



**Ms Megan Drayton
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<http://www.tracksafe.co.nz/>



Message from Ms Megan Drayton

TrackSAFE NZ is once again proud to support International Level Crossing Awareness Day, focused on heavy vehicle safety at railway level crossings.

There have been twenty collisions between trains and heavy vehicles in New Zealand since 2013. While these events are relatively infrequent (compared to vehicle-vehicle road crashes), they have the potential for considerable loss of life and serious trauma. All rail collisions are devastating for those affected and they have a traumatic impact not just on the victims and their friends and families, but also on the wider community and rail staff involved.

TrackSAFE NZ has been working alongside the heavy vehicle industry to promote safety and help prevent further incidents. We recently carried out research (with KiwiRail, NZ Transport Agency and the NZ Road Transport Forum) looking at the views of professional drivers with a view to developing a future education campaign.

This research found that professional drivers are acutely aware of the dangers associated with some railway level crossings. As such they recommended that drivers educate themselves and take time to plan and know their route and their vehicle. The simple steps of stopping, looking and listening, as well as focusing on the task at hand, were the key important safety messages that were identified.

These drivers have also developed strategies to try to make crossing the tracks safer, including using spotters, taking alternative routes and stopping, looking and listening for trains. However they said that this can all be in vain if visibility is poor and drivers are forced to stop with their vehicle on the railway tracks.

There are more than 400 public level crossings in New Zealand (around 31 per cent of all level crossings) with short stacking distances. This means a long vehicle will not be able to completely clear the level crossing when it is stopped at an adjacent road intersection. Heavy vehicle drivers worry that this situation will only get worse as longer trucks become more prevalent on New Zealand roads and the number of trains increase.

Another key finding from the research was that all agencies have a role to play in improving safety. These improvements included improving visibility, better signage, road infrastructure improvements and using technology such as apps to alert drivers to dangerous crossings.

TrackSAFE NZ wishes everyone involved in ILCAD a successful safety campaign. We are pleased to be part of this global community of organisations focused on reducing incidents and preventing harm on the many rail networks around the world.



ILCAD

Act safely at level crossings



11th edition of the
INTERNATIONAL LEVEL
CROSSING AWARENESS DAY