



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

MEDIA RELEASE

MASSIVE WORKS PACKAGE GETS UNDERWAY ON HUNTER VALLEY RAIL CORRIDOR

Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) is rolling out one of the largest packages of upgrades in a single possession on the Hunter Valley rail corridor since ARTC took up management of the network.

The \$20 million package of upgrades will take place from for the 17th to the 20th November and will allow for significant upgrades to take place.

Approximately 70 individual projects will be carried out during the closedown making this closedown one of the largest ever undertaken in the Hunter Valley.

ARTC CEO, David Marchant, explained that this large possession was part of ARTC's strategy to further develop capacity on the Hunter Valley Coal lines.

"This is one of the largest corridor possessions we have undertaken on the Hunter Valley coal lines. This package of works includes a mix of ARTC maintenance and upgrades made possible by the Australian Government's stimulus investment."

"This possession will allow ARTC to implement valuable upgrades and make preparations for major capital works that are planned for the future as part of the ongoing development of the Hunter Valley Rail Corridor," he said.

Specifically this major package of works will include:

Newdell Junction Upgrade

Upgrade to the control system and turnouts are being completed at Newdell Junction. The works will see and improvement in reliability and capacity through the junction.

NCIG Terminal Connection

The 3rd coal export terminal at Kooragang is rapidly taking shape and the commissioning of the rail connection to the ARTC coal network will be undertaken during the closedown.

Whittingham to Maitland 3rd Track

Works on the 3rd track between Whittingham and Maitland are progressing rapidly and some essential stages will be completed between the 17th and the 20th November. Works to be progressed during the closedown include:

- Earthworks on the Minimbah bank;
- Bridge works at multiple locations;
- Installation of bridge planks at Range Rd; and
- Golden Highway bridge works.

Maitland Junction Upgrade:

In preparation for a major upgrade of Maitland Junction enabling works for a new computer based control system will be undertaken during the closedown. Once commissioned the computer based control system will allow for future changes in the track configuration to be undertaken at Maitland Junction with minimal down time.

New Crossing Loops

Works relating to the construction of a number of new crossing loops will be carried out in the Upper Hunter and on the Ulan line. The completion of these loops will be announced at a later date.

In addition to major capacity improvements the Australian Rail Track Corporation are undertaking in excess of \$5 million worth of essential track maintenance activities over the duration of the closedown. These works include ballast cleaning, rerailing, track reconditioning and resurfacing, rail grinding, turnout upgrades, signalling upgrades and track drainage.

“We know that demand for 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.

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