

# Media Release

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## **BUILDING A POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH CULTURE INSPIRES INAUGURAL R U OK DAY IN TRUCKS AND SHEDS EVENT**

Building a positive mental health culture for workers in the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries inspired the inaugural R U OK Day in Trucks and Sheds event held at Coles Distribution Centres nationally today.

A joint initiative between Coles, R U OK and Healthy Heads in Trucks and Sheds (HHTS), events were held at each Coles Distribution Centre, with the occasion-tailored-to their teams, offering advice and support to encourage people to know when and how to meaningfully connect and genuinely ask: "are you OK?". Onsite activities included R U OK ambassador speeches, toolbox talks and the promotion of the preventative services of the Employee Assistance Program which strives to improve the mental health skillset of team members.

Coles Chief Legal and Safety Officer David Brewster is a mental health advocate and proud to support the launch of the industry R U OK day.

"We know the transport, warehousing and logistics industries have unique and at times complex risk factors for mental health," he said. "All industry participants, including Coles, need to actively collaborate to reduce mental health stigma, improve mental health literacy and ultimately improve health outcomes in this critical sector. We recognise that a conversation, can truly change a life and this is what today is all about, connection, checking in and encouraging help seeking behaviours."

Coles Supply Chain is a founding partner of Healthy Heads in Trucks and Sheds. The not-for-profit foundation was created with the aim to create a holistic approach to improve both physical and mental health outcomes across the road transport, warehousing and logistics industries in Australia.

At the Parkinson Distribution Centre event, CEO of HHTS Naomi Frauenfelder, CEO of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator Sal Petrocchio, R U OK ambassador Jim Priss and Mr Brewster spoke about the importance of having regular opportunities and reminders to check in with work mates and drivers, about continuing to speak about mental health to reduce stigma and build a positive mental health culture.

"Mental health continues to be an important issue for our industry, and I congratulate Healthy Heads in Trucks and Sheds for urging everyone to check in and ask R U OK? – not just once a year, but every day," Mr Petrocchio said.

"Show your support and ask: 'R U OK?' today and every time you spot the signs a work mate might be struggling please use the industry tools made available by R U OK and HHTS to show genuine care for our team. Together, as an industry we can drive conversations that make a real difference," Ms Frauenfelder, said.

As a founding and active member of HHTS enables Coles to work together with industry to lean in and create innovative solutions to improve mental health in our Supply Chain teams and the broader community. The commitment to safety continues to be aligned with the Coles/TWU Charter, which focuses on safe and fair supply chain principles.

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