



Rail & Maritime Transport Union Rail Union Speaks Out On Ngaruawahia Train Incident

Rail and Maritime Transport Union media release FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Wednesday 4 February 2009

The Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU) says that action must be taken to prevent a serious rail incident in the Waikato.

The Union was responding to an incident on Tuesday 3 February where children on the Ngaruawahia railway bridge pelted the engineer of a freight train with stones and bottles.

The engineer had stopped the train to speak to the young people who were on the rail bridge and required medical attention after the incident.

RMTU National Secretary Wayne Butson says that the situation is extremely bad.

"Workers should not have to put up with this type of behaviour, especially when they are acting to protect the public."

He says that immediate measures must be taken on the bridge and any other trouble spots to stop people from gaining access and endangering their own lives and those of others through stupid behaviour.

A regular patrol of the area may be necessary until the situation improves, he says.

Mr Butson says if a serious injury or fatality occurred, it could have a devastating effect on any workers involved, and the actions were also endangering workers.

He added his concerns to those of KiwiRail, who say that children have been playing dangerous games on the bridge which has been a well-known problem area in the past.

ENDS

For further information, contact Wayne Butson, General Secretary on 0274962461