**Rio Tinto urges the community to stay safe as the rail network becomes busier and level crossings change**

## 16 October 2014

Rio Tinto is urging the community to stay safe around its increasingly busy heavy haul Pilbara rail network following the completion of level crossing upgrades and changes to further improve safety.

Rio Tinto general manager for Rail Maintenance Heath Harnden said 51 of its main level crossings are now upgraded with flashing lights and bells, and many have boom gates and advanced warning signals, while 79 other crossings have been fenced, gated and will soon be locked to restrict non-operational access to improve safety.

“At any one time we have over 50 trains on the rail network and with our ongoing expansion it’s only getting busier, so these changes are about creating safe access points for the community to cross the tracks,” Mr Harnden said.

“All crossings that have flashing lights and bells remain open to the community and, while closure of the remaining gated level crossings will not inhibit access through the Pilbara, we are asking everyone to familiarise themselves with the crossings that remain open and plan their trips accordingly.

“A map can be found at **looklistenlive.com.au** and anyone choosing to take shortcuts, walk on or near train tracks or ignore railway level crossings is not only risking their own lives but also potentially others who are working on or near our rail network,” he said.

The Rio Tinto access roads remain unchanged and anyone who holds a valid permit can continue to use the roads.

“We are installing signage along the access roads to direct the community to the nearest available safe level crossings and we will continue to keep everyone informed as any other changes occur,” Mr Harnden said.

Rio Tinto recently wrapped up its Rail Safety campaign for 2014 highlighting messages about how to stay safe around the rail network.

Messages include:

* Always slow down when approaching rail crossings and ensure it is safe to cross – never try to race the train;
* Obey the signals at crossings;
* Be aware of hazards on the access road; and
* Never go near or on the railway track or a stationary train and ore cars (wagons) as the trains could move at any time and are coordinated remotely.

## Contacts

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