



Anthony Albanese

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport



John Fullerton

Chief Executive Officer

Joint Media Statement

MAMMOTH UPGRADE TO INTERSTATE RAIL NETWORK AT AN END

In another sign of Federal Labor's commitment to the nation's rail network, the final 15 kilometres of a mammoth 711 kilometre program to upgrade a section of track from South Australia to New South Wales has been completed.

Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Infrastructure and Transport Minister Anthony Albanese said the re-railing is the final part of a significant \$288 million Nation Building program to upgrade the interstate rail network between Parkes and Cootamundra and Broken Hill and Whyalla.

"This program, originally funded under Labor's economic stimulus plan, will mean a section of track is now heavier, stronger and better able to support one of the busiest freight transport corridors in the country," he said.

At its peak the project supported around 200 jobs, as well as 40 contract steel jobs that were created at Arrium's Whyalla steelworks to meet the demand of Nation Building projects.

"Nation Building projects like this are important because they create local jobs and support regional Australian communities," Mr Albanese said.

"This re-railing upgrade, which is part of the Rudd Government's significant investment in rebuilding the nation's freight network, has supported local jobs at Whyalla's steelworks, and it will improve the productivity of the transport sector."

The re-railing program has seen 47kg/m rail replaced with heavier, stronger 60kg/m rail which will help heavier, more efficient trains use the rail corridor.

The 60kg/m rail, in combination with other infrastructure improvements in the corridor, means two key domestic steel routes now operate across stronger rail for the entire journey.

"The productivity improvements include reduced maintenance and train operating costs, better track reliability and improved transit times," Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) CEO John Fullerton said.

"Trains running on the Sydney to Perth corridor will benefit from the improved punctuality and reduced congestion due to the re-railing upgrades as well as recent concrete re-sleeper works, in one of the busiest interstate freight corridors in the country."

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