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

Media Statement

ECONOMIC STIMULUS: NEW PASSING LOOP AT KEREWONG COMPLETED

The modernisation of the Brisbane-Sydney-Melbourne rail corridor is picking up pace with the opening today of the newly upgraded passing loop at Kerewong between Herons Creek and Wauchope in NSW.

Funded from the Rudd Labor Government's Economic Stimulus Plan, the $9.8 million project increased the length of the existing passing loop and installed two new turnouts – infrastructure able to cater for much longer trains.

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 our rail infrastructure.

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

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

ARTC CEO David Marchant said the upgraded passing loop at Kerewong complements the recently constructed loops at Mindaribba, Dungog, Nana Glen, Tamrookum and Greenbank, increasing the capacity and speed of the interstate rail network.

"The ARTC and the Federal Government are pushing forward with the upgrade of the Brisbane-Sydney-Melbourne corridor to make rail more competitive," said Mr Marchant.

"The upgrade of the Kerewong passing loop is another important milestone in the north-south strategy to increase capacity and cut transit times from Melbourne to Sydney by 20 per cent (up to 2 hours 50 minutes) and by almost 20 per cent (3 hours 50 minutes) between Sydney and Brisbane.

"The work currently underway on this vital rail corridor is part of the biggest rail project to be initiated since the track was originally laid more than a century ago.

"The ARTC is pleased the Government has declared its support for the upgrade of the nation's rail infrastructure through the $1.2 billion investment it announced late last year – an important contribution to the resurgence of rail."

The ARTC delivered the project in partnership with TEJV and AANCSA.

Media contact: **Jeff Singleton (Albanese's Office)** **0410 476 890**
Brad Emery (ARTC) **0419 297 004**

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PARLIAMENT HOUSE CANBERRA ACT 2600
Telephone: 02 6277 7680 Facsimile: 02 6273 4126