



BHP welcomes Australias first purpose-bu...

BHP welcomes Australia’s first purpose-built battery-electric locomotives to the Pilbara



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The first brand-new, purpose-built battery-electric locomotives (BELs) in Australia have arrived in Port Hedland.

The two BELs, delivered in partnership with Wabtec, are fully battery-powered heavy-haul units that will be trialled on BHP’s iron ore rail routes between its Pilbara mines and Port of Port Hedland operations.

Purpose-built to withstand the region’s extreme heat and demanding conditions, the locomotives have been designed to deliver high performance while aiming to reduce operational greenhouse gas emissions (Scopes 1 and 2).

Each locomotive features a 7 megawatt-hour (MWh) battery system and regenerative braking technology, which captures energy during downhill braking and feeds it back into the battery to improve efficiency and reduce waste.

Once safely commissioned, the BELs will undergo track trials to test the technology in real-world conditions.

BHP Western Australia Iron Ore Asset President, Tim Day, said:

“It’s incredible to see these battery-electric locos in Port Hedland – the first new models in Australia, and representing years of planning, problem solving and partnership.”

“It marks the beginning of an important trial to understand how this technology can help us reduce diesel use, lower associated operational greenhouse gas emissions and improve efficiency across our rail network.”

“The Pilbara has always been a place of big ambition, and these locomotives represent the kind of innovation that is needed to keep the region firing.”

Wabtec’s Regional Senior Vice President for ANZ & SEA, Peter Thomas, said:

“The arrival of Australia’s first battery-electric locomotives marks a significant milestone for heavy-haul rail innovation in the Pilbara.”

“Wabtec is proud to partner with BHP on this important step toward decarbonising rail operations. These FLXDrive locomotives are purpose-built to perform in one of the world’s most demanding environments, combining advanced battery technology and regenerative braking to deliver high efficiency and lower emissions.”

“Together, we are demonstrating how cutting-edge solutions can help meet the region’s operational needs while supporting the industry’s sustainability goals.”

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