




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Rail Safety Week

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (3.03 pm): This week across Australia and New Zealand more than 45 organisations are uniting to deliver an important message as part of the annual Rail Safety Week. The railway network is a critical part of connecting our communities, allowing Queenslanders to holiday or visit family and friends or to commute to work and, of course, for tourists to see our great state and for goods to be transported.

Safety on railways is vital. Trains can travel up to 160 kilometres per hour. They cannot swerve or quickly slow to avoid people or vehicles. Overhead electrical wires have 25,000 volts and can kill in an instant. Railways deserve caution and respect. That is why this week Queensland Rail, G:link, the Department of Transport and Main Roads, TransLink and the Queensland Police Service have teamed up to raise awareness of rail safety in Queensland. All year round these agencies work tirelessly to keep our communities safe, and this week they will join forces and encourage people to take responsibility for their own actions.

Last year Queensland Rail recorded 249 near misses across the state and the reality is that every one of those near misses was avoidable. As part of Rail Safety Week, Queensland Rail has released shocking footage of people acting foolishly and dangerously around trains in an effort to remind people of the serious consequences of not being safe. Shockingly, this footage includes a young family pushing through the pedestrian gates at a level crossing and narrowly being missed by an oncoming train. This incident could have ended in tragedy.

The safety of the public, customers and staff is our No. 1 priority. People of all ages need to understand that reckless behaviour can have tragic consequences not only for the person involved but their family, friends and rail staff. Queensland Rail, QPS and TransLink will be visiting stations to speak with customers about rail safety and they will be visiting schools as well.

Queensland Rail works hard to make sure the safety message is reaching as many people as possible, but the bottom line is that people need to take responsibility for their own actions to keep themselves and others safe.