The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Minister for Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development
and Local Government
Leader of the House

Media Statement

ECONOMIC STIMULUS: NSW BORDER TO ACACIA RIDGE RAIL UPGRADE

The modernisation of the interstate rail network continues unabated, with work now underway on the significant upgrade of the line between the NSW border and the Brisbane suburb of Acacia Ridge.

The $55.8 million project – funded under the Government's Economic Stimulus Plan – will replace existing timber sleepers with 105,000 new concrete sleepers and support 120 jobs.

Federal Infrastructure and Transport Minister, Anthony Albanese, congratulated the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) for moving so quickly to put the Government's economic stimulus funding to work creating jobs and upgrading the nation's rail infrastructure.

"As well as supporting jobs and businesses during the current global recession, our economic stimulus package is building the modern rail infrastructure vital to Australia's long term prosperity," said Mr Albanese.

"We will invest more in rail over the next 12 months than our predecessors did during their 12 years in office."

As well as the replacement of sleepers, the project will also involve the provision of narrow gauge access from Acacia Ridge to Bromelton and from Bromelton to Glenapp as well as the conversion of existing loops to dual gauge track.

ARTC CEO David Marchant explained the upgrade of the line north of the NSW border would improve the overall efficiency of the interstate network.

"Concrete sleepers in themselves may not sound significant. But they will greatly improve the track's capacity and reduced transit times," said Mr Marchant.

"Their use will also reduce the need for temporary speed restrictions in the summer months. Whereas wooden sleepers tend to buckle on extremely hot days, concrete sleepers hold the rail firmly in place.

"The upgrade is good news for the wider community as well. Not only will in create jobs and provide an immediate boost to the local economy, it will also allow more freight to be transported by rail – which overtime will lead to fewer trucks on our roads."

One 1,500-metre train can replace around 100 trucks.

For more information about the Government's Economic Stimulus Package go to: **www.economicstimulusplan.gov.au**.

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