

## **Resources sector stands together to end family and domestic violence**

Some of the largest resources companies in Western Australia have united to take a strong stance against family and domestic violence. As part of the 16 Days in WA to Stop Violence Against Women campaign, 12 organisations have co-ordinated an industry walk to show that the sector cares about the safety of its employees, both at work and at home.

“Family and domestic violence doesn’t discriminate. It affects people of all ages, socio-economic groups, cultures and sexes. It does not matter whether you have a job, your level of education or your postcode,” said Chamber of Minerals and Energy of WA (CME) CEO, Paul Everingham.

“The shocking statistics are that 1-in-4 women and 1-in-13 men have experienced at least one incident of violence from a current or former partner since the age of 15. And this isn’t just physical or sexual violence, it can also be emotional, verbal, or financial.”

Mr Everingham said that many of its members were long-term supporters of White Ribbon and despite its closure in Australia they would continue to speak out against family and domestic violence.

“As one of the biggest employers in Western Australia, the resources sector has a responsibility to work together to raise awareness, educate our people, challenge conversations around family and domestic violence and be part of a long-term solution,” Mr Everingham added.

“As an industry, we believe that keeping each other safe extends beyond the workplace and into the home and community. And it’s our strong safety culture that informs the way we respond to family and domestic violence. We understand that our employees are happier and more productive at work when they are safe at home.

“By participating in this important initiative, we are showing support for our employees and their families that may be experiencing family and domestic violence and giving our people permission to ask for help. As a workplace and as an industry, our commitment to our employees is to recognise when support is required, respond with the help we can provide, and refer them to available professional support services.

“Our work in supporting action against family and domestic violence is ongoing. We are taking proactive steps to be part of the solution, and we encourage organisations around the country, to join us and take actions to address this issue which is too often ignored.”

Mr Everingham said the companies involved in today’s walk provide support to their employees through a range of initiatives including Employee Assistance Programs with access to free 24-hour counselling services, peer support programmes, emergency housing, emergency financial assistance, safety plans, referrals to support services, support cards, and leadership training.

Speakers at the event included Ms Amber-Jade Sanderson, MLA for Morley, Shona Zulsdorf, Chairperson Patricia Giles Centre and Scott Browne Vice President, Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment, Rio Tinto Iron Ore.

As part of the campaign, the companies created a video with employees explaining why it is important for them to work in an industry that supports people affected by family and domestic violence.

Gold coin donations from a sausage sizzle after the speeches is going towards the Patricia Giles Centre, which provides a range of services for women and children experiencing and escaping family and domestic violence.

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