

**MEDIA STATEMENT**  
**12 November 2024**

**Rail freight industry support increased fines for protestors putting lives at risk**

Freight on Rail Group members welcome the decision announced by the NSW Government today that it intends to put in place stronger sanctions for irresponsible and disruptive activities that obstruct and endanger safety on railways.

Measures include a new maximum fine of \$22,000 or two years imprisonment.

The penalties for blocking the passage of trains will align with changes to laws, passed by the NSW Parliament in 2022, making it an offence to block or obstruct major roads, bridges and tunnels and major facilities like ports and railway stations.

Over recent months, actions taken by people involved in protest activities have jeopardised the safety of themselves and train drivers in New South Wales. The rail industry, led by the Freight on Rail Group, have voiced serious concerns for the safety of everyone involved in unsafe and illegal activity on the rail corridor.

A fully loaded train can take up to two kilometres to come to a full stop, and every near miss and or incident on the rail network can impact the lives of train drivers, both physically and psychologically. There are also risks for the rail workers who look after the track infrastructure and the first responders who have to manage the often-challenging recovery of the protestors.

FORG members, as key representatives of the Australian rail industry, commend the NSW Government in considering the serious health and safety hazards for rail workers and first responders, and in taking appropriate action to deter unsafe actions on a rail corridor.

About FORG:

FORG members contribute more than \$11 billion to Australia's economy each year, employ almost 20,000 people, operate 1,600 freight locomotives and manage 23,000 kilometres of rail track. They include Arc Infrastructure, Aurizon, Australian Rail Track Corporation, One Rail Australia, Pacific National, Qube Holdings, SCT Logistics, Southern Shorthaul Railroad and Watco Australia.

Contacts

Mark Hairsine  
[mark.hairsine@aurizon.com.au](mailto:mark.hairsine@aurizon.com.au)  
Mob: 0418877574