



## AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### **NEW TIME SAVINGS REVEALED ON BRISBANE-SYDNEY-MELBOURNE RAIL LINE MARKS RESURGANCE IN FREIGHT RAIL**

Freight rail between Brisbane Sydney and Melbourne is set to benefit from the first fruits of Australian Rail Track Corporation's (ARTC) \$2.4 billion upgrade of the North South line with the release of the new 'first stage' time table for the North Coast.

ARTC CEO David Marchant explained that the new timetable revealed today is the first stage of three timetable updates thanks to the significant upgrade of the North South rail corridor.

"The new 'first stage' timetable released by ARTC shows that Section Run Times on the North Coast have been reduced based on modelling including both the 'Up' and 'Down' directions".

"Specifically, steel trains running from Morandoo in NSW to Acacia Ridge over the QLD border have had their average transit time reduced by 2 hours 22 minutes to 17 hours 34 minutes, and on the return journey the average transit time has been reduced by 1 hr 39 minutes to 16 hours 1 minute," Mr Marchant explained.

"Intermodal Superfreighter trains running from Islington Junction in NSW to Acacia Ridge have had their average transit times reduced by 1 hr 19 minutes to 14 hours 37 minutes, and on the return journey the average transit time has been reduced by 1 hr to 14 hours 45 minutes," he said.

Mr Marchant explained that the upgrade of the North South rail corridor has led to significant fuel savings as well as environmental benefits.

"Fuel savings arising from the 'first stage' timetable for the steel and intermodal trains on the North Coast have been estimated based on reduced section run times to yield savings of greater than 750,000 litres per year. This translates into reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions estimated at greater than 2 million kg per year," he said.

The 'second stage' timetable will be released in October – November 2009 following further upgrades to the Main North and Main South rail lines.

The 'third stage' timetable will be released in April – May 2010 following the completion of the Southern Sydney Freight Line along with other works.

These stages will be coordinated with Railcorps timetable in Sydney.

The \$2.4 billion upgrade of the North South rail corridor has seen a series of new passing lanes and loops installed between Brisbane and Melbourne, along with the

insertion of nearly 1,500 kilometres of new concrete sleepers and new signal technology.

“The new concrete sleepers, new passing lanes and signal upgrades combined, are perhaps the biggest rail project on the North South corridor since the track was originally laid,” Mr Marchant said.

“For ARTC it marks rail’s resurgence as a realistic freight option.”

“Once the resleepering and passing lanes are completed, ARTC will be able to offer the freight industry transit times as low as 10 hours 40 minutes between Sydney and Melbourne and 15 hours 35 minutes between Sydney and Brisbane.

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

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