

Scania and Rio Tinto agree to develop autonomous haulage solutions supporting a pathway to lower emissions mining

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Scania and Rio Tinto are developing more agile autonomous haul trucks at a mine in Western Australia's Pilbara region to pursue potential environmental and productivity benefits.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here:
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A Scania autonomous truck is loaded at Rio Tinto's Channar iron ore mine in Western Australia's Pilbara region (Photo: Business Wire)

The two companies have established a long-term research and development collaboration agreement for the continuous advancement of this autonomous technology, under which Rio Tinto's Channar mine has become the first active partner site for Scania's autonomous mining solution. The partnership also includes options for the future transition to electric-powered vehicles.

Rio Tinto and Scania launched new trials on Scania's 40-tonne-payload autonomous mining trucks in April 2022 and quickly reached a key milestone of driverless operation in a simulated load and haul cycle environment.

Rio Tinto Group Technical Managing Director Santi Pal said "Rio Tinto is excited to partner with Scania to develop a mining solution which will create optionality across our diverse portfolio. Collaboration and partnership is key to reimagining mining in the future."

"Our climate action plan includes phasing out the purchase of new diesel haul trucks by 2030, and partnering with industry leaders, such as Scania, across a range of fields, is an important step towards achieving that. As well as the potential decarbonisation benefits, this partnership provides a path to potential productivity improvements."

Scania Vice President & Head of Autonomous Solutions Peter Hafmar said "With its dedication to achieving cleaner, more energy-efficient operations, Rio Tinto is the ideal partner and first customer for Scania as we seek to put mining on a pathway to net zero emissions. This is a major step towards the goals of a sustainable autonomous mining solution, and builds on our already fruitful long-term collaboration."

Scania's trucks have potential advantages over traditional heavy haulage trucks, both in terms of emissions and productivity.

In utilising Scania's autonomous mining trucks, energy requirements, mining footprint and infrastructure requirements can be reduced, meaning that capital and operating expenses may also be reduced at suitable sites.

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Contact

Please direct all enquiries to media.enquiries@riotinto.com

Media Relations, UK

Matthew Klar
M+ 44 7796 630 637

David Outhwaite
M +44 7787 597 493

Media Relations, Americas

Simon Letendre
M +514 796 4973

Malika Cherry
M +1 418 592 7293

Media Relations, Australia

Matt Chambers
M +61 433 525 739

Jesse Riseborough
M +61 436 653 412

Investor Relations, UK

Menno Sanderse
M: +44 7825 195 178

David Ovington
M +44 7920 010 978

Clare Peever
M +44 7788 967 877

Investor Relations, Australia

Tom Gallop
M +61 439 353 948

Amar Jambaa
M +61 472 865 948

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 43, 120 Collins Street
Melbourne 3000
Australia

T +61 3 9283 3333
Registered in Australia
ABN 96 004 458 404

riotinto.com

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