Media Release

NEW ERA IN MAINTENANCE BEGINS FOR ARTC

03 January 2013

A new era for ARTC’s management of rail maintenance has begun with the turn of the New Year, with rail maintenance for Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) track in the area now delivered in-house from 1 January 2013.

Eleven new regional work centres have been created by ARTC across the country – each tasked with the care and maintenance of the standard gauge rail network in their respective areas.

Previously, maintenance was delivered on a contract basis by alliance partners.

“Insourcing maintenance is an exciting period of change for the Company, and the decision is a reflection of the condition of our asset base and the need to have a consistent approach to maintenance across the company,” ARTC CEO John Fullerton said.

“This month we welcome more than 200 new staff to the organisation and build on our current connection with rural Australia through our regional work centres - local centres of expertise with skilled and experienced rail maintenance staff.”

“Many of the new staff have transferred over from our previous alliance partners, so they bring with them their extensive knowledge and experience of the local network, conditions and needs of the track, Mr Fullerton said.

“We are reaching the end of a significant amount of investment into the interstate rail network, and with that change comes a fresh focus on maintaining this improved and modern asset base.

“Rail is intrinsically tied to this country’s history and the land, and it’s great that those with the greatest connection to the land in regional Australia are now part of the ARTC team looking after our rail corridor.”

“Our alliance partners have handed us a safe and well-conditioned network and we would like to thank them for the stewardship they have shown for the nation's interstate railway over the last 14 years.

“Our assets have grown, and they're in great shape – our focus is on keeping them that way and innovating as we continue to mature as a company.”
New ARTC maintenance depots have been established at (staff numbers in brackets):

- Western Australia: Kalgoorlie (10);
- South Australia: Port Augusta (32), Snowtown (5), Murray Bridge (7) and Edwardstown - Adelaide (9);
- Victoria: Seymour (8), Wangaratta (6), Geelong (10), Ararat (14); and,
- NSW: Parkes (14), Broken Hill (15).

They join existing in-house arrangements ARTC has in place for track maintenance in the Hunter Valley and in parts of regional NSW.

ENDS

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Contact: Bas Bolyn – 0477 340 658

Summary of the changes by area

Interstate rail network

Melbourne to Sydney:
- All track and civil planning, inspection and reactive maintenance is now in-house.
- Signalling maintenance in Victorian sections now in-house in line with the rest of the organisation.

Melbourne to Perth (Kalgoorlie):
- All track and civil planning, inspection and reactive maintenance is now in-house.
- Signalling maintenance in Victorian sections now in-house in line with the rest of the organisation.

North Coast between Telarah and Brisbane:
- No change to the current model

Hunter Valley rail network
- No change to existing internal arrangements; continue to use contractors for track shutdowns
- From 2013/2014 ARTC will be tendering annually for geographic packages of works.

Nationally
- ARTC will continue to award national contracts for specialised rail tasks such as ultrasonic rail flaw detection, rail grinding and turnout grinding and explore the option of a national face tamping contract and regional maintenance tamping contracts.