously and stop, look, listen and think. Obey the law and stay safe.

"It's just not worth the risk. No injury or fatality can be justified by the short amount of time that you think you will save by taking a short cut and disobeying the law."

Aurizon and the TrackSAFE Foundation have a range of rail safety education materials, including animations, available on their websites at [www.aurizon.com.au](http://www.aurizon.com.au) and [www.tracksafefoundation.com.au](http://www.tracksafefoundation.com.au)

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