



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

Sandgate Rail Flyover Opens

A long standing block to efficiency of the Hunter Valley coal chain was removed today when the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) began full operation of the Sandgate flyover.

The \$80 million project, which has been completed on schedule, removes the necessity of coal trains destined for Kooragang Coal Handling Facility to stand idle at Sandgate while waiting for passenger and main line freight services to clear the rail track.

The Sandgate flyover enables coal trains to run under the main line to access Kooragang without delay, increasing the efficiency of the entire coal rail system. Associated with the project were major signalling works and other rail upgrades.

"It's been a block for decades," said ARTC Chief Executive David Marchant, "as coal trains had to wait for a clear track to move from the western to the eastern side of the main line to run into Kooragang Island.

"Regular delays of up to 30 minutes or more at Sandgate telescoped up the Hunter Valley coal line, delaying trains and reducing the efficiency of the entire coal chain.

"The removal of this bottleneck will also assist local residents who have had to endure idling trains with engine noise as well as the sounds of rolling stock stopping and starting."

"Now, that's a thing of the past," he said.

"The line separation at Sandgate has been planned for years but when ARTC took over the lease of NSW rail lines in 2004 it became a priority."

"This was the first major project for ARTC in NSW and delivery of this project within the time frame has been an outstanding achievement." Mr Marchant said.

The total project cost in the vicinity of \$80 million comprises \$60M for construction of the flyover and tracks, \$10M for signalling and communications and \$6M for rail and sleepers supplied by ARTC and \$4M for project management.

14 November 2006