



AUSTRALIAN RAIL TRACK CORPORATION LTD

Media Release

THREE DAY HUNTER VALLEY SHUTDOWN FOR TRACK UPGRADES

Friday 15 November 2013

Australia's busiest rail network outside of the Sydney and Melbourne suburban passenger networks will shut down for three days next week to commission new track infrastructure, finalise major upgrade works and carry out important maintenance.

ARTC's Acting Executive General Manager for the Hunter Valley Network, Gerard Withford, said trains would not operate on the Hunter Valley network for approximately 60 hours from 6 am Tuesday 19 November through to Thursday 21 November.

"Over the three days we have approximately 111 individual jobs being completed across the 800 kilometre Hunter Valley rail network from Kooragang in Newcastle out to Narrabri in the Upper Hunter and along the Ulan line," Mr Withford said.

"We will be undertaking early works on several major projects which are designed to reduce congestion and increase the operational flexibility and reliability of the Hunter Valley rail network, as well as taking the opportunity to upgrade a significant portion of track."

Some of the major works taking place during the three days includes early construction and signalling enabling works for the Hexham Relief Roads project as well as reconfiguration works for the departure roads at Kooragang.

"These planned shutdowns not only allow ARTC to work network-wide but gives the entire coal chain, from pit to port, a clear window to schedule important maintenance."

"ARTC will also be carrying out general track maintenance activities to maintain the safety and reliability of the track for both passenger and freight train services," Mr Withford said.

Some of the critical maintenance works include:

- Around 7.7km of ballast cleaning
- Approximately 13.6 km of new rail being laid
- 1.7 km of track being reconditioned
- The renewal of two turnouts
- 50km of track resurfacing or 'tamping' and,
- 64km of rail grinding

"Pre-planned network closures of this size are scheduled over 12 months in advance and balance the need to maintain and grow the network while minimising disruption to our customers," Mr Withford said.

For information on impact to passenger services, customers should visit www.nswtrainlink.info.

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