

# THINK ABOUT THE TRACK BEFORE YOU 'SNAP'

## A GUIDE FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND FILMMAKERS NEAR THE RAIL CORRIDOR

The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) receives many requests from media outlets, designers, photographers, filmmakers and rail enthusiasts for photographs, viewing locations, and to use our rail corridor as a backdrop for imagery. While we recognise that trains and the rail corridor can provide some great image and vision opportunities, it is not an open access area and there are many risks to be aware of when taking images near to the rail corridor.

This guide aims to provide some tips and direction to help keep you safe when capturing imagery. We also hope that by promoting safe behaviours around the rail corridor through our actions, in our imagery and in our stories, we can start reducing incidents.

### THE RAIL CORRIDOR IS A DANGEROUS PLACE

With 44,200km of railway track in Australia and ARTC's network comprising of over 8,500km of this; trains, people and vehicles cross paths every day. Unfortunately, there are more than 5,000 incidents of trespass on the rail network every year in Australia. That's over 13 trespasses a day or one every two hours. In addition there are around 1,000 near hits at level crossings in Australia every year – that is 1,000 people who could have ruined their life as well as the trauma and impact it has on the lives of the train driver, scene attendants, witnesses, and their family because of an avoidable incident.

#### Train Controller Report – WODONGA – WANGARATTA, VIC

##### NEAR HIT

"At 1542hrs the driver on a passenger service reported a near miss at Beechworth Road Level Crossing just north of Chiltern whilst travelling in an up direction. TTM advised. Driver advised control that he applied the emergency brake and that the on board attendant firmly advised the people to clear. The attendant on board informed the driver they were clearing the area. The members of the public were taking photos way too close to track. The driver was OK to proceed."

### WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

- ✓ Rail enthusiasts
- ✓ Photographers and videographers (professional/commercial and amateur/hobbyist)
- ✓ Media outlets and representatives (press, online and broadcast)
- ✓ Members of the public
- ✓ People taking photos and film for social media
- ✓ Others with an interest in the rail industry



### WHAT IS THE RAIL CORRIDOR?

The rail corridor is the land on which the railway is built. It comprises all property typically bounded from fence line to fence line or, if not fenced, everywhere 15 metres either side of the outermost parts of track, unless otherwise indicated. It is a highly regulated area and actions around the rail corridor are supported by National Rail Safety Regulation – which includes provisions for criminal acts. The community should view the rail corridor as a high danger 'worksite'. The people that work in the rail corridor are trained, hold relevant certification and must be authorised to be there.

## TRAIN DRIVERS ASSUME THE WORST

ARTC and rail operators around the country receive hundreds of reports of members of the public entering the rail corridor to take photos or view passing trains every year. Many people are unaware that entering into the rail corridor is an illegal activity that constitutes trespass. Worse still, it can result in serious injury or death should that person be struck by a train.

A rail accident affects many people – train crews and track workers see tragedy all too often for what are almost all avoidable incidents – and will take immediate action such as applying their emergency brakes if they see something unsafe. Rail workers and train crews are also trained to report unusual and unsafe acts and rail staff and/or Police are notified to attend where appropriate.



Train Controller Report –  
MAITLAND, NSW

## TRESPASSER IN RAIL CORRIDOR AT EAST MAITLAND FOOTBRIDGE

“Trespasser in rail corridor at East Maitland footbridge. Driver of freight service advises control that there is a 60 year old male trespasser sitting at the base of the East Maitland foot bridge in the rail corridor with light blonde hair and a blue shirt filming the passing trains. Newcastle Police advised.”

Train Controller Report –  
MOUNT LOFTY, SA

## TRESPASSERS ON TRACK

Report from Mt. Lofty of a wedding party standing on the track having their photos taken. Manager has photos of offenders' cars and will pass them to Security.

## DON'T LET THE PICTURE BE YOUR LAST ONE

- 1 A good picture is not worth losing your life over.** Too many people are seriously hurt or die each year because they do not understand rail corridor operations and the danger that comes with it. **What message are you setting with the images and story you portray?**
- 2 Accessing the rail corridor is against the law.** Rail tracks, yards and rail maintenance vehicle tracks are restricted access property. If you plan to photograph near the rail corridor make sure you are in a safe and public space.
- 3 Trains can't stop quickly to avoid people or vehicles on the tracks.** It can take up to two kilometres for a fully laden freight train to stop – that's more than 12 footy fields. Don't think you can safely gauge a train's distance from you and its speed –it's often going much faster than you expect.
- 4 Never stand on railway tracks.** No tracks should be assumed to be abandoned or inactive.
- 5 Always behave as you would expect others to.** People in your community mimic your behaviour and may copy what they see in pictures.
- 6 Don't pose subjects on railway tracks** or other equipment when taking photos. It's not only illegal, it sends a dangerous message around right and wrong behaviour.
- 7 Give train crews a break.** Most drivers and train crew have experienced too much tragedy in the rail corridor and experience near hits all too often.
- 8 Get permission** from the relevant rail operator or track owner if you are looking to film or photograph the rail corridor and the rail yards.
- 9 Obey signage and any directions** from rail staff, they are there to ensure your safety and that of others

# THINK ABOUT THE TRACK BEFORE YOU 'SNAP'



**PLAN**  
AHEAD



DON'T  
RESTRICT  
**VISIBILITY**

**TURN OFF**  
YOUR FLASH



**REMEMBER**   
YOUR ROAD RULES



**CHECK**   
YOUR  
BOUNDARIES

**WEAR**  
THE RIGHT  
CLOTHING

**SECURE** YOUR EQUIPMENT



**CHECK**  
FOR  
**HAZARDS** 

DON'T  
**DISTRACT**  
THE DRIVER



# CHECKLIST<sup>1</sup>

TASK	✓
<b>Plan ahead</b> – contact ARTC or relevant rail operator if unsure	
<b>Check your boundaries!</b> Are you in a safe location and outside the rail corridor?	
<b>Only take photos or view trains from public locations</b>	
Do not intentionally distract a train driver or rail worker's attention	
Check you are not <b>obstructing the visibility or view of train drivers</b> or road-based vehicles if you are near a railway level crossing	
Are you or the vehicle you are using obstructing the visibility or location of any signalling equipment, signals or other rail safety equipment?	
<b>Turn off your flash.</b> Flash photography or direct lights in the direction of oncoming trains is a major hazard for train crew; have you checked if you are wearing anything that might be reflecting the sun or could affect a train driver's vision?	
<b>What colour clothing are you wearing?</b> Red and Green are railway signal colours and track workers are prohibited wearing these colours in the rail corridor, think about what you wear when near railway lines.	
If you are taking photos from an overpass, <b>is your equipment attached safely</b> to your body and cannot fall into the rail corridor?	
Do not enter areas not accessible or open to the public	
Don't climb on or obstruct signals, equipment or signs	
Check you are safe from hazards (road and rail)	



## MORE INFORMATION

Visit: [www.artc.com.au](http://www.artc.com.au) and [www.tracksafefoundation.com.au](http://www.tracksafefoundation.com.au)

For access to rail stations or passenger trains for filming or photography purposes, please contact the relevant passenger operator or passenger rail authority.

Further ARTC enquiries can be directed to the Manager, Stakeholder Communications on: (02) 8259 0724 or, by mail to:

Att: Manager, Stakeholder Communications  
 Australian Rail Track Corporation  
 GPO Box 14,  
 Sydney NSW 2001

<sup>1</sup> This information is provided as a guide only – please take all steps to keep yourself and others safe and abide by all necessary laws. There may be additional hazards not listed in this publication that you should also consider.