



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

‘TRANSFORMER’ HITS THE TRACKS: New Shoulder Ballast Cleaner illustrates ongoing ARTC investment in improving Melbourne-Sydney rail corridor

Wednesday 17 July

One of the most up-to-date rail track maintenance machines in Australia, dubbed ‘the Transformer’ by Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) staff, will soon be hitting the tracks between Melbourne and Sydney, ARTC announced today.

The \$10 million dollar, state-of-the-art, LORAM Shoulder Ballast Cleaner is currently in testing in South Australia after safe delivery from Minnesota, the United States last month.

The almost 100 metre-long shoulder ballast cleaner is expected to be in operation along the Melbourne – Sydney rail corridor in late August following completion of the testing and commissioning process.

“This new piece of machinery illustrates ARTC’s long-term commitment to ensuring the track condition between Melbourne and Sydney is at a high quality standard, so our customers can get where they need to go reliably, safely and on-time,” ARTC CEO John Fullerton said.

“Current testing of the 240 tonne-heavy machine in the Adelaide Hills has been promising with it delivering production rates of 1.7km per hour, improving drainage by helping remove mud-holes and returning high quality ballast onto the track.”

The production rate means more than 1400 tonnes of freshly cleaned ballast is being returned to the track each hour.

“While temporary speed restrictions remain in place on some sections of the line between Melbourne and Sydney, we have been able to reduce a significant number of speed restrictions across the entire corridor with the works completed so far. The new shoulder ballast cleaner will help us continue these improvements,” Mr Fullerton said.

“We’d like to thank the North East Victorian community for their ongoing patience while these important works are being undertaken and particularly those customers that have had passenger train journeys replaced by coach as a result of recent works.

“The new shoulder ballast cleaner is a symbol of the continued investment ARTC is making in areas that will improve performance, reliability and transit times for our customers.”

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Media Contact: Bas Bolyne – 0477 340 658

Note to editors / Newsdesks: Video of the machine in action is available at the following address: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jbhpqcongq67gkg/e4PwD3ojR0>

Additional still images also available

FAST FACTS:

'THE TRANSFORMER' LORAM HP SHOULDER BALLAST CLEANER

- Approximately **83 metres long**
- **3.00m wide**
- Variable **height of up to 5.6m** while working, and 4.3m while travelling
- Weighs in at around **236,000 kg** (excluding add-on components)
- Top speed of up to **80 km/h**
- Working speed of up to **3.2km per hour** depending on conditions and depth of cut
- Production of up to **1,200 cubic meters of ballast** an hour
- Discharge distance of waste ballast of up to **8.8 m** either side of the track centre



The Loram HP Shoulder Ballast Cleaner is a self-powered heavy duty machine that uses twin 660mm-wide digging buckets to clean ballast from the sleeper ends outward to the edge of the ballast section, digging as deep as 400mm below the top of sleeper. Scarifier teeth undercut the sleeper ends to 125mm, breaking up mud pockets and restoring drainage.

A conveyor transfers the fouled ballast to a series of vibrating screens where fines (dirty residue from the ballast) are separated and discharged up to 8.8m from the centerline of the track. The screen is set at an optimum angle for proper separation of fines and ballast.

The shoulder ballast cleaner then distributes the cleaned ballast along either or both shoulders and regulates to the shape specified by the railroad. Any ballast that may have come to rest on top of the sleepers is then broomed into the ballast section.

When the job is done, it moves efficiently to the next work site at speeds of up to 80 km/hr.

Source: http://www.loram.com/uploadedFiles/Services/Ballast_Cleaning/FINAL_SBC.pdf