

Network Rail: “We need to track these people down and make sure they know the consequences of their actions.”

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A video captured by CCTV cameras shows the moment a pair of riders on a small moped narrowly escaped being struck by a train travelling at up to 70mph, after they dodged barriers at a level crossing near Littlehampton, in West Sussex.

The two riders ran red lights – a criminal offence – and caused delay to Southern passengers when the incident happened on February 21.

Anyone with information about the incident can contact BTP by texting 61016 quoting log 411 of 21/02/23.

The driver of the 1430 Brighton to Southampton service made an emergency stop and took time to compose himself before carrying on with the journey. The incident happened at 1509, at Toddington crossing, on a stretch of 70mph railway between Angmering and Ford/Littlehampton.

Lucy McAuliffe, Network Rail’s route director for Sussex, said: “We came very close to having two deaths

on our railway last week and a train driver living with the memories of that. We try to make our network as safe as possible but we do need people to work with us by paying attention to red lights and barriers.

“We need to track these people down and make sure they know the consequences of their actions.”

Inspector Emma Boulton, of the British Transport Police, said: “Put simply – this is some of the most stupidly reckless behaviour on a level crossing I have seen in my entire career. These riders blatantly ignored the red light in front of them and were just split seconds away from a truly catastrophic collision, which I have no doubt would have had fatal consequences. This footage should serve as a very explicit reminder to everyone of the dangers of misusing level crossings.”

Samantha Facey, Southern’s Health, Safety & Security Director, said: “This video beggars belief. Today we could be talking about a double death with all the misery and heartache that would cause the bikers’ families and friends.

“And think of our driver: no-one should have to be put through this trauma and none of our passengers should find themselves put at risk in this way.

“Sadly, we’ve also seen a rise in young people trespassing on the railway – it’s an incredibly dangerous place so please, please, please keep off the tracks.”

Toddington level crossing is an Automatic Half-Barrier crossing, which operates automatically, with lights flashing, sirens sounding and barriers descending 27 seconds before trains are due across the road. The barriers extend halfway across the road so nobody can be trapped behind them if they end up on the crossing.

Photo and video credit: Network Rail