

29 July 2016

PROTECTED ACTION TO DISRUPT ARTC CUSTOMERS NEXT WEEK

ARTC customers may face disruptions across NSW next week if unions proceed with industrial action from Wednesday to Saturday, 3-6 August (inclusive).

“Our focus is to keep running services safely and reliably where we can, but the industrial action will cause disruptions.

“We’re working with our customers to put contingencies in place, but if union members decide to participate in the stoppages, we won’t be able to avoid delaying and cancelling some freight, passenger and coal services,” ARTC CEO John Fullerton said.

ARTC is in negotiations for an enterprise agreement that covers 582 staff in NSW. Around 100 union members voted in favour of protected action in a ballot conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission.

Union members voted in favour of up to 18 different types of protected action that can be taken individually or concurrently. ARTC has been notified that union members plan to take 10 forms of action from next week, with the potential of further additional protected action.

ARTC expects the greatest impact on Thursday 4, Friday 5 and Saturday 6 August where union members have notified the intent to stop work.

“We are still assessing what the final impacts might look like, but it is inevitable that delays and disruption will occur,” Mr Fullerton said.

“In the interim we are working with freight and passenger rail operators and coal producers on how we can continue some services safely and reliably.

“Companies with time critical freight deliveries, commuters booked on regional rail services and coal producers in the Hunter Valley all rely on our network.

“Most of these will be affected by the stoppages planned from Thursday to Saturday.

“The Hunter region’s rail network will also be heavily affected by action on Wednesday 3 August.

“The proposed action is disappointing and we apologise to our customers for any delays or cancellations as a result of the action.

“We’ve provided a draft agreement to the bargaining committee which proposes a 2 per cent wage increase and no changes to conditions and we’ll be discussing that at our next meeting on Tuesday 2 August.

“We are committed to reaching a fair and sustainable agreement.”

ENDS

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Nb. Further background information – page overleaf

BACKGROUND

- ARTC manages and maintains an 8,500km rail network, supporting freight, bulk and passenger services across five states.
- It is an Australian Government Business Enterprise

Employees Covered by the NSW 2012 Agreement:

- 582 employees in NSW, with 115 of those staff working in our two NSW based network control centres.
- The Broadmeadow (Newcastle) centre manages the Hunter Valley network (coal, passenger, freight) and the North Coast section of our Interstate Network (freight and passenger).
- The Junee centre manages the Interstate network within NSW and (the North South section) of Victoria
- The remaining staff are in a variety of roles in Sydney, Newcastle and Wagga Wagga supporting the Interstate and Hunter Valley rail networks.

Train services that use the NSW rail network operated by ARTC

- Bulk freight, coal and containerised rail services that use the ARTC network through NSW
- Some regional NSW TrainLink services
- Southern Highlands line passenger services (controlled out of the Junee network control centre)
- Hunter line passenger services (controlled out of the Broadmeadow centre)
- North East Victoria passenger train services may also be affected (as they are controlled out of our Junee centre)