

**MEDIA RELEASE****Inland Rail shortlists three for Narrabri to North Star (N2NS) SP1 section****Tuesday, 3 December 2019**

In another milestone for the Narrabri to North Star (N2NS) section of the Inland Rail program, the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) has announced the shortlisting of three construction firms to deliver the multi-million-dollar main works contract.

The shortlisting follows a rigorous expression of interest process, which drew an extremely high standard of responses from local and interstate construction firms.

The scope of works for this section of N2NS will upgrade approximately 171km of existing track between Narrabri and North Star including the construction of multiple bridges. This project is integral to the overall rolling out of the once-in-a-generation Inland Rail which will redefine the freight task across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

Inland Rail Chief Executive Officer Richard Wankmuller said the project's next works package will be awarded to the very best available team and ARTC is now entering a formal Request for Tender phase to determine who will be chosen.

"There are three excellent tenderers in line for this project including Leadlease Engineering Pty Ltd, RailFirst (a joint venture between Downer EDI and Seymour White) and Trans4m Rail (a joint venture between Rhomberg Rail Australia, BGC Contracting and SEE Civil)," Mr Wankmuller said.

"The successful contractor for this portion of the work will be required to deliver initiatives and meet targets related to industry participation, employment and workforce development with the Inland Rail team working closely with them to achieve these targets," he said.

Mr Wankmuller also pointed out that as the overall program proceeds Inland Rail's goal is to create meaningful change in communities along the alignment by creating a pathway to support longer term employment outcomes. Inland Rail will result in many benefits for regional centers such as Narrabri, Moree and Goondiwindi as well as smaller centres.

"I know there is excitement building in the N2NS section as we move towards construction next year and local companies are looking to be ready to hit the ground running once the successful tenderer is announced.

"In order to help local companies, get ready three regional supplier briefings are being held this week for local businesses. These briefings are intended to help get as many people as possible involved with the project.

"From the outset Inland Rail has had a focus on creating opportunities for regional workforces and we are also engaging with businesses right across Australia to fill the contracts for the project's build," he said.

"We see Inland Rail as a way to create meaningful change in communities along the alignment by developing a pathway to support longer term employment outcomes. Companies can register for the N2NS project-related subcontract or supply opportunity via ICN Gateway at [gateway.icn.org.au](http://gateway.icn.org.au)."

**// ENDS //****Media contact: Chris Leslight | Mobile 0427 691 262**

**Editor's please note:** This section has been divided into two portions (separable portion 1 and separable portion 2 – SP1 and SP2) 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 remaining 174km upgrade progresses on schedule. This media release is referring to the SP1 section of works.