



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

ARTC Gives Green Light to Hunter Valley Track Access for Coal Producers

Australian Rail Track Corporation's (ARTC) has entered into its first contracts with coal producers for mine to port access to the Hunter Valley rail network. Following the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) approval of the ARTC Hunter Valley Access Undertaking in July ARTC has entered into new access contracts with three Gunnedah Basin producers.

ARTC CEO, John Fullerton, said the new rail access contracts would have similar "long term, take or pay" conditions to those used by the coal loader terminals at the Port of Newcastle.

"By streamlining our access contracts for producers, and bringing them into line with coal loader contracts, we can, by having more certainty in long term capacity forecasts, improve the overall efficiency of the entire Hunter Valley coal chain," Mr Fullerton said.

"For both track and port, all producers will be on the same page," he added.

"As the producers do with the port coal loaders, they will make firm, long term commitments on what capacity they want from the Hunter Valley rail network and ARTC has certainty to effectively plan for future capacity.

"All our future Hunter Valley planning is based on our commitment to keep track capacity ahead of port capacity.

"Delivering this commitment, which is underpinned by our massive upgrade program and maintenance schedules, enhances the overall efficiency and capacity of the coal chain."

ARTC is working with producers all down the Hunter Valley to finalise the new arrangements. Each of the producers will individually enter into ARTC access contracts.

"Once the ACCC signed off, we're able to work with all the coal producers to get the new access contracts in place," Mr Fullerton said.

"ARTC wants long term certainty on capacity, as does the port, and through this new contract regime, the producers will also have certainty on tonnages they can send down the coal chain.

"This is a 'win-win' for efficiency and the benefits will be gained by all those involved in this major national and state export industry," Mr Fullerton said.

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