

Thursday 14 December, 2017

Arc Infrastructure's unbearably cute upcycling project now in the hands of WA kids

A little creative thinking and a lot of stitching has helped Arc Infrastructure transform one tonne of old uniforms into hundreds of special teddy bears for WA's at-risk and vulnerable children this Christmas.

When the company officially changed its name from Brookfield Rail to Arc Infrastructure in July 2017, almost 1,000 kilograms of obsolete branded uniforms were destined for the dustbin.

Determined to act differently, think creatively and challenge themselves as a new company to find a better solution, Arc Infrastructure partnered with LOOP Australia and embarked on an upcycling project with a difference.

From Perenjori to Albany, Kewdale to Kalgoorlie, Arc offices set up collection bins to gather old uniforms and slowly moved them back to Perth to escape the rubbish tip and begin a new life in a different form.

With LOOP's assistance, the old shirts, skirts, pants and jackets were dispatched to community-based seamstresses who worked for five months to turn each item into a special 'Railway Teddy Bear'.

The Bears, all with a unique design and most bearing the 'Brookfield Rail' moniker, are now travelling across the State into the hands of children most in need to bring a little Christmas cheer to some of the State's most vulnerable families.

Community welfare groups that are receiving the Bears include:

- The WA Women's Shelter
- Ronald McDonald House
- Princess Margaret Hospital
- Goldfields Children in Care
- Starlight WA
- South West Women's Refuge

Arc Infrastructure also contributed \$10,000 to help fund an upskilling program to increase the sewing and haberdashery skills of the seamstresses who assisted with the project, paving the way for further employment opportunities.

In total 390 Bears were produced, with all materials drawn from the donated clothing, reducing the impact on the environment. Any items that could not be used were gifted to local community groups across Perth including the Salvation Army and the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre who support those most at risk in our communities.

Arc Infrastructure CEO Paul Larsen said the positive outcomes from the upcycling project are testament to what can be achieved when creative ideas are connected with opportunities to delivery real and meaningful outcomes.

“The act of transforming our old workwear into the Railway Bear is more than just changing its form; it is the product of our journey to become Arc Infrastructure and part of team’s commitment to support the communities in which we operate and leaving a lasting positive impact on those neighbourhoods looking for a hand up, not a hand out,” Mr Larsen said.

LOOP Director Wayne Rowland said it is inspiring to work with companies that go above and beyond and Arc Infrastructure have truly led by example by giving back to the communities they operate in.

“Arc Infrastructure really embraced the uniform upcycling model and the ability to make a difference to those most at need whilst reducing their environmental impact. Transactional relationships can only deliver transactional results, great things happen when people work together and that’s what LOOP is all about,” Mr Rowland said.

Fifty limited-edition Bears were reserved by Arc Infrastructure to auction off with all proceeds going to support Youth Focus and the fundraising efforts of the company’s two teams taking part in the Hawaiian Ride for Youth Challenge.

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ABOUT ARC INFRASTRUCTURE

Arc is pronounced as a word and not an acronym.

Arc Infrastructure is a leading transport infrastructure manager in Western Australia. We currently operate the State’s 5,500km freight rail network, connecting people, commodities and ports across the State with the rest of Australia and the world.

Spread across regional Western Australia, our team of 430 employees keeps the rail network operating 24/7. We live local, buy local and are committed to contributing to regional communities.

Previously called Brookfield Rail, we changed our name to Arc Infrastructure in July 2017 to reflect the aspirations for our future to expand our involvement in transport infrastructure assets. We’re committed to working with industry, our customers, partners and communities to find new opportunities that will support and strengthen our rail network for the benefit of WA.

For more information about Arc Infrastructure, please visit www.arcinfra.com.

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