The Dangers of Trespassing in the Rail Corridor



Crossing railway tracks anywhere other than a level crossing is extremely dangerous behaviour. It is the leading cause of deaths on the railway network in New Zealand and around the world.

Every year there are hundreds of reports of people crossing railway tracks or entering railway land without permission. Hundreds of people have died in New Zealand in the past 10 years on railway tracks, tunnels or rail bridges.*

It is not only unsafe but also illegal under the Railways Act 2005 to enter railway land without permission.

Trespassing is an offence

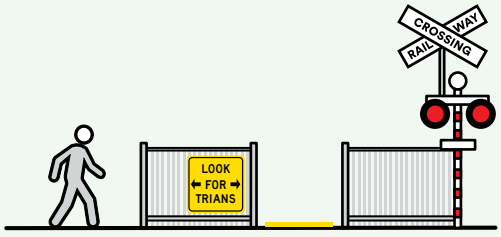
Crossing or walking along railway tracks at any place other than a formed level crossing is against the law. Even if a railway line is not in regular use (whether 'mothballed' or closed due to repairs) it is still illegal to be on the tracks without a permit to enter.

The fine for illegally being on or crossing railway land without permission is up to **$10,000**.



Stay Safe:

- Only cross at a formed pedestrian crossing or an overpass or underpass.
- Stop and look for trains both ways up and down the tracks.
- Only cross if you are sure there are no trains in sight.
- Obey the warning signs at the crossing – if lights are flashing or bells are ringing this means a train is approaching.
- If a train has passed or is stationary at a station – always check both ways again to make sure another train is not coming.
- Two tracks might mean there is a second train approaching.
- If there is a pedestrian swing gate, wait until the gate opens fully before entering the crossing.
- Always stand at least two full metres away from the tracks or a station platform - fast trains can create a vacuum that can suck you under the train.
- Never put yourself at risk by walking on railway bridges or in railway tunnels.



* NB: some deaths are attributable to self-harm.

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It's important to remember:

Trains are fast

Trains travel faster than they appear and cannot stop quickly. Research has proven people cannot accurately predict the speed of an approaching train.

Trains are quiet

Most people think they will hear if a train is approaching but trains do not make much noise and you will not always hear them. Trains travelling on an electrified rail network (for example in Auckland and Wellington metro areas) are almost completely silent.

Trains cannot swerve or stop

Unlike a car, trains are not able to stop in a hurry or swerve to miss a person, vehicle or object on the tracks. A fully laden freight train can take up to a kilometre to stop after the locomotive engineer (train driver) applies the emergency brake.

Trains are frequent

In Auckland and Wellington there are a growing number of urban passenger trains to meet the increasing populations.

Trains are unpredictable

They can come from either direction, at any time of the day or night. Not all trains stop at all stations and can travel through at high speeds.

Rail vehicles also have legal right of way

Pedestrians and motorists should treat rail vehicles, such as hirails and other track maintenance vehicles, with the same care as they would a train. Rail vehicles are often running on lines that are not in regular use. Like trains they are quiet and they cannot swerve to avoid a person or object on the tracks.



Ian Thornton
Locomotive Engineer,
Taranaki

"Trains and rail vehicles are not like a car – we don't have a steering wheel and we have little chance of avoiding a collision with a person or vehicle. The best we can do is apply the emergency brakes and hope for the best. As train drivers we never want to see the horrific things we see when we are involved in a collision".



If you see anyone trespassing on railway tracks or crossing where they shouldn't, report it immediately to the Police by dialling 111.

You must not enter railway land in any circumstances (even to move stock or take photos) unless you have a permit from KiwiRail. Scan the QR code for more information or phone 04 498 3000.

Train Control Emergency Number: 0800 808 400

If you notice a problem with a level crossing or are stuck on a level crossing call the Train Control Emergency Number (This number is only to be used in emergencies).

Further rail safety information and resources.
Please visit: **www.tracksafe.co.nz**
or find us at @TrackSAFENZ TrackSAFENZ

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