



## AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

### **TRACK DUPLICATION COMPLETED AS INVESTMENT IN HUNTER VALLEY COAL LINE CONTINUES**

The Hunter Valley Coal rail network is set to benefit from increased line capacity and reduced transit time thanks to a \$35 million duplication of the tracks between Antiene and Grasstree, completed today by the Australian Rail Track Corporation.

This milestone marks the completion of stage two of the overall Antiene to Muswellbrook Duplication Works project due for completion in May 2009.

Stage two of the overall project saw the line upgraded from a single track to two tracks side by side between Antiene and Grasstree.

This will result in a transit time saving of 15 minutes for Gunnedah trains and 19 minutes for Ulan trains.

In addition, the duplication of the line will result in increased capacity between Antiene and Grasstree; from 35 MTPA (Million Tonnes Per Annum) to 200 MTPA.

Once the entire Antiene to Muswellbrook Duplication Works project is completed in 2009, the number of available daily freight paths will increase from 21 to 96.

ARTC CEO David Marchant explained that increasing capacity on the rail line is essential for keeping ahead of market demand.

“Against the backdrop of an increasingly volatile world markets, it is essential for the Australian economy that the Hunter Valley rail network is able to meet future market demand and deliver coal to port efficiently and on time.”

“The duplication of the track between Antiene and Grasstree is another stepping stone in enabling significant growth from the Gunnedah region. Demand on Hunter Valley coal is set to increase dramatically by 2012. The ongoing upgrade of the corridor with new signals, more passing loops and bridge replacements is part of ARTC’s strategy to stay ahead of future export capacity for coal,” 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.”

ARTC enlisted Worley Parsons to provide the design element of the project with the track and civil construction works delivered by BMD / Coleman Rail, and the signalling works by the HV&NCSA.

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