



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

CONCRETE SLEEPER PROJECT ANOTHER MILESTONE IN MELBOURNE FREIGHT SYSTEM UPGRADE

Investment in the upgrade of the Melbourne – Sydney – Brisbane rail corridor continues unabated with the completion of a project to lay 33,000 new concrete sleepers in the Metro freight connection between Tottenham and Somerton in Melbourne.

The \$6 million project was undertaken by Australian Rail Track Corporation and was completed in the near record time of 4 days. ARTC teams worked around the clock to install the large volume of new concrete sleepers along the 22km section of track before the New Year.

ARTC CEO David Marchant explained that the upgrade of the line in the Metro freight network to concrete sleepers will lead to greater efficiency on the corridor.

“The efficient movement of freight trains through the Melbourne Ports district and the Metro system is essential in increasing the capacity of the Melbourne – Sydney – Brisbane rail link. By moving freight trains more efficiently through the Metro system we will be able to free up more train paths, which will ultimately mean an increase in rail capacity.”

“This upgrade is part of ARTC’s North South strategy to reduce transit times between Melbourne and Sydney to as low as 10 hours 40 minutes and 15 hours 35 minutes between Sydney and Brisbane,” Mr Marchant said.

“Consistency in rail sleepers may not sound significant, but it means better efficiency from the track and reduced transit times and therefore increased capacity on one of the country’s most significant rail links,” he said.

“The use of concrete sleepers will also reduce the need for temporary speed restrictions in summer due to the effects of heat on the rail; the concrete sleepers will hold the rail firmly in place, where as wooden sleepers can tend to give and allow the rail to move.”

The project was completed in partnership with the South Improvement Alliance.

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