

14 February 2017

FOOTAGE REVEALS COMPLEXITY OF RAILWAY UPGRADES

- **Trackwork from 6am Tuesday 21 February – 6am Friday 24 February**

Lasers and caterpillar-like robots don't immediately come to mind when envisaging rail maintenance work, but new vision released by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) today shows it is all part of the job on its Hunter Valley railway network.

More than 1,000 ARTC employees and contractors will work in shifts around the clock for 72 hours at the end of this month carrying out essential major maintenance on its busy Hunter Valley rail network.

The \$20 million worth of work will include renewing and upgrading track, ballast, sleepers and structures like bridges, culverts and level crossings between Kooragang, Ulan and Narrabri from 21 to 24 February.

"While most people think 'big yellow machines' and track 'gangs' when we talk about railway maintenance - and there are plenty of those - the reality of modern railway maintenance work is that it is highly complex, intricate and technical work," ARTC's Executive General Manager – Hunter Valley Jonathan Vandervoort said.

"The crews work in shifts, under lights, around the clock to get as much work done as quickly and safely as possible so trains can resume normal operations.

"During the last major shut down we captured just how busy the worksite is with a timelapse camera set up for a track renewal project near Maitland," Mr Vandervoort said.

"It shows the railway lines prior to the works commencing, staff erecting a temporary safe work fence between them and the danger zone of the operating lines and the sheer volume of plant and people power required to get the job done fast.

"There are traditional civil works vehicles including dump trucks, diggers, loaders, but also specialised track laying machines including tampers fitted with the latest laser technology to ensure the tracks are installed to design.

"The footage shows our hi-rail equipment that allows many of the machines to run on the rails and our workers even use temporary rails at one point to get the caterpillar-like track layer into position.

"The vision also shows work through all the elements including a temporary tent hastily erected to allow our thermit welders to connect the new sections of track to the old through a small downpour.

"While all this activity is going on the lines behind the workers are still operating and the final moments show the first trains running on the brand new track.

"Hundreds of passenger trains run on our network every week – and the maintenance work we do is critical to keeping these trains running safely and reliably – at no cost to the taxpayer."

"We'd like to thank the community for their patience with us while this important work is delivered and we also ask motorists to take extra care and be cautious of trucks entering and exiting work sites."

ENDS

Media Contact: Bas Bolyn, ARTC, 0477 340 658

- Visit our [trackwork calendar](#).
- View and share the vision [here](#) or download the footage [via this dropbox link](#)

Nb. There are road closures during this shutdown, please find details on page 2 of this release.

About ARTC in the Hunter Valley

- ARTC directly employs more than 300 Hunter Valley residents.
- We inject more than \$100 million per year into the broader Hunter Valley economy.
- We indirectly support thousands of local jobs by using local suppliers, contractors, materials & services.
- Our Hunter Valley network moves coal, general freight, bulk freight and passengers – about 240 trains per day. Around half of these services are passenger trains.

Road Closures

ARTC is carrying out important maintenance works at a number of level crossings during this maintenance shutdown.

Please find listed below the relevant crossings and a proposed schedule of works, please note that times are approximate only and may be subject to change depending on a number of factors.

Location:	Proposed Schedule of Works:
Rouchel Road, Aberdeen	21/2 9:00am to 3:00pm - Closed
Liverpool Street, Scone	22/2 9:30am to 3:30pm - Closed
Merriwa Road, Willow Tree	23/2 10:00pm to 4:00am - Closed 24/2 8:00am to 11:00am - Closed
Kenilworth Street, Denman	From 6:00am 21/2 to 7:00am 24/2 - Closed
Sandy Creek Road Muswellbrook	From 6:00pm 22/2 to 10:00am 23/2 - Delay
New England Highway, Muswellbrook (under the railway bridge)	22/2 10:00pm to 11:30pm - Delay
Single Street, Werris Creek	22/2 3:30pm to 5:30pm - Delay

During maintenance periods the level crossings will be closed continuously for access from both sides.

We suggest if you are planning to travel, plan your travel ahead of time and avoid these locations around the proposed times and dates.

There will also be a number of roads impacted by short road closures of 10-15 minutes from 21 – 24 February and we would advise you to visit the ARTC's trackwork calendar on our website for further information regarding the locations and rough times these will occur (www.artc.com.au/events)