



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

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New signalling system for Hunter Valley coal link

New signalling on the Ulan rail link in the Hunter Valley will deliver major time savings for export coal trains using the link and provide coal producers with greater capacity for the movement of coal to the Port of Newcastle.

Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) said today that the first two stages of the new Centralised Train Control (CTC) system on the Ulan line between Muswellbrook and Kerrabee would be commissioned this week.

ARTC CEO, David Marchant said, "This project represents significant value to both train operators and coal producers in the Hunter Valley.

"Both will benefit from improved cycle times, more efficient asset utilisation and increased capacity on the route.

"The removal of the antiquated staff token system of safe-working means that trains travelling between Muswellbrook and Ulan will save at least 20 minutes at each of the two crossing locations.

On a return journey from the port to the mine and back, export coal trains will save a minimum of 1 hour and 20 minutes on the current schedule.

Stages one and two of the project cover 73.5km of the total 146km between Muswellbrook to Ulan. Commissioning of the CTC system over the remaining 73kms is scheduled for completion in mid- February providing further increases in capacity and reductions in train cycle time.

"The project has been delivered on budget at a total cost of \$14m", Mr Marchant said.

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Australian Rail Track Corporation is responsible for management of the rail track in the Hunter Valley and for the national interstate rail network. In 2005, ARTC commenced a \$381 million investment program to increase the capacity and reliability of that part of the rail network vital to the efficient operation of the Hunter Valley Coal Supply Chain.
