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NEWS RELEASE

Road users urged to use their train brains to stay safe

Motorists, cyclists and pedestrians are being urged to use their train brains as the 2019 cane crushing season enters its third month.

Wilmar made the renewed plea during national Rail Safety Week to raise public awareness about the potentially devastating consequences of not exercising caution or obeying the rules around rail networks.

Wilmar operates Queensland's third-largest rail network with more than 1600km of cane railway through the Herbert, Burdekin, Proserpine and Plane Creek canegrowing regions.

Cane Supply and Grower Relations General Manager Paul Giordani said recent footage of near-misses around Wilmar's extensive cane rail network indicated some road users were not heeding the safety message.

"A minority of motorists are still speeding up through level crossings to beat our cane trains, putting our loco crews, other motorists and themselves in danger," Mr Giordani said.

"We've also had instances of cyclists crossing the track in front of an on-coming train.

"It's very concerning. It can take more than a kilometre for a fully loaded cane train to come to a complete stop, so it's important that motorists, cyclist and pedestrians give way to our trains."

Mr Giordani said cane trains had been operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, since the season started in June and would be operating until December.

"People need to stay alert and use their train brains as they travel around our milling regions," he said.

"There are almost 500 rail crossings on public roads across our four regions and it is vital that motorists and pedestrians take care at every single one of them.

"Some of our cane trains are 200 bins long and have more than 1500 tonnes of rolling weight, but unfortunately, some people still underestimate the force behind them.

Wilmar continues to roll out its proactive train safety campaign by visiting kindergartens, schools and attending community events to spread the important rail safety message.

“We have had our safety mascot Sam the cane train out and about to help us teach kids about staying safe during the crushing season,” Mr Giordani said.

“Sam helps us spread the message to keep off cane trains and their bins, keep clear of cane railway tracks and bridges, and to stay safe at level crossings.

“We’re making it clear this Rail Safety Week: Use your train brain and give way to cane trains.”

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Vision of near-misses available on request



Photo: Wilmar is urging visitors and locals to use their train brain during Rail Safety Week