

MEDIA RELEASE

14 August 2013

TASRAIL CLOSES RAIL NETWORK OVERNIGHT

Severe weather conditions overnight resulted in TasRail closing the rail network just after midnight. Excessive rain, wind and hail hampered service crews that were trying to establish the extent of the risk.

One of the major concerns leading to the decision to close the network was a land slip at Kimberley Bank on the Western Line, which was unable to be assessed for its severity due to the amount of water on the track.

CEO Damien White has congratulated his Infrastructure teams on their responsiveness to a difficult situation.

“Our teams have worked throughout the night to make assessments of the track safety for our people and assets in impossible conditions.

“A number of freight movements were scheduled overnight, these services faced extreme weather and commensurate track issues that had to be managed in real time.

“To make the rare decision to close the entire track is an indication of the significant safety risk we believed was present on the mainline. Safety is paramount at TasRail, and we are prepared to take strong measures to ensure a zero harm environment.”

The track has reopened between Railton and Devonport this morning, with other sections of the track forecast to open later today. A full assessment of the condition of the land slip is currently underway with daylight and a brief reprieve from the rain improving access.

TasRail staff are monitoring rising water levels in rivers that impact the track throughout the morning.

ENDS

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About TasRail

TasRail is a State-owned Company, established on 1 December 2009 by an Act of the Tasmanian Parliament. The principal objectives of the business are set out in the Rail Company Act 2009 and require the Company to operate a rail business in Tasmania, effectively and efficiently and to operate its activities in accordance with sound commercial practice.

With a workforce of around 260 men and women, Tasmania's current freight task is approximately 2.5 million tonnes per year – generating annual revenue in the order of \$35 million. Since it was established, TasRail has spent \$97.7 million purchasing goods and services from more than 900 Tasmanian Companies.

TasRail conservatively estimates that the freight it transports by rail each year effectively removes the equivalent of 100,000 B-Double truck movements from the State's road network. Even after taking into account the total of TasRail's reported annual carbon emissions (fuel and energy), this equates to a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of some 45,800 tonnes.