

WMWA Member News September 2016

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## WMWA MEMBER NEWS – SEPTEMBER 2016

### R U OK? REALLY?

Living and working in the Pilbara is tough, it takes a special resolve to handle the remoteness, weather and harsh environment. These factors, coupled with long working hours and rosters, mean even the most positive of us can feel the bite of the Black Dog at times.

R U OK? Day is a day designed for us to ask this question to our family, friends and workmates.

Are you ok? Sometimes a simple question and a listening ear is all it takes for a person to realise they are not alone and do not have to suffer in silence. For more information on RU OK? Day, visit the RU OK website [here](#).

We know that suicide prevention is an enormously complex and sensitive challenge the world over. But we also know that some of the world's smartest people have been working tirelessly and developed credible theories that suggest there's power in that simplest of questions - "Are you ok?"

### RIO ANNOUNCES HIRING FREEZE

LAs most members are already aware Rio recently introduced a hiring freeze on full time employees and will now fill most vacancies' with contractors.

This announcement has caused great concern to existing employees with serious questions being asked about Rio's commitment to its current workforce and the Pilbara communities it operates from.

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not welcome the decision. We explained the members believed the decision would drive down employee's wages and conditions across the industry.

We also expressed members deep concerns about the impact of contract employment on safety standards across the Iron Ore Division.

We explained that the historical evidence is clear around contractors being less likely to raise safety concerns, making Rios Pilbara worksites less safe at a time when Rio should be looking to improve its safety. We understand that Rio will review the hiring freeze in 12 months time.

As Rio seeks to increase its contract workforce there has never been a more important time for members take the lead on safety in their workplace.

In the current environment it is vital that members ***Stand up, Speak Up and Back up your workmates about safety concerns at work.*** If you have unresolved safety concerns or do not feel comfortable raising your concerns with management you can speak to your health and safety rep or Union organiser.

Your safety is in your hands - workers in the Pilbara can raise serious safety concerns anonymously by contacting the department of mines and petroleum on **(08) 9358 8010** or by emailing them [north.inspectorate@dmp.wa.gov.au](mailto:north.inspectorate@dmp.wa.gov.au).

WMWA - providing a strong voice on the things that matter to you.

## **RIO'S PERIODIC MEDICALS & YOUR RIGHTS**

WMWA members have many concerns about Rio's periodic medical assessments. These concerns centre on the privacy of personal medical information and members job security. Some members are concerned that Rio may use these periodic medicals as a way to shed parts of its workforce.

To find out about your rights regarding Rio's medicals go to our [advice bulletin](#).

## **WORKPLACE RIGHTS LUNCH & LEARN SESSION - THURSDAY 22 SEP, PERTH CBD**

Due to member demand the WMWA is planning to conduct a lunch and learn meeting for members in Perth on Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2016. The session will cover things like your rights at work and the WA safety laws.

The session is informal and will take around 2 hours. It is designed to provide you practical information to help you make your workplace fairer and safer. So we can

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