



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Record Rail Freight Volume Increases Continue - ARTC

Record highs for monthly traffic volumes carried over the Australian Rail Track Corporation interstate network in South Australia, Western Australia and Victoria were today released by the ARTC for the months of September, October and November.

During September, a record total of 2.989 billion gross tonne kilometres (GTK) was moved by train operators, a 14.9 % increase on the September 2003 figures.

In October, the highest monthly level was recorded to date, when tonnages carried increased to 3.195 billion gross tonne kilometres, a 14.5 % increase over October 2003.

In November, preliminary figures also show increases to record levels of 3.081 billion GTK, the second highest on record and 10.7% higher than the same month last year.

ARTC Managing Director, David Marchant said "these recent monthly volume increases are particularly significant as they are record highs coming off record highs and indicate very strong growth."

"While October and November are traditionally our two strongest months these record growths were contributed from good increases across the majority of our customers and continue the sustained trend for freight forwarders to move increasing volumes of freight by rail."

The record tonnages in September, October and November follow on from record totals carried on the interstate rail network in July and August this year, when increases were recorded over their 2003 monthly totals of 15% and 11.9%.

Rail's share of the land transport freight market on the national East-West (east coast to west coast) corridor continues at the record level of 81%. The integration into the national network of the NSW interstate and Hunter Valley lines in September 2004 will ensure a seamless service across most state borders and support better network integration for rail freight on the North South national rail corridor.

ARTC commenced operating the New South Wales interstate and Hunter Valley rail networks on 5 September this year as part of its 60 year lease of the NSW network. ARTC will undertake an initial \$872 million infrastructure investment programme during the first 5 years of the NSW Lease and proposes to invest the \$450 million grant in this year's federal government budget in the important Sydney- Brisbane corridor.

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