PLANNING A RAIL PROJECT?
ENSURE PROJECT i-TRACE COMPLIANCE

The Australian rail industry is moving towards digitalisation. Based on ISO certified GS1 Global Data Standards, Project i-TRACE is an industry-led program created to ensure the correct digital foundations are laid to support long term traceability and asset management processes.

It specifically addresses unambiguous identification, physical marking and importantly, the efficient management of material master data to assist the procurement process of rail components and assets.

Endorsed by the board of the Australasian Railway Association (ARA) for industry-wide adoption and implementation, a growing number of rail organisations have commenced their digital journeys under Project i-TRACE and are reaping the benefits that this initiative delivers.

Project i-TRACE involves standardising the capture of data relating to all assets and materials in the rail supply chain, ensuring there is a strong foundation upon which to build digital capabilities. Using a common, standards-based approach to identify and mark materials is critical across a range of areas.

Industry benefits include:

- Reduced inventory write-offs and waste
- Better customer service by achieving more consistent object identification
- Improved maintenance and repair operations
- Improved traceability and warranty management
- Reduced costs through fewer transaction errors and better-quality data

Efficiency is heavily reliant on effective supply chain management practices to assure material availability of the right quantity and quality is available when needed. So widespread adoption is critical to achieving cross-industry benefits.

Businesses who fail to adopt GS1 global data standards run the risk of getting left behind and not taking advantage of the enormous benefits this initiative has to offer.

In 2021, rail operators will be asking their major suppliers "are you on track?", as they increasingly require their suppliers to have GS1 barcodes on products when signing new contracts.

CREATE A BUSINESS CASE

Project i-TRACE is a broad business initiative which needs buy-in from a range of internal stakeholders. Business case approval from executives will ensure sponsorship for the project, providing a high measure of success.

View the case studies on the GS1 Australia website at www.gs1au.org/for-your-industry/rail/ which show how organisations have benefited from implementing GS1 standards.

WHERE TO GET HELP

At every stage of the process GS1 is available to assist businesses on their journey. Work with the GS1 team to help guide your organisation through the critical steps of Project i-TRACE.

"We encourage prospective and current members to attend a training session," Tony Repaci, Account Director – Freight, Logistics and Industrial Sectors at GS1 Australia, said.

"It's very important that before they barcode all products that they have the barcode QA tested to ensure the correct symbology and that the data is encoded to the correct specifications. Once we've tested the barcodes, we can then give them a full verification report which they can take away with confidence and start their trial or project."

The rail industry is streamlining their supply chains. The need for digitalisation of vital supply chain data is a critical enabler of operational efficiency, safety and accountability. If you are a supplier to the rail industry – are you on track?

For more information, contact **itrace@gs1au.org.**