About Inland Rail

Inland Rail is a once-in-a-generation project connecting regional Australia to domestic and international markets, transforming the way we move freight around the country. It will complete the ‘spine’ of the national freight network between Melbourne and Brisbane via regional Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

This new 1,700km line is the largest freight rail infrastructure project in Australia. It will connect our farms, mines, cities and ports to global markets and will support Australia’s four richest farming regions; provide supply chain benefits and substantial cost savings for producers.

The Australian Government, through the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), is delivering the multi-billion dollar infrastructure in partnership with the private sector. The Government has committed $8.4bn to deliver Inland Rail, on top of the $900m already funded.

ARTC’s commitment

ARTC is committed to limiting the impact of operational activities on the communities in which we work. As part of the project approval process, noise and vibration impact assessments will be undertaken to determine any impacts to sensitive receivers (such as residential, schools, educational institutions and child care centres) and if any measures to reduce and mitigate impacts are required.

What is being delivered in New South Wales?

As part of the Inland Rail Programme seven projects will be delivered in New South Wales. These include:

- **Albury to Illabo**: enhancement works and increased height clearances along a 185km corridor
- **Illabo to Stockinbingal**: approximately 37km of new track
- **Stockinbingal to Parkes**: enhancement works and increased height clearances along a 169km corridor
- **Parkes to Narramie**: upgrade of approximately 106km of existing track and 5km of new track
- **Narramie to Narrabri**: approximately 307km new track
- **Narrabri to North Star**: upgrade of approximately 188km of existing track and 1.6km of new track
- **North Star to NSW/QLD Border**: approximately 37km of new track.

Each of the projects are at different stages of development and delivery. Up to date information on project status can be found on the Inland Rail website at inlandrail.com.au.

What type of noise and vibration emissions will be generated?

When Inland Rail is operational it will have the potential to impact the amenity of nearby sensitive receivers.

Some sections of Inland Rail will involve upgrades of existing structures and tracks along the rail corridor, to allow for trains to be heavier, longer and travel faster, and works to existing level crossings. New sections of track and new level crossings will also be established to create the missing links between Melbourne and Brisbane.

Train volumes will increase when Inland Rail is operational and the through connection between Melbourne and Brisbane is completed in 2025.

A note about this fact sheet

This fact sheet describes operational noise and vibration assessment and measures to reduce and mitigate impacts along the Inland Rail route in New South Wales.

For information on operational noise and vibration in other states please contact the Inland Rail team at inlandrailenquiries@artc.com.au or on 1800 732 761.
Operational modelling is undertaken to consider the increase in train volumes and the noise impacts at three points in time:

1. On opening of each individual project
2. On opening of the completed Inland Rail between Melbourne and Brisbane (2025)
3. At a year when operating at full capacity (likely 2040).

Noise and vibration emissions will be associated with trains travelling along the rail line including:

- trains passing or idling on the network
- movement of rail wagons when trains change speed, and during shunting activities
- trains operating on track with irregularities, resulting in flanging and wheel squeal
- operation of signals at level crossings and use of train horns by train operators
- standard operational maintenance activities, involving upkeep work.

All impacts associated with the operation of Inland Rail (including noise and vibration) are assessed in the environmental impact assessment (EIA). Depending on the type of project this could be via an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Review of Environmental Factors (REF).

**How will operational rail noise be assessed and managed?**

ARTC has developed the Inland Rail Noise and Vibration Strategy to guide the management of noise and vibration across Inland Rail. In accordance with the Strategy, operational rail noise and vibration will be assessed in accordance with the Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline (RING). This Strategy outlines the criteria that will be used to assess noise and vibration from operation of the railway line.

RING provides noise and vibration trigger levels, above which feasible and reasonable noise abatement must be considered. The EIA will provide a worst-case noise assessment. The EIS will identify properties likely to exceed RING trigger levels and lists a suite of potential noise mitigation measures, including noise walls, property treatments and track lubricators. ARTC acknowledge that some residents will not have experienced rail noise before. The impacts of rail noise on residents and other noise sensitive receivers will be assessed in accordance with the Strategy and RING.

If planning approval is granted, the noise assessment will be refined based on detailed design. The refined assessment is known as the Operational Noise and Vibration Review (ONVR) and it is at this point that ARTC will start discussing specific noise mitigation measures with any impacted community members.

**Is noise assessment required?**

A noise assessment is only required where ARTC is upgrading track or constructing new track. Areas outside of specific project areas will not be the subject of an assessment.

For all other areas of track, ARTC has developed a Rail Noise Abatement Program to address this issue. This is a voluntary program available once operations have commenced and will provide noise abatement to residential dwellings that meet eligibility requirements (including noise levels).

ARTC will be conducting community information sessions to support the release of each project’s EIA. These sessions will enable you to talk to ARTC staff about the EIA findings and what this means for your property and your community. Up to date information on project status and upcoming community events can be found on the Inland Rail website at inlandrail.com.au.

**Want to know more?**

ARTC is committed to working with communities and landowners, local and State governments as a vital part of our work, and we value your input.

If you have any questions or comments about noise and vibration please let us know.

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