

**14 February 2018**

### **HUNTER VALLEY TEAM FLIES INTO MAINTENANCE IN 2018**

- **Drones just one technology solution ARTC exploring to keep rail safe & efficient**
- **New vision released ahead of major maintenance shutdown 20-23 February**
- **Over 120 projects, more than \$20m worth of work to be delivered**

Using drones that film in 4K video to undertake technical bridge inspections is just one of the tasks that ARTC's Hunter Valley team has been doing in the lead up to the first major rail maintenance shutdown of 2018.

The Australian Rail Track Corporation's (ARTC) Group Executive – Hunter Valley, Wayne Johnson said ARTC continues to look at new and efficient ways to run one of the most complex rail networks in the country.

"Using drones to inspect critical structures like rail bridges is just one of the technology solutions we have been employing to make our rail network safer, more efficient and reliable," Mr Johnson said.

"Other recent examples [include selecting GE's Movement Planner](#) technology to optimise our network control operations [and conducting earthworks using GPS-guided machinery.](#)"

Drones are increasingly being employed across the rail industry to help inspect structures as it is a faster, more efficient and importantly, safer, way of delivering the work which previously required long hours, cherry pickers or cranes and often put people in difficult position to review structures visually.

"A drone removes the need for slow moving equipment, harnesses and the dangers of working at heights and there is the added benefit of being able to record the inspection for future reference and review in high resolution."

ARTC has shared vision from a recent inspection ahead of the first major maintenance shutdown on its rail network this year between 20 and 23 February.

The works will take place over 72 hours across more than 120 different project sites.

Essential works including bridge repairs and replacements, re-railing, rail grinding, track reconditioning, signal works and other corridor maintenance tasks will take place during the three day work window.

ARTC [has also released vision](#) showing the type of project that can be delivered during one of these maintenance shutdowns – making available video with a side-by-side comparison of more than 1.2km of new track commissioned at Breeza, West of Tamworth, in November.

"We would like to thank the community for its patience while this work takes place. We know that it can be disruptive and with the use of heavy machinery, noisy work, and we do appreciate it causes an inconvenience to some of our neighbours," Mr Johnson said.

"Trucks and heavy machinery will be in use, as well as entering and exiting work sites. We ask the community to please take caution around the rail corridor during this time and be aware there may be some road closures or detours in your region."

**ENDS**

**Media contact:** Bas Boly, ARTC, 0477 340 658

**Dropbox link to drone bridge (Glennies Creek, Hunter Valley, NSW) inspection vision:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/v0d0io9jur95rtc/Glennies%20Creek%20Drone%20Footage.mp4?dl=0>

More information – including ARTC's new Trackwork notification and magnetic calendar – is available on the Community [section of its website](#) . **Road closure information is on page two.**

**Feb Shutdown Major Public Road / Level Crossing Closures**

**Rosemount Road, Denman** on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> to replace the bearers under the crossing tin tops. It is a complete road closure, and detours will be in place. Traffic control contractors have been engaged for this work.

**New Street, Gunnedah** closed from 8pm Wednesday the 21st to 6am Thursday 22nd 0600 hours. (6am 23rd as contingency). Detours will be in place. With road closed signs and traffic management plan in support.

**Merriwa Road, Willow Tree**

The scope includes:

1. Installation on new pedestrian crossing city side of Merriwa Road
2. Installation of new under track drainage city side of Merriwa Road
3. Installation of concrete pathways / drainage to new pedestrian crossing each side of rail corridor
4. Installation of extension to existing path way in Humble Street

The works are largely planned for daylight hours (6am to 6pm) but will run until 1 March 2018. Alternative traffic and pedestrian movement plans are in place. Short delays may be experienced.

**Bells Gate Road (near Werris Creek/ The Gap)** level crossing will be closed between 11pm and 1am on 21 and 22 February.

**Roxburgh Road level crossing (on Ulan Line near Muswellbrook)** will be closed for maintenance on Tuesday Morning 20 Feb and will last for approximately 1 hour while the track machine passes. Works are scheduled to occur between 8am and 10am, but it may vary.