

LEVEL CROSSING SAFETY

CONSIDER THE FACTS



There are more than **23,500** railway level crossings in Australia.

- › **21% of level crossings in Australia are active**, that is they have boom gates and/or flashing lights to alert you when a train is coming.
- › The remaining **79% of level crossings are passive**, meaning the majority of them have either a 'Stop' or 'Give Way' sign, so you must check for trains yourself. These also include private and maintenance level crossings.
- › There are **over 1,000 'near hits'** between vehicles and trains at level crossings annually. A near hit is when a train driver applies the emergency brakes and the train narrowly misses colliding with a truck, car, cyclist or pedestrian.
- › The difference between a fatal collision and a near collision at a railway level crossing can be just **seconds**.

Almost every near hit and incident is due to the road user doing the wrong thing, either through error or deliberately. **Trains always have right of way and simply cannot stop quickly**, especially with a load.

It can take a fully loaded freight train **up to 2km to stop** after the emergency brakes have been applied.

Until recently there were **around 30 fatalities every year** resulting from level crossing collisions. These numbers are declining, however there are still multiple fatalities every year and collisions resulting in serious injuries.

Most railway level crossing crashes happen at sites that drivers use regularly, at active level crossings on dry, straight roads.



REMEMBER:

- › Always take extra care if there are two sets of railway tracks
- › Trains are usually travelling faster than you think
- › Get into the practice of turning off radios and winding down your window when approach a level crossing

GOOD PRACTICE FOR MOTORISTS

When approaching level crossings, a driver must ALWAYS give way to a train.

ACTIVE LEVEL CROSSINGS

At railway level crossings controlled by red flashing lights or boom gates, you must:

- › come to a complete stop when flashing lights have started flashing; and
- › not proceed until the lights stop flashing, the boom gates have lifted and the tracks are clear of trains. If a train passes but the lights don't stop and/or boom doesn't rise, don't assume there's a fault – there might be another train coming!
- › If the lights, bells and boom gates continue for a long period of time and there does not appear to be a train coming, you should turn off your vehicle and look for instructions on the electrical box next to the crossing. There is normally an ID number and phone number to call.

If the signals are not activated then there is no requirement to stop, however you should still apply safe driving skills and look for trains in both directions to ensure the tracks are clear.

PASSIVE LEVEL CROSSINGS

When approaching a level crossing protected by a 'Stop' sign, you must:

- › come to a complete stop before the holding line or well clear of the tracks in a position where you can see in both directions along the tracks;
- › look for trains in both directions; and
- › only proceed over the tracks if there are no trains approaching.

At level crossings protected by a 'Give Way' sign you must:

- › slow down and prepare to stop;
- › look for trains in both directions along the tracks;
- › only proceed if there are no trains approaching.

Visit www.artc.com.au for more information.

