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MAITLAND STEAMFEST: 'THINK ABOUT THE TRACK BEFORE YOU SNAP'

With Maitland Toyota Hunter Valley Steamfest this weekend, ARTC has re-released its handy photographers guide to help keep photographers and train enthusiasts safe around the rail corridor.

"There are going to be some cracking photo opportunities this Steamfest, and we are urging everyone to make sure they stay safe when they are out and about during the weekend," Executive General Manager Hunter Valley, Jonathan Vandervoort said today.

"The Great Train Race is sure to get the most attention, and we know there will be everyone chasing that perfect photo, we just want no-one to die trying to.

"That means taking steps to keep yourself and those around you safe, and our photographers guide has a bunch of tips to guide photographers and train enthusiasts," Mr Vandervoort said.

"Unfortunately we still get multiple reports of photographers either racing trains or standing too close to the tracks as they steam past, and this is the kind of behaviour that can kill.

"Many people are unaware that entering into the rail corridor is an illegal activity that constitutes trespass. Worse still, it can result in serious injury or death should that person be struck by a train.

"We know everyone is just aiming to have a fun day at this great event, and that's why it is important to think about the track before you snap," Mr Vandervoort said.

The key tips are:

- **Plan ahead:** Make sure you know where you want to be and times, so you are not rushing to locations
- **Don't restrict visibility:** Avoid obstructing things like signal gantries or speed boards
- **Turn off your flash:** It can distract the train driver, and momentarily impair their decision making
- **Remember your road rules:** Don't race trains, suddenly stop or pull-over
- **Wear the right clothing:** Don't wear red or green as they are colours of railway signals
- **Check your boundaries:** Stay out of the rail corridor – it is illegal to enter
- **Secure your equipment:** if you are photographing from a vantage point, ensure your equipment is attached safely to body and can't fall into the rail corridor
- **Check for hazards:** Be aware of your surroundings, don't get lost in the lens
- **Avoid distracting the train driver** and listen to railway staff instructions

ARTC is proud to support Maitland Steamfest with train planning and train pathing requests the last twelve years – in-kind support worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

ENDS

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Nb. To editors – sadly, there have been instances of deaths of enthusiasts getting too close to trains and not being aware of their wider environment. In 2013, a New Zealand man died in Greymouth after entering the rail corridor and trying to capture a close-up photo of an oncoming steam train.