



MEDIA RELEASE

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On-board for cane train safety

Bundaberg Sugar is warning motorists that its cane trains will have an increasing presence across the district in the lead up to the 2016 cane harvesting season, scheduled to commence on June 13.

Bundaberg Sugar cane supply manager, Robert Powell said the Bundaberg police have come on board to assist with alerting people to watch out for cane trains.

“We appreciate the support of the police and have invited a police officer on board one of our trains as a passenger to gain a better understanding of what our train crews experience on a daily basis, especially when approaching a level crossing,” he said.

“It’s important for motorists and other members of the public to understand the cane harvesting season brings with it a lot of cane train movement across our cane rail network. Our trains operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week from June to December.

“Each year our drivers experience near miss incidents where motorists try to race the trains at level crossings. Motorists should not be fooled by the speed of a cane train and must realise that it can’t stop quickly. A cane train fully loaded can weigh in excess of 400 tonnes and takes more than a kilometre to stop.

“Bundaberg Sugar’s cane rail network plays a significant role in transporting the harvested cane to either of our two sugar mills and without it would increase the number of trucks on our roads. It is a safe and reliable means of transport and we need people to obey the road rules and drive to the conditions.”

Mr Powell said flashing lights are maintained regularly but if motorists experience a set they believe are flashing for no reason; they should report it by phoning the number displayed on the side of the flashing light control box at the level crossing. The crossing identification number listed is to be quoted as a reference for maintenance staff.

Bundaberg Police Senior Constable Danielle Loftus said many motorists do not realise that failing to stop or give way at the signage situated at a level crossing is a traffic infringement.

Currently motorists could receive a \$353 traffic infringement notice and three demerit points for the following offences:

Fail to stop at ‘STOP’ sign at level crossing

Fail to give way at ‘STOP’ sign at level crossing

Fail to give way at ‘GIVE WAY’ sign at level crossing

Enter level crossing while warning lights or bells operating

Enter level crossing while train on crossing

Enter level crossing while train approaching crossing and collision likely

Enter level crossing while crossing or road beyond is blocked

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“Road safety includes level crossings and we remind motorists to be vigilant and patient at all level crossings, especially during the busy cane season,” said Senior Constable Loftus.

Mr Powell added that it is also important for parents to be aware of their children’s activities and whereabouts and remind their children to keep well away from the cane rail tracks.

“It is tempting for children to play on the tracks and around cane trains and bins, especially during the school holidays. We urge parents to educate their children of the dangers associated with such behaviour and to take a safer ride instead at the Botanic Gardens sugar cane railway,” Mr Powell said.

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For further information and photo opportunity please contact

Maria McMahan, Bundaberg Sugar media officer, 0488908987