

TRANSNET FREIGHT RAIL WELCOMES BAN ON SCRAP METAL TRADE

[Johannesburg, 2 December 2022]. Transnet Freight Rail (TFR) welcomes measures by government to restrict and regulate trade in scrap metal products to limit damage to infrastructure and the economy.

We are pleased that Government has acted decisively against the scourge of metal theft that doesn't just plague Transnet, but the country as a whole. For the next 6 months, and as of 2 December, the export of scrap metal will be banned whilst government finalises a more permanent legislative solution.

Transnet Freight Rail has a rail network infrastructure of 30 400 km in track and theft and vandalism of our infrastructure results in delays on the system and possible derailments.

TFR has long viewed this as economic sabotage. Since 1 April 2022, there have been more than 377 export coal trains cancelled due to security incidents, which is about an average of 11 trains a week. Whilst this is an improvement compared to the 2021/22 financial year, the security solution is not sustainable.

In the first eight months of the financial year, TFR has lost 742 kms of cable nationally.

Transnet has received assistance from coal customers in funding security on the North corridor from Ermelo to Richards Bay. This allowed the company to deploy additional security task teams and drones. As a result, there has been a 30 % reduction in security incidents. However, the security incidents have not reduced sufficiently to completely reduce the impact on train cancellations.

The announcement by government will go a long way to mitigate the security challenges experienced by TFR and industry.

TFR looks forward to Government's finalisation of a more permanent legislative solution to curb cable theft.

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Issued on behalf of Transnet Freight Rail