



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

RAIL TRACK UPGRADES FOR THE NORTH WEST (NSW)

Thursday 11 April 2013

The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) will be undertaking a range of track upgrades to improve the efficiency and reliability of the single line rail network between Gunnedah and Narrabri from 15 April to 20 June.

ARTC's Executive General Manager for the Hunter Valley Network, Alec Mackenzie, said a comprehensive set of works would be taking place over the two month period including concrete re-sleeping, re-railing, completion of the Watermark passing loop, and the second phase of repairs to Boggabri Bridge.

"Nearly 100,000 timber and steel sleepers will be replaced with heavy duty, more robust concrete sleepers along a 60 kilometre section of track between Gunnedah and Turrawan," Mr Mackenzie said.

"These concrete sleepers are safer than timber sleepers and will help with the reliability of the track, particularly during times of extreme heat like we have seen in recent summer months, which can result in speed restrictions."

"Works will also include re-railing nearly eight kilometres of track at five sites between the Gap (near Werris Creek) and Emerald Hill and signalling works and final commissioning on a major passing loop project, including nearly 400 metres of earthworks," Mr Mackenzie said.

The Watermark Project involves the construction of a new simultaneous entry passing loop located between Curlewis and Breeza and will improve the efficiency of train operations.

The final phase to the repair of Cox's Creek Bridge near Boggabri will also take place, including removal of the temporary rock embankment to be replaced with four new, custom-made steel spans and associated new transoms.

"The removal of the temporary embankment will involve moving nearly 10,000 tonnes of rock, so we'd like to advise local residents there is likely to be a greater number of heavy vehicles on local roads near the site than usual, so to take care while driving in the area."

The North West Line north of Werris Creek is a growing rail corridor that forms an essential part of the logistics chain for the businesses and communities within the region providing for the carriage of flour, grains, cotton and coal while also providing for passenger services.

"We'd like to thank the local community for their patience while these important reliability and capacity improvement works take place," Mr Mackenzie said.

For information on the impact to CountryLink services, customers should call 13 22 32 or go to: www.countrylink.info.

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