



**Warren Truss**  
Deputy Prime Minister  
Minister for Infrastructure  
and Regional Development



**Duncan Gay**  
NSW Minister for Roads and Ports



**John Fullerton**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Rail Track  
Corporation

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## Joint Media Statement

25 October 2013

### Reducing coal train congestion at Newcastle Port

A PROJECT designed to get coal to Newcastle Port more efficiently by easing rail congestion has been given the green light to start construction next month.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Warren Truss, said the Hexham Relief Roads project would greatly improve the Hunter Valley coal network through to the port.

“It involves the construction of five new railway tracks allowing trains to be temporarily diverted off main tracks while they wait to enter the loading facilities at Newcastle Port,” Mr Truss said.

“The five tracks will each be about two kilometres in length and able to hold two or three locomotives and up to 90 wagons on each length of track.

“These new tracks will help remove train bottlenecks and give train movement controllers flexibility in the event of breakdowns or delays, reducing wait times and increasing reliability.

“They will be built at Hexham, a semi-industrial area 15 kilometres northwest of Newcastle, on the western side of the track near the Hexham Railway Station.”

New South Wales Minister for Roads and Ports, Duncan Gay, said the Hexham extra rail lines known as Relief Roads would help increase efficiency in the Hunter Valley coal rail network.

“Moving coal from mine to port is the single largest freight task in NSW, as well as a major employment source in the region, so this project is good news,” Mr Gay said.

“The project will also generate local jobs through the use of local contractors and suppliers.”

The \$163 million project is being delivered by the Upper Hunter Valley Alliance on behalf of the Australian Government-owned Australian Rail Track Corporation.

Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Rail Track Corporation, John Fullerton, said a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan had been prepared to ensure protection of the environment during construction.

“There has been full community consultation during the planning process and a toll-free Community Contact Line on 1800 722 669 is available to local residents with further questions,” Mr Fullerton said.

Project construction is scheduled to take 15 months.

#### Media Contacts

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