

Wednesday 5 February 2020

### **1200 workers and 120 stone production rail grinder kick off major three-day rail maintenance shut down**

- **A major program of maintenance works starts next week on the coal lines between Kooragang and Maitland as well as the main lines from Muswellbrook to Ulan, Narrabri and Maitland.**
- **The three-day shutdown is required for workers to gain safe access to the track, delivering projects to ensure a safe, reliable network.**

The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) will carry out a major maintenance shutdown of the Hunter Valley Network on the rail network from the port of Newcastle through to Narrabri and out to Ulan, with overnight outages on the passenger network from Islington to Maitland.

From Tuesday 11th to Friday 14th February, approximately 1200 workers will conduct over 120 maintenance jobs including:

- Removing and replacing almost 14 kilometres of rail
- Upgrading approximately 1.5 kilometres of track subgrade across six sites
- Continue ongoing signal upgrade work between Islington and Sandgate
- Routine maintenance and defect removal and various other major upgrades

ARTC will also welcome the new 120 stone Loram grinder to the Hunter Valley which will improve rail grinding performance.

ARTC Group Executive Hunter Valley Wayne Johnson assured residents and the community ARTC is focused on delivering a safe maintenance shutdown.

“As days of extreme heat can have an impact on the track, such as causing signal faults, circuit breaks or track buckling due to intense heat conditions, we need to carry out this work to ensure the track remains safe, particularly in recent extreme weather conditions,” he said.

“We continue to also carry out spot maintenance as required, to ensure the safety and reliability of the track and limit ‘hot works’ on these days, such as welding or rail grinding to reduce risk.”

Mr Johnson said the work requires a total shutdown for work to be carried out as safely as possible.

“Similar to other recent maintenance programs, a scheduled shutdown is required to allow us to access the track for maintenance and upgrades that cannot be done safely when trains are running,” he said.

“The work will generally start at 6.30am on Tuesday 11 February and is expected to be completed about 6.30am on Friday 14 February.

“We thank our customers, commuters and motorists across the network for their patience while we carry out this important planned maintenance program.

“We remind residents to remain vigilant as there may be more vehicle movements in and out of work sites in residential areas around the work sites.”

Alternative bus services will be provided for impacted customers, and details and schedules can be found at the Transport for NSW [website](#).

The next major maintenance shutdown is scheduled from 1 to 3 April.

**Media contact:** ARTC media team 1300 196 401

***Link to ARTC 2020 Community Trackwork Calendar***

<https://www.artc.com.au/uploads/Jan-Jun-2020-Track-Work-Notification-Notice.pdf>

***Link to images of new grinder launching next week on the Hunter Valley network:***

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/vwwj159p3rda96l/AABwoOuywKAQgbA-RusH6TxQa?dl=0>