

13 November 2018

Big bridge works part of final major shutdown for the year

Train commuters in the Hunter Valley are being urged to check the timetables next week with the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) starting an extended maintenance shutdown which will affect all services.

From 6.30am Monday 19 November till 6.30am Friday 23 November some train services will not operate, and others will be limited to allow construction and maintenance works to go ahead safely.

“At Gowrie Gates, just west of Singleton on the New England Highway, in partnership with New South Wales’ Roads and Maritime Services we’ll be putting in place a new railway bridge,” said ARTC’s Group Executive for the Hunter Valley Network Jonathan Vandervoort.

“During our September shutdown we installed the 200 tonne girders and assembled the new bridge in a temporary position next to the current one. Starting Monday morning we will remove the current bridge and then use skids to jack the new bridge into place and prepare it to be operational when the shutdown finishes Friday morning. To do this safely our crews need 96 hours and that means this shutdown is going to be longer than usual.”

“Over the week we’ll have over 1200 people doing nearly 130 jobs across the network, and this extra time means we are taking the opportunity to do some other larger projects. We’re going to replace the rail bridge at Quipolly just south of Werris Creek, and conduct repair works on rail bridges at Muswellbrook and East Maitland.”

“Other maintenance works over the week include track reconditioning, re-railing, grinding and ballast cleaning, the jobs that can’t be done safely when trains are running to a regular timetable on the network.”

Anyone living near or commuting near the rail corridors over those five days is being asked to take extra care.

“There will be increased truck and machinery traffic and temporary traffic delays and detours may occur to ensure safe access in and out of the work areas,” said Mr Vandervoort.

This last major shutdown is the final for 2018 with the next scheduled for February next year.

Main points

- The Hunter Valley November maintenance shutdown will start at 6.30am Monday 19 November and finish at 6.30am Friday 23 November.
- The maintenance shutdown will affect all train services in the Hunter Valley. Alternative bus services will be provided, and details and schedules can be found at the Transport for NSW [website](#).
- At the Gowrie Gates work site there will be traffic control and a reduced speed limit of 40 kilometers an hour in both directions on the New England Highway. All traffic will be diverted onto a purpose-built temporary road running to the south of the bridge and the work area. For more information on the Gowrie Gates project please go to the RMS [website](#).”
- With maintenance works happening at sites across the network those living close to the rail corridors or travelling near them during the week can expect possible delays and detours and are asked to be patient.

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High resolution photos of new rail bridge at Gowrie Gates and the worksite can be found [here](#).