

**29 November 2017**

## **\$40M INVESTMENT IN SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS RAIL LINE**

- **100 per cent funded by Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC)**
- **Expedited work focused on improving reliability**
- **Ongoing commitment to support passenger & freight customer performance**

The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) is investing \$40 million in infrastructure improvements to help improve reliability on the Southern Highlands railway line, Peter Winder, Group Executive – Interstate Network, ARTC said today.

The re-railing works, which are now underway, is 100 per cent funded by the ARTC and is part of a major program focused on supporting reliability of train services between Goulburn and Macarthur.

Mr Winder said ARTC is fast-tracking the work to address customer concerns about reliability, with the next package of the re-railing project taking place in early December.

“We are very conscious of the concerns of our customers operating through the Southern Highlands and are working closely with them to improve performance – and in particular reliability,” Mr Winder said.

“Pleasingly, we have seen positive results due to the re-railing and other work ARTC has already delivered between August and November, but there is more to do.”

ARTC is replacing lengths of older rail with new Australian sourced steel rail. The older rail installed over 20 years ago can have defects arise which are best managed by replacing the rail itself. Regular physical and technological inspections are done to ensure the safety of the rail network, and the issue can also contribute to temporary speed restrictions which impacts train punctuality.

The project is planned through to 2020 employing predominantly locals to deliver the works.

“Trains operate on a set timetable, and particularly during busy periods like the morning peak, if there are delays it can flow on across all of our customers.

“While there are a number of factors that can impact reliability, from train faults to signalling issues, the last thing we want are our customers delayed as it impacts the entire network. To grow the number of trains operating, we want to see services running on time as much as our customers do.

“That’s why we have brought this massive \$40 million infrastructure investment forward to build further reliability into this part of our rail network,” said Mr Winder.

In early December, ARTC will be delivering the next major wave of this re-railing work along the line.

The re-railing, as part of various track maintenance and improvement works, is taking place from 10pm Friday 1 December through to 2am Monday 4 December.

Locations targeted include the Menangle Park, Menangle, Douglas Park, Maldon, Picton, Bargo, Yerrinbool, Mittagong and Burradoo areas.

In order to complete these works safely and efficiently the works will take place during a track closedown which will see both day, and to a lesser extent night works, involved, with machinery and equipment in use at various locations during this period.

“We apologise for any inconvenience the work causes,” Mr Winder said.

**ENDS**

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