

MEDIA RELEASE



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PERSONAL FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH FOR TASRAIL ON R U OK? DAY

Angela Jeffery knows first-hand the importance of caring colleagues, supporting supervisors and positive peers as part of her ongoing journey to live with and manage mental illness.

Angela, TasRail's Specialist Safety and Risk Management Advisor, has endured two breakdowns, months in hospital and a range of debilitating diagnoses since the age of 17. Today she is sharing her story as part of the nation-wide R U OK? Day initiative in a bid to encourage others to speak up and seek help.

For the past three years, Angela has been able to actively manage her condition after learning she has borderline personality disorder, a serious mental disorder marked by a pattern of ongoing instability in moods, behaviour, self-image, and functioning that often results in impulsive actions.

"It has taken years of therapy and support from my network to be able to talk about my journey," Angela said. "I now know how to recognise triggers and when to ask for help so I can manage my mental health and wellbeing.

"When I started at TasRail nine months ago, I had an open and confidential discussion with my manager. I trusted him to listen and he did. And he's been very supportive of me from day one.

"Finding the courage to open up is often the hardest step. I had to make a choice – own what I had or continue to be a victim of it. I made a decision not to let this rule my life anymore and now I can help people who are struggling with personal or professional circumstances."

R U OK? Day is a national reminder that all Australians can ask, "are you ok?" and support those struggling with life. People are encouraged to ask, listen, encourage action and check in.

TasRail CEO Damien White said Angela, a mother of two adult children and a professional safety specialist, is a true inspiration.

"Her courage to speak up and manage her condition is so admirable," Mr White said. "But I am also extremely proud of the TasRail team for listening, supporting and ensuring Angela is OK at work and that she can go home safe and well every day."

All TasRail worksites at Brighton, Burnie, East Tamar and Techno Park have been displaying R U OK? Day posters this week and managers have been encouraged to actively speak to their employees to make sure "they are OK".

NOTE: Footage of Angela Jeffery speaking is available at www.facebook.com/TasRail

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