

19 April 2017

## Australian & NZ rail industries on track for Rail R U OK?Day

The Australian and New Zealand rail industries will tomorrow celebrate the third annual, Rail R U OK?Day with celebrations taking place across Australasia.

With rail workers sometimes exposed to trauma on the job, finding ways to create a more supportive environment has been a priority for the rail industry. Through the Rail R U OK?Day initiative, the TrackSAFE Foundation in partnership R U OK?, have been tackling the issue by giving rail workers the tools to help deepen work place conversations and encourage colleagues to open up and support each other through tough times.

**Bob Herbert AM, TrackSAFE Foundation Chairman** said, “Rail R U OK?Day has helped the rail industry proactively address suicide on our networks in an attempt to reduce the number of incidents, while at the same time mitigating the trauma caused to rail employees, families and communities.”

“We strive to create healthy and resilient workplaces by empowering co-workers to support one another and continually check in, asking one simple question— “*are you ok*”? Depression, anxiety and mental trauma are very real issues impacting rail staff and first responders - and regular, meaningful conversations can really help.

“We’re proud to celebrate our third annual, industry-wide Rail R U OK? Day. It is an important opportunity to convince workmates that they can make a real difference to someone who is struggling by having genuine conversations,” he said.

**R U OK? Ambassador and former rugby league legend Brett Finch** understands the stresses rail workers face.

“I know about the trauma and tragedy that can happen on Australian rail networks,” he said.

“My father-in-law works on the rail and I know first-hand the life changing experiences he’s been through and the impact it has had not only on him, but also his family. If you notice a workmate is a bit off or doesn’t seem themselves, don’t joke or make light of it, because it really could be something important you could help them open up about.”

**R U OK? CEO Brendan Maher** says he is proud of the successful collaboration between TrackSAFE and the suicide prevention charity.

“The R U OK? ethos has really been embraced by rail networks around Australia and more recently New Zealand,” he said.

“It’s testament to the fact that work places and rail workers have not only encouraged checking-in with mates, but have whole heartedly embraced it. Rail workers witness some heartbreaking incidents on the job and by supporting each other everyone is better off at work and at also home.”

“Rail R U OK? Day is a reminder to all rail workers to check in not just on the big day but anytime someone looks like they’re struggling,” he said.

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**Rail R U OK? Day's launch event will take place at:**

**Where:** Main concourse Central Station, Sydney.

**When:** Thursday April, 20.

**Time:** Formalities kick off at 9am followed by a BBQ.

**Who:** League legend and R U OK? Ambassador Brett Finch will speak to workers.

**Notes to Editor:**

**TrackSAFE Foundation**

The TrackSAFE Foundation was established by the Australian rail industry to reduce near collisions, injuries and fatalities on the rail network resulting from suicide and reckless behaviour. By doing so, TrackSAFE aims to create a better workplace for rail employees. [tracksafefoundation.com.au](http://tracksafefoundation.com.au)

**R U OK?**

R U OK? is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to inspire and empower everyone to meaningfully connect with people around them and support anyone struggling with life. R U OK? Day is a national day of action, held on the second Thursday of September each year. September 14, 2017. But every day is the day to start a conversation. Conversation tips and crisis numbers can be found at [ruok.org.au](http://ruok.org.au)

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