



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR MAITLAND HERITAGE SIGNAL BOX

Tuesday 23 July 2013

An historic piece of Maitland's railway history has been the recipient of a facelift thanks to the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC).

ARTC's Executive General Manager for the Hunter Valley Network, Alec Mackenzie, said the Maitland signal box, heritage listed on the NSW State Heritage Register, recently received upgrades worth around \$170,000.

The comprehensive repair work, which started in March and finished in June, saw repairs to windows and window frames, replacement of stormwater gutters, and full external painting of the building in line with other heritage buildings in the Maitland railway precinct.

Overgrown vegetation and weeds were also removed from around the structure enabling better views of the site.

"Much of the works had to be coordinated with pre-planned railway maintenance closdowns because of the Signal Box's proximity and height overlooking the railway corridor as well as taking into consideration the major coal line running beneath it," Mr Mackenzie said.

"While closdowns are largely focused on keeping the 800 kilometre Hunter Valley rail network running safely and reliably through important track maintenance works, they also allow us to undertake other important works in the rail corridor like the upgrade of this great piece of rail history," Mr Mackenzie said.

The existing signal box replaced the original structure which was swept away in the 1955 Maitland Flood. It was built on stilts above the 1955 flood level in 1956 to protect it from future flooding and is the reason for its unique height today.

The building is currently being leased by the Coalfield model railway club which has occupied the site since 1995.

"I look forward to the Maitland signal box continuing to serve the club well, as well as it looking down on the next Maitland Steam Festival in its newly renovated form, continuing a tangible and ongoing connection to Maitland's proud rail history," Mr Mackenzie said.

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Date Released: 23 July 2013

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