

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

20 July 2016

### **RESTORATION OF CRITICAL NORTH WEST RAIL LINK**

TasRail expects to resume normal freight rail services across the rail network from tomorrow (Thursday).

Chief Executive Officer, Damien White revealed that urgent repairs to the Kimberley Rail Bridge had progressed ahead of schedule, despite recent challenging weather conditions. "Subject to final inspection, I am confident this critical rail infrastructure will re-open tomorrow", Mr White said. "This will facilitate a return to normal services and schedules right across the rail network".

To minimise disruptions to business and industry, TasRail very quickly took action to ensure the continued flow of freight across the State, including through the establishment of a temporary freight terminal at Conara, and sub-contracting road operators to transport freight to and from the major ports of Burnie and Devonport.

Mr White said he was incredibly proud of the effort and commitment of the TasRail workforce, saluting their efforts to fully service customer freight needs in parallel with completing repairs at more than 65 locations across the network, including restoration of four rail bridges.

"What has been achieved is remarkable", he said. "It's also very clear that the damage to rail infrastructure that resulted from what is widely considered one of Tasmania's worst flood events, was far less than would have been the case had the recent investment in upgrading rail infrastructure not occurred over the past six years".

The route between Burnie and Brighton is Tasmania's major freight corridor and the State's highest volume freight link. TasRail carries 68 per cent of all contestable freight on this corridor, and seeks to increase its market share well beyond this level.

While freight rail services have been operating between Boyer and Brighton to Conara, Launceston and Bell Bay, TasRail is concerned to alert the public to the imminent restoration of rail services across the North West coast.

TasRail is urging the public to be alert to the resumption of freight train services and a return to 24/7 operations. Road users are asked to obey all level crossing signs and signals and to refrain from entering the railway corridor without the prior authorisation of TasRail's Train Control.

#### **IMPORTANT MEDIA NOTE:**

- As the Kimberley Rail Bridge is a work site, only authorised persons accredited with appropriate rail safety qualifications can enter.
- TasRail will have HD video of the first train crossing the Kimberley Rail Bridge available for media.
- TasRail CEO Damien White will be available for interview in Hobart on Thursday morning. Details will be provided with TasRail's confirmation to media tomorrow that the rail link has re-opened .

For further information please contact [Jennifer.jarvis@tasrail.com.au](mailto:Jennifer.jarvis@tasrail.com.au) or on mobile 0428 139 239

### **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 240 men and women, Tasmania's hauls around 50 per cent of Tasmania's contestable freight task - generating annual revenue in the order of \$34 million. TasRail conservatively estimates that the freight it transports by rail each year effectively removes the equivalent of 200,000 B-Double truck movements from the State's road network.*