As we continue through the planning process for Inland Rail between Narrabri and North Star, here’s an overview of where we’re up to, and what to expect over the coming months.

Narrabri to North Star (N2NS) is one of 13 projects that complete Inland Rail. We are working towards finalising necessary government approvals to allow construction to begin in late 2020 and finish by approximately 2024. As we prepare for construction, you will see more rail track activity between Narrabri and North Star. We will make sure that you hear from us regularly about what’s happening in your neighbourhood.

WHAT DOES THE WORK INVOLVE?

In the N2NS project, we are upgrading approximately 188km of existing rail track and building approximately 1.6km of new rail track. The upgrade is to allow the operation of 1,800m long, double-stacked freight trains and improve transit times.

The work involves upgrading existing rail tracks, sleepers and ballast, as well as constructing a new section of rail track at Camurra to bypass the existing hairpin turn and five crossing loops.

We are also improving and/or replacing drainage and culverts, bridges, overpasses, level crossings and fencing.

WHAT’S NEW?

DESIGNING TO MANAGE FLOOD RISK
1. We are progressing through the planning process and have further developed the design of the railway upgrade, increasing height in many areas to manage flood risk.

LIBERTY STEEL DELIVERIES UNDERWAY
2. Liberty Primary Steel has secured the contract to supply the steel rail for the N2NS project. You may have seen the deliveries of this steel along the alignment, which began in mid-June.

LEVEL CROSSING SAFETY PARAMOUNT
3. We are working to ensure safety at both private and public level crossings and are engaged in conversations with landowners and local government to make sure the crossings meet the ALCAM (Australian Level Crossing Assessment Model) safety requirements.

MEHI–Gwydir Floodplain Planning
4. Pending approval, the N2NS project has been divided into two portions to enable the more complex hydrology of the 15km floodplain between the Mehi and Gwydir rivers north of Moree to be further investigated, while the upgrade of the remaining 174km progresses on schedule.
WHAT'S COMING UP?

STEEL DELIVERY AND LEVEL CROSSING SAFETY

- The delivery of steel rail and concrete sleepers will continue throughout the year until mid-2020. You may see advertising around the closure of some level crossings. All proposed closures are subject to the prior agreement of landowners and local and state government representatives. Please keep an eye out for changes to local travel routes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community engagement is vital to the successful delivery of the N2NS project. We will continue our conversations with you about important issues, including level crossings, flood mitigation measures and property impacts. We will also continue talking to landowners, local and state government, and service providers about required changes to utilities, hydrology, visual amenity, safety, and noise and vibration along the rail track.

SITE AND FIELD INVESTIGATIONS

- We will commence a new Environment Impact Statement for the floodplain portion of the project. This will involve additional site and field investigations.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

- We will soon call for Expressions of Interest from suitably qualified contractors for delivery of the project. Keep an eye out for more information on our website or local and national newspapers.

INNOVATIVE NEW RAIL FOR NARRABRI TO NORTH STAR

An innovative new rail has been designed and manufactured in Australia specifically for Inland Rail.

The new rail is designed to match the profile shape that’s currently ground onto the rails in high-speed, straight tracks. The new design helps to steer the wheels very lightly and stop train wheels from ‘hunting’ (wobbling slightly), removing the need for rail grinding. The design is expected to reduce rail wear and maintenance costs during the early stages of the rail life.

Designed in collaboration with ARTC teams and Liberty Primary Steel in Whyalla, the first batches of the new rail were delivered by train on the track between Narrabri to North Star in June.

UPCOMING LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES

INTERESTED IN BIODIVERSITY OFFSETS?

The Inland Rail project aims to minimise the clearing of native vegetation as much as possible. Where removal is unavoidable, we are required to offset any native vegetation affected by our work. We would like to hear from landowners who might have parts of their property suitable for us to provide permanent biodiversity offsets.

Across NSW, we are investigating native vegetation areas larger than 10ha and connected to other areas of vegetation and habitats, such as creek lines. If you might have suitable areas, no matter how far from the railway line you are located, please get in touch.

You can contact us on 1800 732 761 or inlandrailnsw@artc.com.au

WORK WITH INLAND RAIL

Inland Rail is committed to using local suppliers, skills and labour wherever possible, and ensuring environmental, community and economic issues are considered throughout our procurement process.

There are three ways you can register your interest as a supplier online:

1. Register for Inland Rail tenders via: tenderlink.com/inlandrail
3. Register to connect with other suppliers through the Industry Capability Network at gateway.icn.org.au

Please note that costs apply and will only be suitable depending on your field and company.

As we progress with tenders and shortlisted tenderers, we will be holding supplier briefings.

If you are registered with us directly, you’ll be the first to know about project updates and event invitations.
INLAND RAIL IN THE COMMUNITY

We celebrated our first round of community sponsorships with two great events in the N2NS project area in July. The Inland Rail Community Sponsorship and Donations Program provides funding to eligible community groups that give back to their local regions through initiatives that enhance regional wellbeing.

Moree Aboriginal Interagency received funding from program for the Miyay Birray NAIDOC Cultural Family Fun Day, held in Moree on 11 July. The family fun day brought the community together, creating a great space for generations to connect, share knowledge and enjoy a day out. There was a range of activities from traditional women’s weaving classes to a petting zoo, providing entertainment for all members of the family.

We also enjoyed being involved in the North Star Trail Ride on 27–28 July, another recipient of the community sponsorships program.

The North Star Trail Ride is an annual, non-competitive event, raising funds for local community groups in and around North Star. With trails to suit all levels of skill and all ages, the event saw a huge turnout from the local community and further afield for a fun weekend of riding and community celebration.

We love being involved in these local events and look forward to contributing to more community initiatives through the next round of sponsorships.

APPLY NOW FOR OUR SPONSORSHIPS AND DONATIONS PROGRAM

We’re always looking for new opportunities to make a difference in the regional communities we live and work in.

The Inland Rail Community Sponsorships and Donations program aims to support local community groups that are running events and activities which contribute to local and regional prosperity, wellbeing and sustainability.

Financial requests between $1000 and $4000, from eligible community organisations, are considered.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

There are four open rounds each year. The current round is open for applications until 6pm (AEST) on 31 October 2019. For more information please visit inlandrail.artc.com.au/sponsorships If you have any questions, please email communitysponsorships@artc.com.au

PROJECT TIMELINE

- Concept assessment (2015)
- Reference design (2016 – late 2017)
- Project assessment (late 2017 – early 2020)
- Project approval (early 2020)
- Construction (late 2020 – 2024)

The North Star Trail Ride was a fun weekend of riding and community celebration in North Star, supported by Inland Rail sponsorship.
LOOK OUT, TRAINS OPERATING ON LEVEL CROSSINGS

Trains and track-based equipment will operate throughout pre-construction of the N2NS project. This means that some level crossings will also remain active. Using existing tracks helps us to transport materials more efficiently as we build the new rail line.

If you live around the N2NS project, especially close to Edgeroi, Bellata, Moree, Crooble, Milguy, Croppa Creek and North Star, you would know that smaller harvests have meant fewer trains on the line than usual.

However, as we prepare for construction on N2NS, train activity will increase on the track.

Our work also involves using heavy machinery and vehicles both within the rail corridor and travelling to and from the construction site.

SAFETY TIPS

1. Please follow the road rules when driving across level crossings.

2. This includes giving way to any oncoming trains or other equipment using the track.

3. Train operators will sound their horn as they approach all level crossings, but motorists need to take care; always stop and look for trains.

4. For your safety, please do not enter the rail corridor or the construction sites. Please use added caution when driving or walking and observe signage.

5. If you’re driving at night or in low light, make sure you can see the other side of the rail track before crossing. Thanks to your feedback, ARTC has recently replaced the reflective strips on the side of wagons on all trains that are completing deliveries, for better visibility in the dark.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

ARTC is committed to working with landowners, communities, state and local governments as a vital part of our planning and consultation work, and we value your input. If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, please let us know.

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