

Ask RUOK?[®] ANY DAY

This content discusses suicide. For support, contact
Lifeline on **13 11 14** or text **0477 13 11 14**.



Meet Gary

I'm a Project Team Leader at Swietelsky Rail, where I plan and deliver rail infrastructure and operations projects. I lead the project team, coordinate with engineers and contractors, and keep everything on track, safe and within budget. I also manage risks and on-site issues and handle all quality documentation at project closeout.

Working in rail can be mentally, emotionally and physically challenging. Many people in the industry work remotely and spend long periods away from family and their usual routines, so our version of normal can look quite different. For some, being away from home, staying in temporary accommodation, and falling into habits like drinking more or eating poorly can take a toll on their health and, in turn, their mental wellbeing.

We spend a lot of time with our colleagues, so they often become a second family. Because of that, it's important to be open and transparent.



I make a point of letting the people I work with know I'm always there to chat if they need, whether that is an informal chat over coffee or a more meaningful conversation when things are tough.



I lost a childhood friend last year to suicide and spoke at his funeral. It reinforced for me how important it is to check in on people – no matter how they are presenting on the outside. I try to be an active listener and approach others with compassion and empathy. You also need to read people.



If someone seems withdrawn, less engaged, or not quite themselves, they may be the ones who need a conversation the most.

To be a good leader, you also need to look after yourself. Stay hydrated, eat well, keep active, and get yourself mentally prepared for the day. **When you come to work, take the time to connect with people. Say hello, have a conversation, and be present before getting into the job. People are more likely to open up when they see you are genuine and approachable.**

You never really know everything about someone - what trauma they've had in their life, what they might be going through at home, or on site. **Everyone has a role to play in looking out for their work mates. Ask R U OK? Any Day. A conversation could change a life.**

Rail R U OK? is a collaboration between TrackSAFE and R U OK? that aims to empower rail workers to identify the signs that someone might not be OK and offer guidance on how to support them, any day of the year.



Learn more at ruok.org.au/rail

RAIL R U OK? | TrackSAFE Foundation