



## **AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD**

### **ARTC to Consult Coal Industry on New Hunter Valley Coal Network Strategy**

Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd (ARTC) today announced a round of consultations with the coal industry on its updated Hunter Valley Coal Network Capacity Improvement Strategy for the next 5 years.

David Marchant, CEO of ARTC said “In line with ARTC’s commitment to consultation I have written to all Hunter Valley coal producers and port operators seeking their views on the revised investment strategy.”

The total projected cost of capacity enhancements set out in the updated strategy is \$375 million over the next five years.

“We are committed to delivering rail capacity ahead of demand and ensuring value for money for the coal industry. Volume forecasts are increasing rapidly and we want to ensure that ARTC and the coal industry are moving forward in step with each other.” David Marchant said

Key changes in the updated strategy include:

- An updated timeframe with plans extending out to 2011.
- Fully revised volume forecasts, with export volumes reaching 145 million tonnes - up from 120 million tonnes in the current strategy.
- Fully revised analysis to accommodate the volume growth in the most cost-effective way.

“The value of the required projects represents a significant commitment for both ARTC and the entire coal industry”, Mr Marchant said. “We want to ensure that the industry fully understands and supports the strategy and I look forward to their input.”

“While there is a significant increase in the asset base in the strategy it is expected that average access charges will actually decline due to the large increases in volume.” David Marchant said.

ARTC released its last strategy in May 2005 which was valued at \$270 million and included renewals and minor capital works as well as the capacity enhancement projects.

In common with earlier strategies, the 2006-2011 Strategy identifies the constraints on the network’s capacity in the Hunter Valley, the options to resolve these constraints and a proposed course of action to achieve increased coal throughput.

The latest 2006-2011 Hunter Valley Corridor Capacity Improvement Strategy is available on ARTC’s website at [www.artc.com.au](http://www.artc.com.au).

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