

# How do big and small businesses thrive together?

RioTinto

## “How can we do this better?”

This was the question Brian Davies – founder of Davies Wear Plate Systems - asked himself in his Esperance workshop over 10 years ago about wear plates.

Wear plates are a major consumable in the mining industry.

They wear out over time and wear liners require regular maintenance, representing a high labour cost and significant downtime.

While working with miners in the Goldfields and Esperance region, Davies developed an innovative wear plate system that had remarkable results.

“We can change how the wear plate is attached and removed in a better, faster and safer way,” says Davies chief executive officer Rod Houston.

“When you consider up to a million nuts in the Pilbara alone have to be removed and replaced each year, that takes a lot of time and labour and presents safety issues.

“Our technology has improved safety in wear liner maintenance, reduced wear plate change out by more than 80 per cent, and lowered labour costs by more than 50 per cent – with no nuts required.”

With the Pilbara being the largest market in the world of wear plates, working with Rio Tinto presented the perfect opportunity for Davies, who valued their mutual partnership.

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Rio Tinto CEO Chris Salisbury echoes this sentiment.

“Through Davies’ innovation we have been able to speed up our maintenance program and make it safer,” he says.

“Just because they are a local supplier doesn’t mean they aren’t world-leading. Davies is helping us increase productivity across the business and contributing to what we’re doing globally.”

Over last three years, Davies’ revenue has increased 100 per cent, and they have recently expanded their product range with WearSense – advanced technology that can now measure wear remotely in real time and predict when wear liners should be replaced.

“The technology we are developing is leading the world. It’s a capability which we can take to the rest of the world,” says Rod.

*Rio Tinto’s local procurement program is strengthening WA communities by helping local businesses like Davies make it easier to become part of their supply chain.*

*It aims to build strong partnerships with WA businesses by maximising opportunities for local suppliers and boost local economies. Through partnerships like these and many more, Rio Tinto is helping WA businesses develop sustainably and build long-term prosperity for all.*

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