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www.dmp.wa.gov.au/ResourcesSafety

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This publication is available on request in other formats for people with special needs.

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The advice provided in this pamphlet is basic safety and health information. Ensure you are familiar with your site procedures and, if uncertain, discuss this information with your supervisor and safety and health representative.

Mine safety matters

Railway crossings



This pamphlet deals primarily with ore rail systems.

THE HAZARDS

Crossing railway tracks on foot, in a vehicle or in mobile plant is potentially hazardous, as trains travelling at considerable speed

(up to 80 km per hour) can arrive without warning and take some distance to stop.

Due to their size and weight, some iron ore trains may take up to 2 km to come to a stop even if they are travelling relatively slowly.

Uncontrolled road–rail intersections are common in the remote areas where these trains operate.

WHAT CAN HAPPEN

Collisions with trains can result in serious injury or death, and extensive damage to vehicles and equipment.

More than 100 crashes occur at crossings on Western Australian public roads each year, causing on average three fatalities and 46 injuries.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

- Working near any railway track requires special permits and an induction, and is not allowed unless workers have full knowledge of specific safe work practices, policies and procedures
- Whenever you are driving near a railway track, stay alert and switch off distractions such as music
- At night, approach an uncontrolled crossing slowly and look out for approaching lights before crossing. Also check that unlit wagons are not already passing over the crossing
- Ensure all of your vehicle lights are on, including beacon lights when fitted
- Cross railway tracks only at prepared crossings to ensure the underside of the vehicle does not get caught on the rails or the wheels get bogged
- Never attempt to race a train to a crossing — it is not worth the risk of a collision
- When approaching an uncontrolled railway crossing, stop between 5 and 15 m from the tracks, turn off any noisy equipment, and look and listen for trains from both directions. You may need to turn off the engine or radio to ensure you can hear clearly
- Ensure you obey all signs (stop or give way) and other indicators (flashing lights or bells) at the crossing
- If a train has just passed, do not proceed across the crossing until all warning devices have stopped
- Ensure there is enough room on the other side of the crossing for the entire vehicle to cross and clear the tracks before proceeding
- If a train has just passed and there are multiple tracks, check that there are no trains approaching on the other tracks

- Only proceed once you are sure there are no trains approaching and that your vehicle can cross without stopping
- Avoid changing gears while crossing the tracks
- If the engine stalls on the crossing, immediately get everyone out of the vehicle and move away from the tracks
- Report any breakdown or defective warning devices as soon as possible to the police or relevant rail authority

For further advice, refer to Part 15 — Railway Operations of the Mines Safety and Inspection Regulations 1995.



Railway crossings