



## AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

### **ARTC: Concrete Sleeper Program on North Coast Line**

Between Bonville and Grafton 110,000 new concrete sleepers are presently being laid by Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd (ARTC) as part of its North Coast Line improvement program.

“The Bonville to Grafton section is the third of eight such projects to fully concrete sleeper the North Coast Line between Maitland and the Queensland border. The concrete sleeping program is part of ARTC’s \$220 million Strategic Alliance Contract for Track and Civil Works.” David Marchant Chief Executive of ARTC said today.

On completion of ARTC’s 3 year North Coast Improvement program that comprises track, civil and signalling projects, transit times for freight trains travelling between Brisbane and Sydney are estimated to decrease by nearly 4 hours.

The program will increase efficiencies for rail transport to increase market share for transporting freight by rail on the North Coast Line.

To date the North Coast Concrete Sleeping Project has completed track sections from Rappville through to Grafton and from Wiangaree to Casino, replacing in total 131,000 old sleepers. The recently installed concrete sleepers combined with the existing sections of concrete sleepered track have resulted in the railway north from Grafton to the Queensland border being fully concrete sleepered.

Installation of the concrete sleepers is being carried out by a machine known as the “Pony Express” which is one of only two such machines in Australia.

The timber sleepers that are removed and identified as having considerable life remaining are re used in other areas of the rail network in NSW providing cost efficiencies in these areas of the network.

The work is being carried out for ARTC by Transport Express JV (TEJV) a joint venture between Laing O’Rourke and Balfour Beatty.

The installation of the sleepers has been programmed to have minimal impact on rail operation. To utilise the available track access between train operations site activities between Bonville and Grafton commence at approximately 6am.

The sleeping operation can average 450 sleepers (300m) per hr and more then 1.2km per day within the available track time between Bonville and Grafton

The concrete sleepers are being manufactured for ARTC at the Rocla factory in Grafton.

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