



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

EXTENDED PASSING LOOP AT LOADSTONE ANOTHER BOOST FOR NORTH SOUTH LINE

The Australian Government's investment in the upgrade of the Brisbane-Sydney-Melbourne rail corridor through Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) has reached another milestone with the opening of an extended crossing loop at Loadstone between Casino NSW and Acacia Ridge QLD.

The \$7.1 million project involved ARTC increasing the length of the crossing loop and installing a new over bridge; the new infrastructure is now long enough to cater for 1500m trains.

The extended loop will enable trains to pass each other efficiently as one train enters the loop and waits for a short period while the other train passes at regular speed.

The new passing loop complements loops recently constructed at Kerewong, Mindaribba, Dungog, Nana Glen, Tamrookum and Greenbank just over the Queensland border and will lead to increased efficiency and capacity on the line.

ARTC Chief Executive Officer David Marchant said the extension of the passing loop at Loadstone will result in increased capacity and shorter transit times between Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

"ARTC is pushing forward with our plans to upgrade the Brisbane-Sydney-Melbourne corridor and make rail transport more competitive. This passing loop is another important milestone in the north-south strategy to cut the transit time from Melbourne to Sydney to as low as 10 hours 40 minutes and 15 hours 35 minutes between Sydney and Brisbane," Mr Marchant said.

"In May ARTC released a new timetable which saw a significant reduction in transit time for freight trains traversing the corridor between Melbourne and Brisbane. This extended crossing loop is another step forward in further reducing transit times."

"The passing loops ARTC is constructing along the rail corridor, the new concrete sleepers, and the signal upgrades are, combined, perhaps the biggest rail project since the track was originally laid," Mr Marchant said.

"The investment in this corridor upgrade will see rail becoming competitive, and as each 1500 metre long train can replace 100 semi trailers we could see less trucks on our major roads," Mr Marchant said.

The work was undertaken by ARTC's partners TEJV, Robsons, Downer EDI works and Tigertech.

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