

# Media Release

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## Don't put your life on the line

Train drivers living in Queensland's regional communities are at the heart of a new public safety campaign, '**Don't put your life on the line**', which is being launched today by rail company, Aurizon.

While the campaign aims to raise general community awareness it is also specifically targeted at anti-coal protestors who have recently increased their unsafe and illegal trespass in the rail corridor. On-track protests are now one of the primary safety concerns for the Company and in particular for more than 1,000 of Aurizon's frontline train drivers in Queensland.

Aurizon CEO Andrew Harding said the Company wants people to understand that near-misses on railways have a traumatic and lasting impact on its train drivers.

"Trauma and mental health remain one of the rail industry's biggest challenges for its driver community and can have flow on effects for their families as well," he said.

"Through this campaign we want to remind people to be vigilant around the rail corridor for their safety and for our train drivers' safety. It is only a matter of time before someone is seriously hurt or killed due to unsafe or reckless behaviour.

"We don't want our drivers bearing the emotional burden for something that could have been prevented, and potentially being so traumatised they can't return to work or drive a train again."

One of the Company's North Queensland train drivers, with more than 40 years' driving experience, has spoken out about the devastating impact near misses has had on them personally, and the fear that one day he will kill someone.

"Those couple of incidents are absolutely engraved into my mind, picture perfect, from those days.

"I can still sit here talk about how it went and exactly what happened, so the fear of actually running over someone and actually killing someone, it would be just devastating, totally devastating," he said.

"It's putting too much stress on the train drivers, worrying about whether we're going to get home to our families if something serious happens, and whether we as a group could run over someone and potentially kill one of these protestors locked onto the track.

"Even though they think they're going to stop the coal and stop everything else with their protest, they will definitely impact on their family and their friends. Everyone knows that once there is a death in the family, it's life changing, and they need to look at that.

"We just can't pull up on a whim. We've got 10,000 tonnes of coal at the back of us and when we're hurtling along at 80km per hour, it takes at least two and a half kilometres to pull up and stop the train.

"So, if we come around the corner and they're on the track, all we can do is put the emergency brakes on and then close our eyes. They seem to think that we can stop at any time," said the train driver.

Aurizon's public safety campaign will feature in newspapers, across radio and social media.

If you witness anyone illegally trespassing on the rail corridor, please report to the police immediately by calling 000 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

**For more information, please contact:**  
Corporate Affairs: [media@aurizon.com.au](mailto:media@aurizon.com.au)

