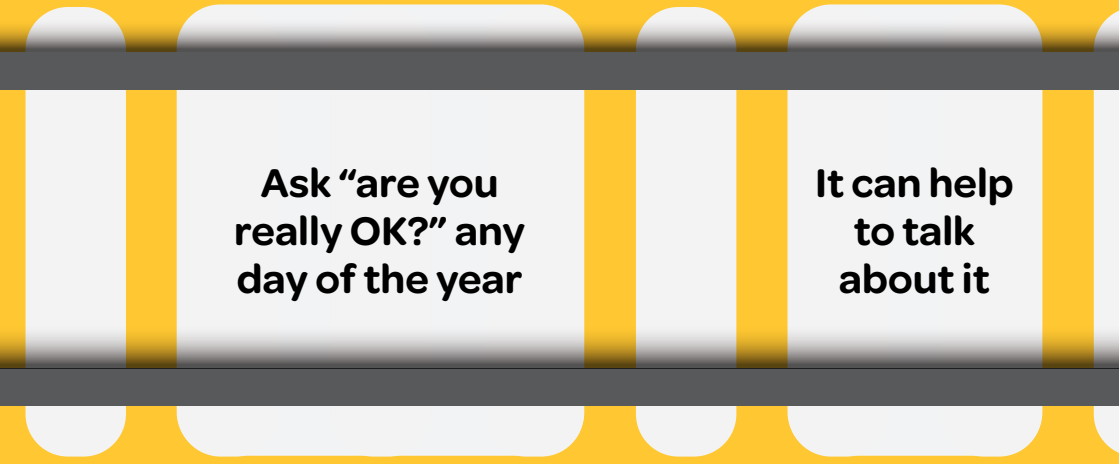
# HOW TO HOST YOUR RAIL R U OK?DAY ACTIVITY

A practical toolkit to help organise **Rail R U OK?Day** activities within your organisation.




**Keep the conversation on track**

ruok.org.au

TrackSAFE Foundation

R U OK?™

TrackSAFE Foundation

R U OK?™
A conversation could change a life.

This toolkit will help you keep the conversation on track by making **"are you OK?"** a part of your everyday. You can use this toolkit any time of the year. In fact, the more you use it across the year, the more life-changing conversations you'll help start.

# Contents

This toolkit will help you organise **Rail R U OK?Day** activities within your organisation.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Copies of this toolkit can be downloaded at:
**tracksafefoundation.com.au/event/rail-r-u-ok-day**

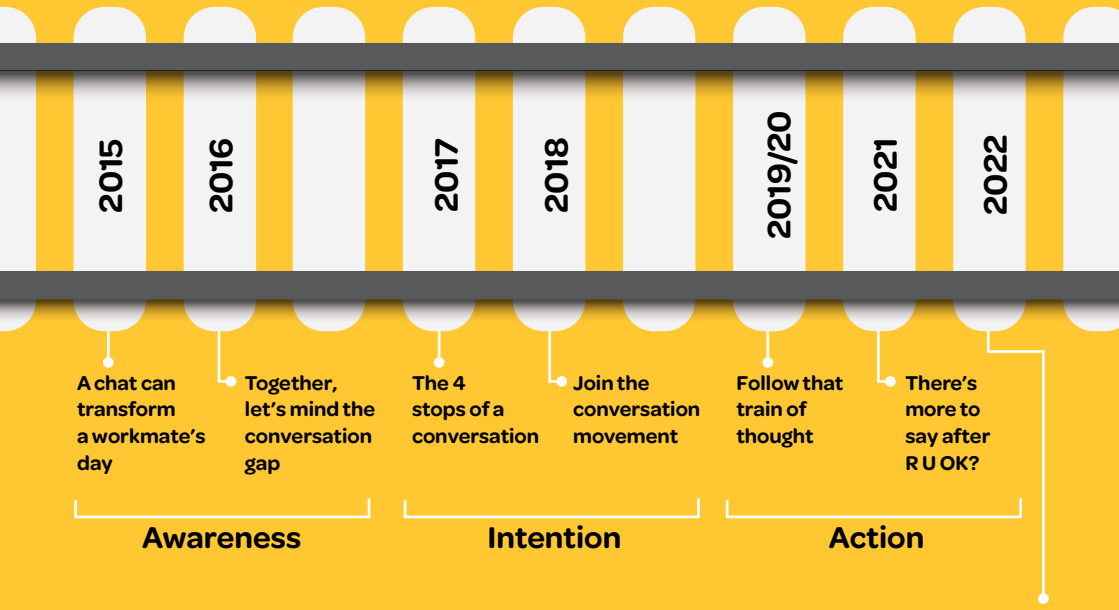
# About TrackSAFE and Rail R U OK?Day

It is an undisputed fact that regular, meaningful conversations can make a difference in our industry and help our workmates. This is why harm prevention charities – the TrackSAFE Foundation and R U OK? – teamed up in 2014 to create the annual initiative **Rail R U OK?Day**, to encourage conversations between rail staff. TrackSAFE strives to reduce suicide, trespass, and level crossing incidents on the rail network while offering best practice trauma support to rail employees. R U OK? is a national not-for-profit organisation dedicated to empowering everyone to meaningfully connect, ask "are you OK?" and lend support to the people around them.

Since the first **Rail R U OK?Day** in 2015 participation has grown from just under 7,000, to over 90,000 expected participants this year. Rail staff from across Australia have joined the conversation movement and are helping to transform workplaces into strong and resilient communities. The action of checking in on others is becoming the norm, resulting in an increasing number of rail staff feeling connected and genuinely supported at work.

The digital toolkit is just one of the many resources offered to participating rail organisations to support you in running a successful and impactful **Rail R U OK?Day**.

# Theme evolution since 2015




**Keep the conversation on track**

This year's **Rail R U OK?Day** will empower those working in the rail industry to know when to ask "Are they really OK?", know what to say when a workmate says they're not OK, and provide guidance on how to keep the conversation on track.

You don't have to be an expert when someone says they're not OK. By knowing what to say you can help a workmate feel supported and access help long before they're in crisis, which can make a positive difference in their life.

Learn how to keep the conversation on track. By using our FREE **Rail R U OK?Day** resources, which includes tips and ideas for sharing the message in your workplace.

# 4 Tips for meaningful activity on Rail R U OK?Day

**Rail R U OK?Day** activities are an opportunity to show workmates that they can make a real difference to someone who's having a tough time by having a meaningful conversation. We encourage you to be creative and think of ways you can bring people together and encourage them to meaningfully ask "are you OK?"

# Why is this important?

Rail staff may need extra support when they're exposed to trauma or experiencing other pressures and stressors, like grief, a relationship breakdown or financial strain. At these times the support of our workmates can make a difference. To encourage greater peer-to-peer support in your workplace, consider the following when planning your **Rail R U OK?Day** activities:

Recruit and involve people in your workplace who believe in the power of a conversation to help you organise and deliver your **Rail R U OK?Day** activities. These individuals can help champion the R U OK? message all year round.

By sharing stories that show how conversations can change lives and information on R U OK?'s 4 conversations steps you can show your colleagues they've got what it takes to support a workmate who might be struggling.

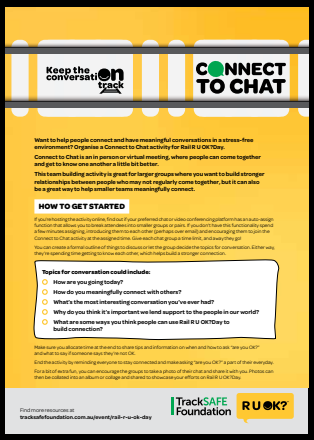
Whether it's a morning tea, an online catch up, a sausage sizzle or a team picnic, a well organised activity can have a positive impact on those attending.

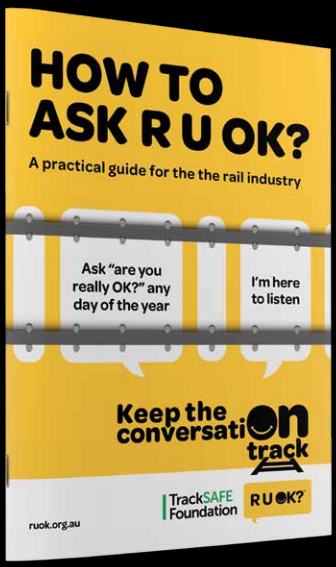
Plan activities that give workmates opportunities (and encouragement) to talk to one another, whether in person or online. They may not talk about life's big issues but they might get to know each other a little better, which will help to break down barriers for future conversations.

# Resources available for Rail R U OK?Day 2022

- Activity Flyer
- Social Media and digital assets
- Posters
- Presentation Kit
- How to Ask Booklet
- Videos
- Save the date

If you'd like to co-brand these assets, please email hello@ruok.org.au outlining which assets you'd like and attach your logo by 29 March 2022





# Key messages

## General

Some suggested key messages to help explain **Rail R U OK?Day**

- **Rail R U OK?Day** on Thursday 28 April 2022 is a joint initiative of national harm prevention charities – the TrackSAFE Foundation and R U OK?
- This is the eighth year TrackSAFE and R U OK? have delivered this important industry initiative, which has given thousands of rail workers around the nation the skills and knowledge to have conversations with workmates who may be struggling.
- This year, the theme is **keep the conversation on track:** learn how and when to ask '"are they really OK?"
- This year's **Rail R U OK?Day** will focus on building confidence in rail workers to keep the conversation on track to make R U OK? conversations part of their everyday.
- While **Rail R U OK?Day** falls on the last Thursday of April, we want to inspire and empower the rail sector to create a safe, supportive R U OK? Culture and encourage workmates to look out for one another every day of the year.
- We will support our **Rail R U OK?Day** Champions to guide managers and leaders to meaningfully engage with their team and colleagues to keep the conversation on track. This genuine support can make a difference to someone who is struggling.

- Life's ups and downs happen to all of us. So chances are someone you know might be struggling. When we genuinely ask, "are you OK?" and are prepared to talk to them about how they're feeling and what's going on in their life we can help a someone feel connected and supported, long before they're in crisis.
- You don't have to be an expert. We can all build the skills to help a workmate feel supported and access appropriate help long before they're in crisis.

# For employees

- Do you know how the people in your world are really going?
- Sometimes it's hard to tell. Life's ups and downs happens to all of us so chances are someone you know might be struggling.
- We all have the opportunity to play an active role in suicide prevention.
- Because you see your workmates often, you're in a great position to notice any changes in them.
- If you've noticed a change, keep the conversation on track, check in with your co-worker and ask "Are you OK?" You've got what it takes to have an R U OK? conversation. Follow these steps: Ask R U OK?, Listen, Encourage action and Check in.
- Your genuine support can make a difference whatever they are facing, big or small.
- So, don't wait until someone's visibly distressed or in crisis. Make a moment meaningful and ask them how they're really going.

# For management

- Research shows that a strong sense of community and trust between colleagues is a protective factor against suicide.
- We have a responsibility to help our people feel safe and supported at work.
- We want to promote an R U OK? culture and encourage workmates to look out for one another, especially if we think someone might be struggling.
- As an industry affected too often by suicide, we need to fearlessly and courageously embrace early intervention strategies.
- We want to give our staff the confidence and capacity to talk about life's ups and downs and connect someone to appropriate support long before they're in crisis.

# Rail R U OK? champions

A Rail R U OK? Workplace Champion takes a lead role in encouraging and enabling peer-to-peer support and regular meaningful conversations in your workplace. Champions have a key role in normalising R U OK? conversations. By encouraging everyone to talk about life's ups and downs, you'll have a positive impact on your workplace culture and help create a workplace where everyone feels safe, encouraged and supported.

## What is a supportive workplace culture?

This is where people's wellbeing is supported and all staff are encouraged (and feel safe) to talk about any worries or concerns they may be experiencing, knowing they will not be judged but rather supported as they work through those challenges.

Psychologically safe teams are not only more productive, they can also help you fulfil your legal occupational health and safety (OHS) obligations. Australia's states and territories have OHS laws that generally mean an employer must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. This includes providing work that is free from risks to people's mental health and wellbeing. There are many ways to build a supportive workplace culture. As a leader, you can actively manage circumstances that can cause stress for team members, such as long working hours or excessive job demands. You can also encourage your team to look out for one another, especially if you think someone might be struggling.

## So, what can you do?

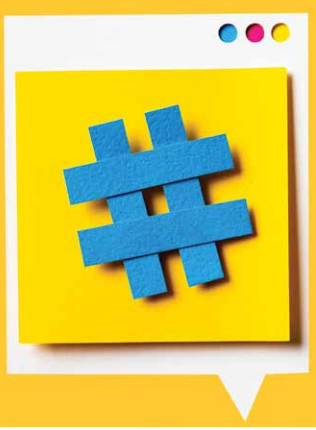
You can model behaviour that sets the tone and supports a healthy work environment.

- Visibly demonstrate leadership commitment to the wellbeing of everybody at work.
- Engage in regular and consistent communication around the importance of wellbeing.
- Value psychological safety as well as physical safety.
- Encourage trust and respectful communication.
- Acknowledge good work practice.
- Ask "are you OK?" and encourage others to have meaningful R U OK? conversations.

# How can you do it?

- Communicate the R U OK? message year round, via your local communication channels (intranet, newsletter, meetings).
- Sensitively share R U OK? stories that highlight instances where the organisation and individuals have been able to support each other to stay well or seek help.
- Engage with your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) if you have one to understand how they provide support and what resources they have available for you and your staff.
- Highlight the services available through the EAP and invite an EAP representative to talk to staff about what it offers and how to access the assistance.
- Chat with your colleagues about embedding the R U OK? culture and messaging in recruitment, induction, training, and other guides, newsletters, presentations to staff and other resources.
- Recognise and reward the efforts of your team for steps they take to build the R U OK? Culture.
- Set a standing agenda item in team meetings to discuss wellbeing matters.
- Get to know your staff so you can understand what's going on for them and recognise when situations in life or at work might be particularly challenging for them.
- Share your own experiences or stories, if you feel comfortable doing so.
- Check in with staff who have been on sick leave for more than a few days.

# Suggested wording for emails and social media



We encourage you to share social media content that demonstrates why your organisation is getting behind **Rail R U OK?Day**, why you believe conversations can change lives and how such conversations help create stronger, more resilient and safer workplaces.

Use **#ruok** and **#railruokday** when sharing posts on and in the build-up to R U OK?Day. Don't forget to tag R U OK? (**@ruokday**) and the TrackSAFE Foundation (**@TrackSAFE**) in your posts.

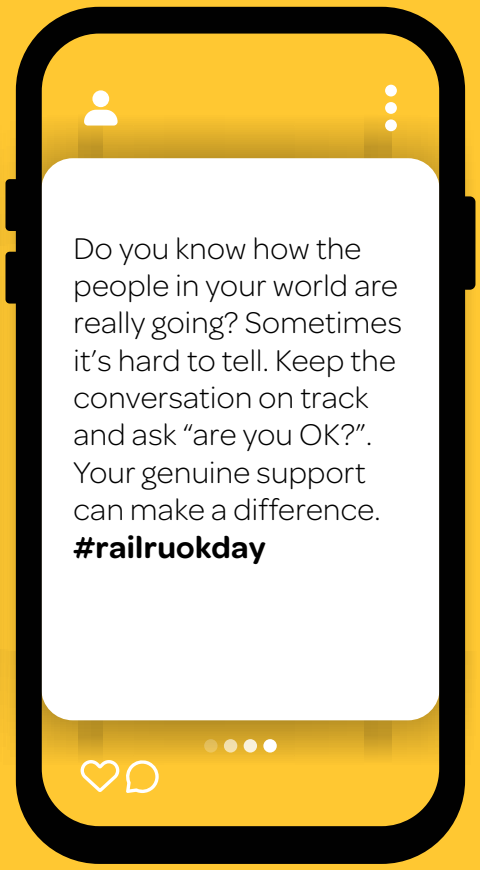
**You can download imagery and social media tiles at: tracksafefoundation.com.au/event/rail-r-u-ok-day**

The below is suggested copy to be included in any communications:

- We talk to our workmates every day, so on 28 April 2022 whether it is in person or online let's find the time and courage to keep the conversation on track and ask "are you OK?"
- Find conversation tips here: **ruok.org.au/how-to-ask**
- **#railruokday** reminds everyone in the rail industry of the importance of regular meaningful conversations and asking **#ruok** any day a workmate may be struggling.
- We're supporting **#railruokday** to encourage regular meaningful conversations and help create a stronger, more resilient and safer workplace.

# Suggested posts

**Rail R U OK?Day** is a reminder that a conversation could change a life. So keep the conversation on track and make asking **#RUOK** part of your everyday. That way if someone you know is struggling they'll know you care **#railruokday**




Life's ups and downs happen to all of us. Don't wait until someone's visibly distressed or in crisis to ask them how they're really going. Keep the conversation on track and ask "are you OK?". A conversation could change a life **#railruokday**

# Suggested copy to recruit champions

New message

To

Subject **Rail R U OK?Day – 28 April 2022**

Dear <First name>

On Thursday 28 April, <insert business name> will take part in the industry-wide mental health initiative **Rail R U OK?Day**. The aim of the day is to emphasise the importance of helping workmates who seem to be doing it tough by keeping the conversation on track and asking "are you OK?"

Our organisation is supporting **Rail R U OK?Day** because we believe if we take the time to have an R U OK? conversation with a colleague we're worried about – not only on our industry-specific R U OK?Day, but any day someone's struggling – we can help create a stronger, more resilient and safer workplace.

We need your support to make **Rail R U OK?Day** a success! You'll find a **Rail R U OK?Day** toolkit at tracksafefoundation.com.au/rail-ruok-day with activity and communication ideas you can tailor for our workplace.

You can also get tips on how to start a conversation and find national helplines if someone needs extra support at www.ruok.org.au. Staff doing it tough at work can also contact *<insert Employee Assistance Provider details, if available>*. Don't worry; the service is confidential. I hope you will get involved in **Rail R U OK?Day**.

Together, let's keep the conversation on track and help those who may be struggling with life.

<Signature>

SEND

# Activity ideas

**Rail R U OK?Day** activities are an opportunity to show people that they can make a real difference to someone who's having a tough time by having a meaningful conversation.

We want you to be creative and think of ways you can bring people together and encourage them to meaningfully ask, "are you OK?".

# Why is this important?

When we genuinely ask, "are you OK?" and are prepared to talk to them about how they're feeling and what's going on in their life we can help someone who might be struggling feel connected and supported, long before they're in crisis.

**Rail R U OK?Day activities can be downloaded from tracksafefoundation.com.au/event/rail-r-u-ok-day**

# Host an R U OK? Community Ambassador

R U OK? has a network of trained Community Ambassadors who can come and present to your organisation on **Rail R U OK?Day**.

Our ambassadors can share their personal story, the R U OK? message and answer questions from the audience. Presentations typically go for 45 minutes – 1 hour.

While there is no cost to have a Community Ambassador present, we request that out of pocket expenses, like travel, are covered.

If you'd like to book a Community Ambassador please complete the form on the Contact Us section of the website **ruok.org.au/contact** We will endeavour to fulfill all requests but as our Ambassadors are volunteers, we recommend getting in early.

# Creative content ideas

Ask someone at your workplace who's passionate about the R U OK? message to share their story online, in print or in person in the lead-up to **Rail R U OK?Day**. They could:

- Reflect on the role we can all play to help someone navigate life's ups and downs, big and small.
- Share a story that shows how asking R U OK? can make a difference.
- Reflect on the everyday moments when we can find the time to meaningfully ask, "are you OK?"
- Discuss why they think it's important that we know how to keep the conversation going when someone says, "No, I'm not OK."
- Share conversation tips and information on what to say when someone's not OK.
- Discuss how they think R U OK? is making a difference.
- Thank the people in their life who knew they weren't really OK and supported them through a tough time.

# Add a splash of yellow

R U OK? has a wide range of merchandise to help you add a splash of yellow and encourage more conversations in your school, workplace or community.

Visit our online store at **store.ruok.org.au**

Proceeds from the sale of merchandise support our work to start more life-changing conversations.

## Receive a 10% Champions discount

Order R U OK? t-shirts, pins, banners and more at **store.ruok.org.au**

Champions will receive a 10% discount by entering the code:
**RAIL R U OK DAY 2022**

Offer is valid until the 30 April 2022 and can be used once per customer.

# Safety first

R U OK? is not a counselling service or service provider. Rather we work to provide all Australians with the resources and confidence they need to navigate a conversation with someone who might be struggling and guidance on how to connect them to appropriate support if they need it.

If you're hosting an activity on **Rail R U OK?Day**, we strongly encourage you to have appropriate support available and/or provide information about what support is available for people in your workplace.

If you're presenting or speaking about the R U OK? message, it's important to acknowledge that some people in the audience might not be OK and encourage them to access appropriate support. You could say, "If today's talk brings up tough emotions for you it's OK to excuse yourself. If you need some extra support, I strongly encourage you to open up to someone you trust, connect with your doctor or access a service like Lifeline which is available 24/7 on **13 11 14.** Mindframe has developed a suite of resources to support, encourage and build the capacity for key speakers with lived experience. For more information visit **mindframe.org.au.** You can find other services and support organisations on the R U OK? website at **ruok.org.au/findhelp.**

# Ideas to remember to keep the conversation on track all year round

- Remind staff to check in with a mate through your regular safety or toolbox talks
- Keep posters visible in your key areas all year round – in offices, common rooms or communal areas
- Plan a connection activity once a quarter to help keep your staff connected
- Allocate time to check-in on a workmate
- Continue to highlight any stories of impact and connection with your staff through your regular safety toolbox talks
- Add a reminder to check-in with a workmate on payslips, daily reporting forms or safety checklists
- Celebrate R U OK?Day in September – This is the national day of action for R U OK?

# Worried about their immediate safety?

If you believe a workmate's life is in immediate danger call **000** (Australia only).

If you think they may be having thoughts of suicide, don't be afraid to ask them if they are – asking the question does not lead to suicide.

Crisis helplines are there for you too. If you are finding the conversation difficult, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467 who will provide immediate support and advice.

Getting them to professional help can start with any of these options:

- Call a crisis support line together.
- Go with them to an Emergency Department.
- Take them somewhere that feels safe to them but where they won't be alone.

# Useful contacts for someone who's not OK

Encourage them to call on these Australian crisis lines and professionals:

**Lifeline (24/7)**
13 11 14
lifeline.org.au

**Suicide Call Back Service (24/7)**
1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

**Beyond Blue (24/7)**
1300 224 636
beyondblue.org.au

**SANE Australia:**
1800 187 263
sane.org

**Mensline** (support over the phone or online for men)
1300 78 99 78
mensline.org.au

**More contacts**
ruok.org.au/findhelp

Record your Employee Assistance Program here:

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Record local health service number here:

_____

_____

Record your HR contact here:

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