



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

BRIDGES REPLACED AS UPGRADE OF HUNTER VALLEY COAL LINE CONTINUES

The investment by the Australian Rail Track Corporation in the Hunter Valley rail corridor continues unabated with the replacement of three bridges between St Heliers and Muswellbrook.

The Muscle Creek Underbridge Replacements are part of the Antiene to Muswellbrook Duplication Works that are due for completion in May 2009. This involves upgrading the line from a single track to two tracks side by side.

The new ballast top bridges will replace the current transom type bridges and enable duplicated track to be constructed between September 2008 and May 2009.

The new bridges consist of in-situ columns, and prefabricated headstocks, girders, and approach slabs which will allow quick and efficient construction while retaining durability.

ARTC CEO David Marchant explained that the installation of new bridges was part of the strategy to increase the capacity on the rail line.

“The replacement of these three bridges is another stepping stone in enabling significant growth from the Gunnedah region by reducing transit times and increasing overall rail efficiency.”

“Greater capacity on the line reduces above rail operating costs, and enables more coal to be transported in a more cost effective manner,” he said.

Mr Marchant explained that the project is part of the 2007-2012 Hunter Valley Coal Network Capacity Improvement Strategy.

“Demand on Hunter Valley coal is set to increase dramatically by 2012. The replacement of the bridges and the ongoing upgrade of the corridor with new signals and more passing loops is part of the investment by ARTC to get more coal to port more efficiently and stay ahead of future demand,” Mr Marchant said.

“Projects like this are about developing rail as a reliable and efficient mode of transport. They are also a boost for the regional economy of the Hunter Valley and the economy of the nation as a whole.”

Further investment projects are planned for completion in the coming months.

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