



## AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

### **HISTORIC DEAL HERALDS NEW RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT IN VICTORIA**

The Victorian rail system will benefit from a massive capital investment thanks to a historic deal announced in Wodonga today, between Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd and the Victorian Government.

ARTC Chairman, Barry Murphy, joined Victorian Premier, The Hon. John Brumby in announcing the long term lease of the Victorian standard gauge rail network.

The original Interstate Infrastructure Lease between ARTC and the Victorian Government for the standard gauge rail network was due to expire in 2014. The agreement reached today will extend the lease by 45 years to 2059.

Barry Murphy explained that this will allow ARTC to deliver significant infrastructure improvements to the Victorian standard gauge system.

“The length of this lease will allow sufficient time for ARTC to plan and implement practical, long term, infrastructure improvements to the rail network in Victoria.”

“Specifically, the agreement will involve converting the North East broad gauge line between Seymour and Albury to standard gauge, and the partial conversion of the Albion to Jacana Line to dual gauge.”

David Marchant, CEO of ARTC said “These and other projects represent an immediate investment by ARTC of more than \$285 million in the existing infrastructure.”

Other projects to be undertaken immediately include:

- Concrete Resleepering of 106km of single line track between Tottenham and Seymour and 200km of single line track from Seymour to Wodonga. This will significantly improve operational transit time, reliability, capacity and yield;
- Upgrades to the Seymour Station and Broadmeadow Station as well as works at Albury, Avenel, Euroa, Springhurst, Violet Town and Chiltern stations,) to facilitate the running of passenger services between Melbourne and Wodonga; and
- The construction of passing lanes at Kilmore East and Tallarook and a crossing loop extension at Donnybrook to improve corridor transit time and capacity.

In addition to these projects, Department of Transport and ARTC, using the Southern Improvement Alliance, will also undertake the Wodonga Rail Bypass.

Mr Marchant said ARTC was well placed to manage the Victorian standard gauge rail network.

“ARTC has a proven track record of delivering important rail projects and managing rail infrastructure across Australia.”

“This new agreement will see valuable long term improvements in the Victorian standard gauge rail network that will breathe new life in to freight rail in the State.”

“For ARTC it marks a significant step in improving the whole rail corridor from Melbourne through to Sydney.”

“Rail will be more than competitive again and as each 1500 metre long train can replace 100 semi trailers we could see fewer trucks on our major roads,” Mr Marchant said.

**Issued: March 30, 2008**

**Contact: Brad Emery                      0419 297 004**

