



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

UPDATE 6: BOGGABRI DERAILMENT – RETURN TO SERVICES

Wednesday 19 December

Trains will be able to return to operations using Cox's Creek Bridge, just south of Boggabri, from 9am tomorrow, Thursday 20 December, an ARTC spokesperson said today.

The return to operations is an additional seven hours ahead of the revised forecast.

"The project team have done a great job, and we know the community, local businesses and industry and ARTC customers will be pleased to have freight and passenger services back on track ahead of Christmas," the spokesperson said.

As a safety precaution, temporary speed restrictions for train services will be in place, initially at 20km per hour for the first 24 hours, gradually progressing to 60km per hour in January, and then full track speeds will return.

"Managing speeds is a standard safety procedure when returning or commissioning a piece of large infrastructure such as the bridge crossing," the spokesperson said.

"Additionally, the Independent Transport Safety Regulator (ITSR) has visited the site a number of times to inspect and assess work progress throughout the reconstruction process and provide quality assurance," the spokesperson said.

The final few days of the reconstruction effort has involved laying and compacting ballast, final welding works, strength testing of the concrete, and track geometry surveying and testing. Site demobilisation and tidy up began on Monday.

"We'd like to thank the community for their patience with the traffic and construction activity in the area while the repair works have taken place and a return to services ahead of schedule has been the best outcome for everyone involved.

"We'd also like to take the opportunity to remind drivers to exercise caution around railway level crossings with trains returning," the spokesperson said.

"The line is likely to be busier than usual with maximum trains running to assist with the backlog of freight and coal, and we'd like everyone to stay safe this Christmas break."

ENDS

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