

# Media Release

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## June School Holiday Warning – Stay off the Tracks!

Aurizon has urged young people not to risk their lives by entering rail corridors and tracks in its coal systems throughout Queensland these school holidays.

Aurizon’s head of safety Neil Backer said Aurizon continued to report near-miss incidents involving young people in the rail corridor.

“In recent months we’ve had multiple incidents of children playing near the tracks, alongside where 10,500-tonne coal trains operate. Only last week we had an employee discover two youths riding their BMX bikes in the rail corridor, completely oblivious to the danger they had placed themselves in,” Mr Backer said.

“This is a worrying trend ahead of the school holidays, when children will be playing outdoors in larger numbers. Clearly some children and their families are unaware of the life-threatening risks posed by playing near train tracks.”

Mr Backer has called on all people, and particularly young people during these school holidays, to think carefully about taking unnecessary risks when it comes to rail safety.

“Safety is our core priority. Quite frankly we’re fed up with our train drivers being put in the horrible position of having to suddenly pull up a coal train, which can be more than two kilometres long,” he said.

“We don’t want your families to have to deal with the devastating consequences of you entering the rail corridor, but we equally don’t want our train drivers to have to bear a potential tragedy on their shoulders.”

Parents are urged to talk to their children about the potential dangers, reminding them of the following:

- Stay away from railway property day and night
- Only cross at designated areas – overhead footbridges, subway tunnels and pedestrian and vehicular level crossings
- Never take a short cut across the tracks
- Trains can’t swerve or suddenly stop. Freight trains can take up to two kilometres to stop in an emergency
- Always look out for a second train when crossing at designated crossings
- Be aware and keep away from overhead lines. High voltages can kill (even without touching). The electricity can jump up to a three metre radius from the power lines
- Never climb on trains
- Trespassing illegally on railway property can result in large fines

Mr Backer said some people living close to rail lines in Aurizon’s central Queensland coal systems mistakenly believed they knew the timetables of coal trains coming through their areas.

“These schedules change from day to day and even from hour to hour, so we urge people not to take any risks at train crossings. We want all children and their families to enjoy a safe holiday period and we are pleading for people to exercise caution near the railway.”

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