Pilbara’s first pink locomotives raising awareness

In his 10-year career as a train driver, Brad Main has never been involved in anything quite like Roy Hill’s pink trucks and locomotives initiative to support and raise awareness of breast cancer.

On Friday 15 February 2019, Brad, who has been contracted to drive Roy Hill trains for three years by Karijini Rail, had the honour of being at the helm of the first ever pink locomotive’s six-hour journey to the mine.

The pink locomotives, charging across the red dirt of the Pilbara creates an eye-catching contrast sure to start up a conversation for whoever sees them.

“I’ve worked for a few big mining companies, but the pink trucks and trains really are incredibly unique in how they are raising awareness up on site and around Australia, not only for breast cancer but for people’s health in general. It really gets the conversation going amongst employees,” Brad said.

With his own Aunty having been diagnosed with breast cancer and subsequently made a recovery, he said most people knew someone who has been affected by the disease.

“We also have a driver up here who has been affected by prostate cancer in the last few months and he’s currently undergoing chemotherapy. So it’s important for all of us to be talking about our health, it’s even raising awareness amongst our employees of different cancers in general – which is a good thing.”

Brad said the inaugural journey from Roy Hill’s port to mine following the locomotives’ commissioning was a great experience, and it had been an incredible honour to meet Roy Hill’s Executive Chairman, Mrs Gina Rinehart when she recently visited Roy Hill’s port and rail facilities.

In October last year, special christening ceremonies were held for the latest additions to Roy Hill’s pink fleet at the rail and mine for two pink locomotives, 130 pink ore cars and three pink Hitachi trucks. The pink locomotives join Roy Hill’s existing fleet of 21 trains, and have been undergoing commissioning following their christening, ahead of Brad’s inaugural trip.

Mrs Rinehart gathered with Roy Hill executives and guests, including representatives from locomotive manufacturer General Electric (GE) and ore car manufacturer China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation (CRRC), at Roy Hill’s Port Hedland rail terminal yard to celebrate the milestone.

At the event, which joined with Breast Cancer Awareness month, the two locomotives were christened “For Mothers” and “Women of the North” in honour of Mrs Rinehart’s deep commitment to these women who have suffered breast cancer and research for better treatments and cures. Dr Pat Kailis AM OBE, a pioneer of the north, was special guest to christen one of the pink trains, having lived there and started with her husband Michael Kailis, the northwest’s first commercial fishing operation, at Exmouth in the 1960’s prior to ore being shipped from Dampier in August 1966.

The pink locomotives continue the tradition of Roy Hill’s pink trucks launched in 2016, with many of Roy Hill’s 20 pink trucks named in honour of Roy Hill and Hancock Prospecting employees who have battled breast cancer.
Roy Hill has matched staff fundraising efforts dollar for dollar, to support the cause of assisting those who battle breast cancer.

Apart from non-melanoma skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer found in Australian women, representing 28% of all cancers diagnosed in women. About 17,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year, and one in eight will be diagnosed by the age of 85. The pink trucks and trains also a sign of respect and thanks to the many women who work throughout the Roy Hill mega project.

Mrs Rinehart with Brad Main, the first train driver to drive Roy Hill’s pink locomotive from the port to the mine site.

Mrs Rinehart with Dr Patricia Kailis AM OBE at the christening event held for Roy Hill’s pink locomotives on 4 October 2018.

Roy Hill’s pink locomotive with pink ore cars snaking behind