

Rio Tinto achieves first delivery of iron ore with world's largest robot

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Rio Tinto has achieved a significant milestone with the first delivery of iron ore by an autonomous train in the Pilbara, Western Australia.

The autonomous train, consisting of three locomotives and carrying around 28,000 tonnes of iron ore, travelled over 280 kilometres from Rio Tinto's mining operations in Tom Price to the port of Cape Lambert on 10 July. It was monitored remotely by operators from Rio Tinto's Operations Centre in Perth more than 1,500 kilometres away.

The inaugural journey is a significant milestone for Rio Tinto's AutoHaul™ programme and follows regulatory approval in May. AutoHaul™ is on schedule to complete by the end of the year, unlocking significant safety and productivity gains for the business, as well as optimising the company's iron ore system by providing more flexibility and reducing bottlenecks.

Rio Tinto Iron Ore managing director Rail, Port & Core Services Ivan Vella said "The safe first delivery of iron ore by an autonomous train is a key milestone for AutoHaul™. The programme will deliver the world's first fully autonomous, long-distance, heavy-haul rail network, operating the world's largest and longest robots.

"This programme symbolises both the pioneering spirit and innovative talents of many people across Rio Tinto and shows our absolute commitment to improving safety and productivity, as well as enabling greater flexibility across our operations.

"We will continue to ensure our autonomous trains operate safely under the wide range of conditions we experience in the Pilbara, where we record more than eight million kilometres of train travel each year.

"We are working closely with drivers during this transition period as we prepare our employees for new ways of working as a result of automation."

Notes to editors

The \$940 million AutoHaul™ programme is focused on automating trains transporting iron ore to Rio Tinto's port facilities in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. Once commissioned, the network will be the world's first heavy haul, long distance autonomous rail operation.

Rio Tinto operates about 200 locomotives on more than 1,700 kilometres of track in the Pilbara, transporting ore from 16 mines to four port terminals.

The average return distance of these trains is about 800 kilometres with the average journey cycle, including loading and dumping, taking about 40 hours.

Locomotives carrying AutoHaul™ software are fitted with on-board cameras allowing for constant monitoring from the Operations Centre. All public rail crossings on the network are fitted with CCTV cameras and have been upgraded to the highest safety standards.

Contacts

media.enquiries@riotinto.com

riotinto.com



Follow @RioTinto on Twitter

Media Relations, United Kingdom

Illtud Harri

T +44 20 7781 1152

M +44 7920 503 600

David Outhwaite

T +44 20 7781 1623

M +44 7787 597 493

Media Relations, Australia

Jonathan Rose

T +61 3 9283 3088

M +61 447 028 913

Jesse Riseborough

T +61 8 6211 6013

M +61 436 653 412

Media Relations, Canada

Matthew Klar

T +1 514 608 4429

Investor Relations, United Kingdom

John Smelt

T +44 20 7781 1654

M +44 7879 642 675

David Ovington

T +44 20 7781 2051

M +44 7920 010 978

Nick Parkinson

T +44 20 7781 1552

M +44 7810 657 556

Investor Relations, Australia

Natalie Worley

T +61 3 9283 3063

M +61 409 210 462

Rachel Storrs

T +61 3 9283 3628

M +61 417 401 018

Rio Tinto plc

6 St James's Square
London SW1Y 4AD
United Kingdom

T +44 20 7781 2000

Registered in England

No. 719885

Rio Tinto Limited

Level 7, 360 Collins Street
Melbourne 3000
Australia

T +61 3 9283 3333

Registered in Australia

ABN 96 004 458 404