

NEWS RELEASE

Concerning brake van shooting

A Victoria Mill brake van was repeatedly shot at in the Herbert region overnight on Friday.

Two of the shots broke warning lights on the back of the *Maitland* unit, while numerous bullet marks are visible on other parts of the brake van.

Herbert Cane Supply Manager Jim Kirchner said the remnants of a bullet pellet were recovered and passed on to the Ingham Police.

He said although the bullets broke the protective light covers, the lights were still operational.

The broken lights and pellet were discovered on Saturday. Further examination of the brake van over the weekend revealed the extent of the gunfire.

Mr Kirchner said it was impossible to know exactly where or when the shooting happened.

“We know the brake van was stationary for a period of time during the night but don’t know if the shooting happened then or while it was mobile,” he said.

“It’s very disconcerting to think a gun was pointed in the general direction of our infrastructure and, potentially, a loco crew.”

Earlier this season a gas cylinder was rolled into the path of an oncoming cane train in the Abergowrie area.

Mr Kirchner said both incidents had potential for more serious outcomes.

“We ask people to have more sense and to respect the safety of our employees,” he said.

“People should keep clear of the cane railway corridor and not interfere with any of our infrastructure.”

Following a spate of collisions and near hits involving cane trains in Wilmar Sugar’s other milling regions in the past two weeks, Mr Kirchner also reminded motorists to take care as they drove around the region.

“Motorists should approach all cane railway crossings with caution and always give way to oncoming cane trains,” he said.

“They should also stay alert for harvesters, in-field transporters and any other slow-moving equipment in use at this time of year.”

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