

4 March 2019

## Rail infrastructure working for the Tasmanian forestry industry

Based on strong industry demand and improved network conditions, TasRail has made the decision to reopen the Parattah Log Siding (near Oatlands) on the South Line.

The Parattah Log Siding was once a major log yard and is part of the Tasmanian Rail Network.

TasRail CEO Steven Dietrich said that the reopening was made possible thanks to the program of targeted investment by the Australian and Tasmanian governments, in close consultation with major industry.

The Tasmanian and Australian Governments investment into the freight rail network has delivered strong growth in rail volumes in recent years.

Tranche One of the Freight Rail Revitalisation program, which is part of the Australian Government's *Infrastructure Investment Program (IIP)*, has allowed rail, sleepers, formation and bridges across the Tasmanian network to be upgraded to a fit-for-purpose standard – the result being increased demand from existing and new customers.

“Due in large part to the improving condition of the network, TasRail started hauling logs again in 2013 between Brighton and Bell Bay – providing industry with a five day per week service. Since restarting on rail, TasRail has hauled almost half a million tonnes of logs, safely for industry to the export port of Bell Bay,” Mr Dietrich said.

Volumes have grown each year and TasRail is forecasting to haul around 130,000 to 140,000 tonnes in the current financial from Brighton to Bell Bay. Current industry demand will see this increase to around 160,000 to 170,000 tonnes in the next financial year.

“TasRail is investing IIP funds to rebuild the rail siding and log loading platform, to provide industry with a dedicated site to load wood from the south-east forests,” Mr Dietrich said.

The rail will directly link in with the Northern Tasmania Forestry Hub, recently announced by Prime Minister Scott Morrison. Parattah is expected to handle approximately 100,000 tonnes of logs per year.

The First Tranche of the Australian and Tasmanian Governments' joint \$119.6 million investment in the Freight Rail Revitalisation program will continue to upgrade priority sections of the Tasmanian rail network until completed in mid-2019. Tranche Two of the program which also has joint funding of \$119.6 million will start in July this year and be completed in mid-2023.

“This continued investment will further underpin Tasmanian rail’s capacity to deliver freight safely and efficiently, supporting businesses across the state, like forestry, and the entire Tasmanian economy,” Mr Dietrich said.

“TasRail already has strong commercial arrangements with existing forestry customers for haulage, stockpile and log loading at Brighton. With the commencement of the Parattah Log Siding project TasRail will be providing around 260,000 tonnes per annum of log capacity for the southern and south eastern forest estates.”

### **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 230 men and women, TasRail's rail freight task in 2017/18 was around 3 million tonnes. TasRail conservatively estimates that the freight it transports by rail each year effectively removes the equivalent of 140,000 B-Double truck movements from the State's road network.*

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