



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

MEDIA RELEASE

RECORD VOLUMES FOR EAST WEST RAIL

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Freight volumes on Australian Rail Track Corporation's East West rail corridor have continued a trend of strong growth during the September quarter with record tonnages being moved during the months of August and September.

Over 3.2 billion gross tonne kilometres (GTK) were carried in both months over the ARTC rail network linking the Eastern States with Western Australia. The previous record high was in October 2005 when 3.181 billion GTK were carried on the strategic East West rail freight corridor.

For the September Quarter, GTK on ARTC's East West network increased by 7.8 per cent when compared to the September 2005 Quarter. Nett freight volumes increased by 9.4% for the same period.

Commenting on these figures, ARTC CEO, David Marchant said, "For the last five years, rail has maintained an 80 per cent share of the land freight market between the Eastern States and Western Australia."

"October is usually the busiest month of the year on the interstate rail network as we see retailers start to build up their pre-Christmas inventory. This year, we are already seeing record levels achieved in advance of the traditional October peak."

Mr Marchant said it is not possible to pinpoint exactly what was driving this strong growth in freight volumes, but suggested a robust economy, the high price of diesel forcing a switch from road to rail, and changes in coastal shipping patterns were all possible influencing factors.

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Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) is responsible for all operations relating to the greater part of the interstate and Hunter Valley rail networks. ARTC provides a 'one stop shop' for access by train operators to the national standard gauge network. This includes the provision of train control functions, the creation and selling of train paths to rail operators and the provision of capital and maintenance works over the network.