

MEDIA RELEASE

27 February 2013

RAIL RENEWAL ON TRACK

The revitalisation of Tasmania's Rail Network continues to advance with the opening of the first of four major North West Rail Bridges to be officially opened today by the Premier of Tasmania, the Hon. Lara Giddings, MP and the Federal Member for Braddon, the Hon. Sid Sidebottom, MP.

The newly refurbished Don River Rail Bridge forms part of the Western Line, a strategic part of the State's Rail Network connecting the Port of Burnie with the South Line and the Bell Bay Line. Built in 1886, the Don River Rail Bridge has been subject to the deteriorating effects of a windy, saline environment and an historically poor maintenance regime. Urgent repairs and upgrade works were required to ensure the safety, integrity and long-term future operation of this critical rail link.

Tasmanian Contracting Company VEC Civil Engineering Pty Ltd carried out the rehabilitation project over a four day rail closure period, commencing on 26 December, 2012.

TasRail Chief Executive Officer Damien White said the successful completion of the \$3 million upgrade was noteworthy for a range of reasons including innovative engineering and work practices and the co-operation of customers, local government and the community.

"In just 84 hours, VEC's construction crews completed some 103 individual tasks over seven continuous shifts", Mr White said. "Works included the removal of the original wrought iron girders of riveted construction and timber ballasted deck; installation of new steel girders and concrete deck panels on the existing mass concrete piers and abutments".

Mr White revealed that planning to support the works was months in the making and required contingencies to cover risk factors such as weather delays; prevention of worker fatigue and ensuring community safety related to recreational activities in and around the river.

The upgrade of the four North West Rail Bridges is a \$24 million project funded by the Australian Government's Nation Building Program that is delivering a total of \$210.5 million investment for the upgrade Tasmania's Rail Infrastructure to 30 June 2014. The Tasmanian Government has committed a total of \$139 million of capital investment for new locomotives, wagons and other operating equipment. This combined funding commitment is designed to provide Tasmanian industry with a modern and efficient rail freight service.

New rail bridges are being built on the Leven and Forth Rivers are progressing to schedule. The recently completed new Blythe River Rail Bridge is fully operational. VEC Civil Engineering Pty Ltd successfully tendered for all four contracts.

MEDIA NOTE: TasRail can supply time lapse images of the Don River Rail Bridge refurbishment works, covering the entire 84-hour construction period.



Nation Building Program

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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 direct workforce of around 250 men and women, Tasmania's current freight task is approximately 2.5 million tonnes per year – generating annual revenue in the order of \$30 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.