



Australian Government

Department of the Environment

# Referral of proposed action

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**Project title:** Parkes to Narromine section of Inland Rail

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## 1 Summary of proposed action

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### 1.1 Short description

The Australian Government has committed to building a significant new piece of national transport infrastructure by constructing an inland railway between Melbourne and Brisbane, via central-west New South Wales (NSW) and Toowoomba in Queensland (**Figure 1.1**). The Inland Rail project ('Inland Rail') is a major national project that will enhance Australia's existing national rail network and serve the interstate freight market.

Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd (ARTC) ('the proponent') is seeking approval to construct and operate the Parkes and Narromine section of Inland Rail (the proposed action). The proposed action is generally located in the existing rail corridor between the towns of Parkes and Narromine in NSW (refer **Figure 1.2**). The proposed action would involve upgrading the existing line between Parkes and Narromine (approximately 106 kilometres) including the existing track and track formation, replacement of culverts and bridges, construction of new passing loops, rationalisation of level crossings and curve easing.

A new north to west connection line is also proposed at the southern end of the referral area near Parkes. The north to west connection provides a link between the existing Broken Hill line (the west line) and the existing Parkes to Narromine line, which it rejoins at about 452.450 kilometres on the line. The connection would enable trains travelling to and from the west on the Broken Hill line to travel north, and for trains travelling south on the Parkes to Narromine line to travel west. The referral area encompasses all land on which the above works will be undertaken, including the existing rail corridor and adjoining lands where required, as shown on **Figure 1.2**.

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## 1.2 Latitude and longitude

location point      Latitude      Longitude  
degrees   minutes   seconds   degrees   minutes   seconds

The coordinates of the turning points of the rail line from south to north are as follows.

Longitude (I)	Latitude (I)	Longitude (I)	Latitude (I)
148°8'15.0"" E	33°8'10.9"" S	148°11'48.1"" E	32°45'48.2"" S
148°7'48.3"" E	33°7'51.1"" S	148°10'32.5"" E	32°42'45.1"" S
148°7'21.7"" E	33°7'6.5"" S	148°10'33.24"" E	32°42'32.8"" S
148°6'50.4"" E	33°5'37.9"" S	148°10'40.44"" E	32°42'20.1"" S
148°6'48.2"" E	33°3'52.4"" S	148°10'42.24"" E	32°42'11.1"" S
148°7'28.5"" E	33°1'42.1"" S	148°9'53.28"" E	32°38'33.0"" S
148°7'18.4"" E	33°1'11.9"" S	148°9'52.2"" E	32°38'11.7"" S
148°7'18.4"" E	33°0'55.0"" S	148°9'57.96"" E	32°37'25.2"" S
148°8'8.5"" E	32°58'55.0"" S	148°9'29.52"" E	32°35'2.4"" S
148°10'13.4"" E	32°56'22.4"" S	148°9'24.84"" E	32°34'49.3"" S
148°10'20.2"" E	32°56'11.4"" S	148°8'38.04"" E	32°33'20.2"" S
148°10'39.7"" E	32°52'47.7"" S	148°8'19.68"" E	32°32'38.2"" S
148°10'46.2"" E	32°52'37.1"" S	148°8'15.0"" E	32°32'20.7"" S
148°12'6.8"" E	32°51'14.4"" S	148°7'51.6"" E	32°27'35.5"" S
148°12'14.0"" E	32°51'4.1"" S	148°8'3.4"" E	32°26'28.7"" S
148°12'16.5"" E	32°50'51.7"" S	148°8'21.4"" E	32°25'26.3"" S
148°12'9.7"" E	32°49'29.9"" S	148°8'36.2"" E	32°24'23.1"" S
148°12'11.5"" E	32°49'23.5"" S	148°9'13.3"" E	32°23'22.8"" S
148°12'47.8"" E	32°48'25.0"" S	148°9'56.5"" E	32°22'1.9"" S
148°12'54.3"" E	32°47'28.3"" S	148°10'14.8"" E	32°20'36.0"" S
148°12'52.9"" E	32°47'19.8"" S	148°12'43.5"" E	32°16'11.4"" S
148°12'34.9"" E	32°46'41.9"" S	148°12'49.6"" E	32°15'55.2"" S
148°12'28.8"" E	32°46'35.8"" S	148°12'54.0"" E	32°15'31.2"" S
148°12'1.8"" E	32°46'18.0"" S	148°13'41.5"" E	32°14'29.6"" S
148°11'53.5"" E	32°46'8.0"" S	148°13'47.6"" E	32°14'17.0"" S

## 1.3 Locality and property description

The referral area is located in central-west NSW. The proposed action traverses two local government areas (LGAs), with the southern section of the referral area located in the Parkes LGA, and the northern section in the Narromine LGA (refer to **Figure 1.2**). The two LGAs are predominantly rural, with the main local industries based around agriculture (mainly wheat and wool) and mining.

Parkes is located on the Newell Highway at the southern end of the proposed action. The town is located close to the geographical centre of NSW, about 785 kilometres south-west of Brisbane, 290 kilometres west of Sydney and 595 kilometres north-east of Melbourne. Parkes has a number of freight industries and service providers as a result of its central NSW location, and its position on a major highway and rail corridor. The main towns in the surrounding area are Forbes (located about 30 kilometres to the south-west of Parkes) and Orange (located about 87 kilometres to the east of Parkes).

Peak Hill is a small village located in the Parkes LGA about halfway along referral area. Peak Hill is located about 47 kilometres north of Parkes, and 55 kilometres south of Narromine.

Narromine is located in the Narromine LGA about 100 kilometres north of Parkes, on the Macquarie River and the Mitchell Highway. Narromine is located about 100 kilometres west of Dubbo, which is an important regional service centre.

The proposed action will generally be located along the existing rail alignment within the rail corridor between Parkes and Narromine. The southern end of the referral area commences just west of Parkes near where Brolgan Road crosses the rail line, about 3.5 kilometres from Parkes Station. The rail line passes through the western outskirts of Peak Hill to the west of the main residential area. It is located about 980 metres west of the Newell Highway (which passes through the eastern side of the town). The northern end of the referral area is located at 555.350 kilometres, which is just south of where Old Blackwater Road crosses the rail line about 500 metres west of the town, and about 1.1 kilometres south-west of Narromine Station.

The existing rail corridor is owned by the NSW Government (Transport for NSW) and leased to ARTC.

1.4

Size of the development footprint or work area (hectares)

The width of the rail corridor varies between Parkes to Narromine. The rail corridor is defined by fences located approximately 20 metres either side of the rail line, however in some sections where fences are not present the rail corridor may be wider, extending out to about 30 to 40 metres from the rail line. The development footprint varies along the length of the proposed action depending on the construction activities that are to take place in any given area. Further as discussed in **Section 2** the proposed action may require works outside the rail corridor including those associated with curve easing and level crossing rationalisation. These works are anticipated to be generally in close proximity to the rail corridor subject to further design. The location of the north to west connection line, which would mostly be located outside the existing rail corridor, is yet to be confirmed.

The referral area includes the construction footprint, including provision for ancillary facilities, for the total 106 kilometres of the rail line; resulting in a referral area of approximately 923 hectares. A new north–west connection rail line is proposed on the southern side of the referral area near Parkes. The north to west connection would provide a link between the existing Broken Hill rail line (the west line) and the existing Parkes to Narromine line, which it re-joins at about 452.450 kilometres.

1.5

Street address of the site

The site on which the proposed action will be undertaken is the rail corridor generally between Parkes and Narromine. There is no applicable street address.

1.6

Lot description

The proposed action is generally located in an existing operational rail corridor that typically does not contain lot descriptors.

1.7

Local Government Area and Council contact (if known)

The southern portion of the proposed action is within Parkes Local Government Area (LGA) and the northern portion is within Narromine LGA.

The proposed action is subject to assessment under Part 5 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The capital investment value of the proposed action is estimated to be over \$50 million and as a result the proposed action is State Significant Infrastructure under *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011*. The proposed action is therefore subject to Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required for the approval of the NSW Minister for Planning.

The proposed action will not be subject to local government approval.

1.8

Time frame

The proposed action, which is planned to commence in 2018, is expected to take about 18 months to construct.

1.9

Alternatives to proposed action

	No
X	Yes, you must also complete <b>Section 2.2</b>

1.10

Alternative time frames etc

X	No
	Yes, you must also complete <b>Section 2.3</b> . For each alternative, location, time frame, or activity identified, you must also complete details in <b>Sections 1.2-1.9, 2.4-2.7 and 3.3</b> (where relevant).

1.11

State assessment

	No
X	Yes, you must also complete <b>Section 2.5</b> .

1.12	<b>Component of larger action</b>		No
		X	Yes, you must also complete <b>Section 2.7.</b>
1.13	<b>Related actions/proposals</b>		No
		X	Yes, provide details: The proposed action forms one of the 14 sections of the Inland Rail
1.14	<b>Australian Government funding</b>		No
		X	Yes, provide details: The Australian Government has committed funding to undertake planning, engineering design and environmental approvals to start construction of Inland Rail.
1.15	<b>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park</b>	X	No
			Yes, you must also complete <b>Section 3.1 (h), 3.2 (e)</b>

## 2 Detailed description of proposed action

### 2.1 Description of proposed action

Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd (ARTC) ('the proponent') is seeking approval to construct and operate the Parkes to Narromine section of Inland Rail ('the proposed action').

#### **Overview of the Proposed Action**

The proposed action would involve upgrading the existing rail line between Parkes and Narromine including:

- upgrading the existing track and track formation
- replacement culverts and bridges
- construction of three new passing loops, at Goonumbla, Peak Hill, and Timjelly
- rationalisation and upgrading level crossings
- curve easing
- constructing a new north-to west connection line near Parkes.

The following ancillary works would also be undertaken:

- changes to some property access roads and the local road network in some locations as a result of the rationalisation of level crossings
- flood protection works
- stormwater drainage works.
- upgrading signalling and communications
- establishing or upgrading existing fencing of the rail corridor
- relocation of some services and utilities.

A more detailed description of the works associated with the proposed action is contained in the sections below.

The referral area is referred to in the later assessment sections and is the entire length of the Parkes to Narromine rail corridor currently subject to investigation assuming an average rail corridor width of 40 metres and the north to west connection area.

#### **Main corridor works**

A preliminary concept design for the proposed action is currently being prepared. Key features of the preliminary concept design are described below. These design elements will be further defined as the concept design progresses.

##### **Track works**

Proposed track works would involve upgrading the existing track for a distance of about 106 kilometres, including provision of:

- upgraded formation
- new track ballast
- new heavy duty concrete sleepers
- new 60 kilogram rail tracks.

Track work would also involve curve easing. Existing tight curves (those with a geometrical radius of less than 800 metres) would be replaced with larger radius curves. This would involve providing new track alignments

and straightening the rail line. Curve easing may require works outside the existing rail corridor which have been included in the referral area.

### **Track formations, earthworks and drainage**

Bulk earthworks would be required in some sections along the referral area. Subject to the outcomes of the concept design process, the earthworks required could range from relatively minor improvements relating to drainage works or tidying up of ballast or total reconstruction of the existing track formation, to new track formation for new sections of track.

Further investigations are currently being undertaken to confirm the extent of works likely to be required to meet the Inland Rail performance specification, based on the condition of the existing track formation.

Where possible, bulk earthworks would include reusing and/or replacing existing material (with treatment as required) to provide the required subgrade, general fill and structural fill for the track formation. Cut and fill operations would also be required in some areas to achieve the required track grades.

Existing drainage within the rail corridor would also be upgraded to suit the upgraded track formation and address existing drainage issues.

Consideration would be given to appropriate flood immunity when designing all new track formations, embankments, and cuttings for the Inland Rail route.

### **Culverts and bridges**

During the concept design process, all structures will be assessed for compliance with the Inland Rail performance specification. Any bridges and culverts that do not comply, have limited life spans, or cannot be feasibly made to comply, would be replaced as part of the proposed action.

### **North to West Connection Line**

A new north–west connection line is proposed on the southern side of the referral area near Parkes. The north to west connection would provide a link between the existing Broken Hill line (the west line) and the existing Parkes to Narromine line, which it re-joins at about 452.450 kilometres.

### **Passing loops**

Three new passing loops would be required to allow trains to pass at the following potential locations:

- Goonumbla
- Peak Hill
- Timjelly.

This would involve constructing new sections of track, each up to about 2165 metres long (to accommodate an 1800 metre long train), roughly parallel to the existing track. The passing loops would be constructed within the rail corridor where possible and would provide for possible future upgrades to accommodate a 3600 metre long train.

### **Road/level crossings**

There are 72 public and private (both active and passive) level crossings within the referral area. Each crossing was reviewed against the following criteria to determine the appropriate upgrade works required:

- existing safety issues
- opportunities for alternative access arrangements
- property acquisition and easement requirements
- road closure implications under the NSW *Roads Act 1993*
- road network, access and local traffic implications
- estimated implementation costs.

The required upgrade works form part of the proposed action.

## **Sidings**

Existing sidings would be upgraded to suit the new track arrangements. Suitable turnouts would be provided within the rail corridor as part of the proposed action. Private operators would be responsible for any works outside the rail corridor.

## **Other ancillary works and infrastructure**

### **Changes to property accesses**

Where an existing access to or within a property is proposed to be removed, altered or severed by the closure of a level crossing, additional works to reinstate access to the property may need to be undertaken, pending detailed investigation. This may require works outside the rail corridor but have been included in the referral area.

### **Changes to local road networks**

Changes to some property access roads and the local road network may be required in some locations as a result of the rationalisation of level crossings. In some locations, provision of a new grade separated crossing (in the form of a road or rail bridge) may be required. This may require works outside the rail corridor but have been included in the referral area.

### **Signalling, power and communications**

New and/or upgraded signalling, power and communications would be provided along the referral area as required. These works, which would mainly be undertaken within the existing rail corridor, would involve the provision of underground and above ground services.

Utilities (such as water, sewer, electrical, gas and telecommunications) located within or crossing the rail corridor may need to be relocated in consultation with the relevant utility owner.

## **Indicative construction outline**

A preliminary review of the main construction activities that would be undertaken is provided below. The information presented below is indicative only and would be subject to confirmation during future design stages.

### **Construction sequence**

The sequence of construction activities would be dependent on local conditions and track operational requirements. A typical construction sequence is as follows:

- establish construction work sites and environmental controls
- undertake enabling works, including the excavation, installation and relocation of services
- remove redundant structures and material, including:
  - removal and storage of existing track components and ballast
  - demolition of existing sub-structures
  - excavation of unsuitable material.
- construct new structures, including:
  - placement of suitable formation material
  - installation of new culverts and associated structures.
- track works including as required:
  - removal and storage of existing track components and ballast
  - upgrade existing formation
  - construction of cuts and fills
  - replacement of ballast
  - installation of new track and track components.

- installation of new services
- commissioning works
- site rehabilitation.

Some works not essential to the commencement of operations may be deferred and undertaken at a later stage.

#### **Site compounds, work areas and access**

The proposed action would require the establishment of site compounds and work areas along the entire length of the proposed action. These would be located within the existing rail corridor where practicable, however some may need to be located outside the rail corridor where there is insufficient space available or for safety reasons. All works would be undertaken in the referral area, detailed in **Section 1.4**.

Major compounds and storage areas would be located preferably on disturbed land, close to major access roads and clear of sensitive environmental areas and residences as far as possible. A number of smaller compounds and storage areas would be required at strategic locations along the referral area, for example near bridges. All works would be undertaken in the referral area, detailed in **Section 1.4**.

Access to the rail corridor and construction areas would be via existing ARTC access roads located off public roads. Should access through private property be required, then this would only be undertaken with permission of the land owner.

#### **Indicative construction program and work hours**

The proposed action is expected to take about 18 months to construct and is planned to commence in 2018.

The majority of construction works are expected to be undertaken during standard working hours. Due to the need for works within an operational rail corridor, some construction activities would be undertaken during track possessions on a 24-hour basis. Other activities, such as delivery of oversized plant and materials, may also need to be undertaken outside standard hours.

### **Operation of the proposed action**

#### **Train operations**

Freight train numbers are expected to increase to an annual average of 11 trains per day in 2025, and 17.5 trains per day in 2040 (from the existing two to three trains per day). The trains would be a mix of grain, intermodal (freight) and other general transport trains. Total annual tonnages would increase to about 11.8 million tonnes in 2025 and about 19 million tonnes in 2040 (from the existing two million tonnes of grain per year).

Proposed freight train speeds would vary according to axle loads, and range from 80 km/h (30 tonne) to 115 km/h (21 tonne) in comparison to existing train speeds that range from 90 to 100 km/h.

#### **Maintenance activities**

Standard ARTC maintenance activities would be undertaken during operations. Typically, these activities could involve minor maintenance works such as bridge and culvert inspections, through to major maintenance such as reconditioning of track and topping up of ballast as required.

#### **Activities Excluded from this Referral**

The Parkes to Narromine rail line is an existing operational rail line and will continue to operate prior to and during the works subject to this referral. Accordingly, this ongoing use of the rail line is not part of this referral. This includes any associated maintenance works and other minor works undertaken by ARTC in accordance with existing ARTC procedures and processes and under relevant State legislative requirements.

### **2.2 Alternatives to taking the proposed action**

The proposed action is required to meet the forecast growth in freight volumes and address existing constraints associated with the existing coastal railway route. The proposed action would satisfy the relevant components of the *National Land Freight Strategy* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012).

As noted by the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development (2013), 'an efficient rail freight network is the key to effective supply chains, national productivity and competitiveness'. The *2015 Australian Infrastructure Audit* (Infrastructure Australia, 2015) notes that the demand for freight rail infrastructure is projected to grow. It also notes that freight rail will need to play a growing role in the movement of goods



between ports and inland freight terminals, and in the movement of containerised and general freight over longer distances.

Not undertaking the action has been determined not feasible in order to meet the forecast growth in freight volume.

### **2.3 Alternative locations, time frames or activities that form part of the referred action**

Two major studies have been undertaken in relation to the development of an inland rail route between Melbourne and Brisbane. The first study, the *North–South Rail Corridor Study* (Department of Transport and Regional Services, 2006) considered potential corridors for the rail line. This study identified that the ‘far western corridor’ through Parkes would be the best option.

In 2010 an Inland Rail Alignment Study analysed alternative rail corridor options in stages; in terms of operational, engineering and environmental factors. At each stage the options were analysed in sufficient detail to enable key decisions to be made and finally narrow the rail corridor options down to a single rail alignment. The successive stages of route analysis included:

- identification of the route – evaluation of the route options and preliminary analysis for the three main areas: Melbourne to Parkes; Parkes to Moree; and Moree to Brisbane
- analysis of the route – the route was analysed in terms of capital cost, environmental impacts and journey time, as well as its preliminary economic and financial viability
- development of the preferred alignment – the alignment was developed considering environmental and engineering factors.

### **2.4 Context, planning framework and state/local government requirements**

As outlined in the following sections, *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007* (the Infrastructure SEPP) provides that the proposed action may be carried out without consent. As the proposed action has a capital investment value of greater than \$50 million and it is considered to have the potential to significantly impact the environment it is subject to the assessment and approval provisions of Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act. An EIS is required to support the application for approval of the proposed action by the NSW Minister for Planning.

### **Consideration of requirements under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979**

The EP&A Act and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* (the Regulation) provide the framework for development assessment in NSW. The EP&A Act and the Regulation include provisions to ensure that the potential environmental impacts of a development are considered in the decision making process prior to proceeding to construction.

### **Application of Part 5 of the EP&A Act**

Part 5 of the EP&A Act defines the assessment process for proposals that do not require development consent. In accordance with section 110(1), ARTC would be the proponent and a determining authority for the proposed action. Section 111 imposes a duty on a determining authority to ‘*examine and take into account to the fullest extent possible all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment by reason of that activity*’.

Section 112(1) provides that ‘*a determining authority shall not carry out an activity, or grant an approval in relation to an activity .... that is likely to significantly affect the environment (including critical habitat) or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, unless (a) the determining authority has obtained or been furnished with and has examined and considered an environmental impact statement in respect of the activity*’.

In accordance with the requirements of section 112, ARTC has formed the opinion that the proposed action has the potential to significantly affect the environment. As a result, an EIS is required.

### **State Significant Infrastructure and the application of Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act**

State Significant Infrastructure is development that is declared under section 115U of the EP&A Act to be State Significant Infrastructure. Under section 115U(3) development may be declared to be State Significant Infrastructure if it is:

*‘(3) Development of the following kind that a State environmental planning policy permits to be carried out without development consent under Part 4:*

*(a) infrastructure,*

*(b) other development that (but for this Part and within the meaning of Part 5) would be an activity for which the proponent is also the determining authority and would, in the opinion of the proponent, require an environmental impact statement to be obtained under Part 5.'*

Clause 14 and Schedule 3 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (the State and Regional Development SEPP) operate to make the proposed action State Significant Infrastructure. The proposed action is therefore subject to Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act.

Under section 115W of the EP&A Act, the approval of the NSW Minister for Planning is required for State Significant Infrastructure. In accordance with section 115X (Application for approval of State Significant Infrastructure):

*(1) The proponent may apply for the approval of the Minister under this Part to carry out State Significant Infrastructure.*

*(2) The application is to:*

*(a) describe the infrastructure, and*

*(b) contain any other matter required by the Director-General.*

*(3) The application is to be lodged with the Director-General.*

### **Consideration of relevant environmental planning policies**

#### **State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007**

The Infrastructure SEPP clarifies the consent arrangements for infrastructure projects. According to clause 8(1) *'if there is an inconsistency between this Policy and any other environmental planning instrument, whether made before or after the commencement of this policy, this policy prevails to the extent of the inconsistency'.*

The proposed action meets the definition of rail infrastructure facilities, which are defined by clause 78 of the Infrastructure SEPP as *'railway tracks, associated track structures, rail freight terminals, sidings and freight intermodal facilities'.*

Clause 79(1) provides that development for the purpose of a railway, or for rail infrastructure facilities, may be carried out by or on behalf of a public authority without consent on any land. This clause also specifies the conditions whereby such development can be carried out without consent on land reserved under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. As the referral area is not reserved under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, these conditions do not apply.

As a result of the application of clause 79, the proposed action is permissible without consent.

#### **State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011**

Sections 89C(2) and 115U(2) of the EP&A Act provide that a SEPP may declare any development, or any class or description of development, to be State Significant Infrastructure or State significant development. The State and Regional Development SEPP provides definitions of State Significant Infrastructure and State significant development. The proposed action does not meet the definitions of State significant development.

Clause 14 of the State and Regional Development SEPP provides that development is State Significant Infrastructure if it is wholly or partly permissible without development consent under Part 4 of the Act, by virtue of the operation of a SEPP, and it meets the definitions provided in Schedule 3 to the SEPP.

As noted above, the Infrastructure SEPP provides that the proposed action is permissible without consent. Schedule 3 (item 3) of the State and Regional Development SEPP includes the following definition of 'rail infrastructure' - *'Development for the purpose of rail infrastructure by or on behalf of the Australian Rail Track Corporation that has a capital investment value of more than \$50 million.'*

The capital investment value of the proposed action is over \$50 million. As the proposed action meets this definition it is defined as State Significant Infrastructure.

#### **Other environmental planning instruments**

Section 115ZF(2) of the EP&A Act provides that environmental planning instruments do not apply to or in respect of an approved State Significant Infrastructure, except where they apply to the declaration of infrastructure as State Significant Infrastructure.

## **Approval requirements under other NSW legislation**

### **Approvals not required**

In accordance with Section 115ZG of the EP&A Act, a number of approvals that may otherwise be relevant under other Acts are not required to be obtained if a project is approved under Part 5.1:

- concurrence under Part 3 of the *Coastal Protection Act 1979* of the Minister administering that Part of that Act
- a permit under Section 201, 205 or 219 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
- an approval under Part 4, or an excavation permit under section 139, of the *Heritage Act 1977*
- an Aboriginal heritage impact permit under Section 90 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*
- an authorisation referred to in Section 12 of the *Native Vegetation Act 2003* (or under any Act repealed by that Act) to clear native vegetation or State protected land
- a bushfire safety authority under section 100B of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*
- a water use approval under section 89, a water management work approval under Section 90 or an activity approval (other than an aquifer interference approval) under Section 91 of the *Water Management Act 2000*.

In addition, Division 8 of Part 6 of the *Heritage Act 1977* (relating to making heritage orders) does not apply to prevent or interfere with the carrying out of approved State Significant Infrastructure.

### **Approvals to be applied consistently**

Under Section 115ZH of the EP&A Act, the following approvals cannot be refused if necessary for the carrying out of approved State Significant Infrastructure:

- an environment protection licence under Chapter 3 of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*
- consent under Section 138 of the *Roads Act 1993*.

The approval requirements of these Acts as they relate to the proposed action are summarised in the following section.

## **Requirements of other NSW Acts**

### **Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997**

The *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) establishes, amongst other things, the procedures for issuing licences for environmental protection on aspects such as waste, air, water and noise pollution control. Environment Protection Licences are generally required for scheduled activities or scheduled development work.

#### *'33 Railway systems activities*

##### *1. This clause applies to railway systems activities, meaning:*

- a) The installation, on site repair, on-site maintenance or on site upgrading of track. Including the construction or significant alteration of any ancillary works.*
- b) The operation of rolling stock on track.'*

The proposed action meets this definition and would therefore require an Environment Protection Licence.

ARTC would obtain an Environment Protection Licence for construction of the proposed action. In relation to operation, ARTC currently holds a licence to carry out railway systems activities on other parts of the NSW rail network. It may be appropriate to either amend this licence to include the operation of the proposed action or to obtain a new licence. This would be considered in consultation with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) during the EIS process.

### Roads Act 1993

Under Section 138, Part 9, Division 3 of the *Roads Act 1993* (the Roads Act), a person must not impact or carry out work on or over a public road other than with the consent of the appropriate roads authority. Construction of the proposed action may impact on public road reserves under the control of various authorities. Clause 5(1) of Schedule 2 of the Roads Act provides that public authorities are not required to '... obtain a roads authority's consent to the exercise of the public authority's or network operator's functions in, on or over an unclassified road other than a Crown road.'

As noted above, section 115ZH of the EP&A Act provides that a permit under section 138 of the Roads Act cannot be refused if it is necessary to carry out a State Significant Infrastructure project.

### **2.5 Environmental impact assessments under Commonwealth, state or territory legislation**

The proposed action is subject to assessment under Part 5 of the EP&A Act. The capital investment value of the proposed action is estimated to be over \$50 million, and as a result the proposed action is State Significant Infrastructure under *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011*. The proposed action is therefore subject to Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act and an EIS is required for the approval of the Minister for the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (NSW Minister for Planning).

ARTC are currently in the process of preparing an EIS in accordance with the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements issued by the NSW Minister for Planning. The EIS will be lodged with the NSW Department and Planning and Environment for assessment and determination by the NSW Minister for Planning.

### **2.6 Public consultation (including with Indigenous stakeholders)**

#### **Consultation approach and strategy**

ARTC's values commit the organisation to active engagement with stakeholders and the community. A community engagement plan has been prepared for the Inland Rail project that will guide the consultation activities for the proposed action.

#### **Consultation to date**

As a result of the history of Inland Rail and previous consultation undertaken, the proposed action is generally known to stakeholders. Consultation undertaken for Inland Rail to date has included consultation with local councils, regional businesses, farming and mining exporters and motoring organisations.

ARTC has identified key stakeholders relevant to the Parkes to Narromine section of the Inland Rail project including the respective councils. Early engagement has occurred with both Parkes Shire Council and Narromine Shire Council. Workshops were held in April 2015 and June 2015 with Parkes Shire Council and Narromine Shire Council respectively. Further consultation with these councils regarding the Inland Rail project update occurred on the 19 and 27 August 2015. ARTC will provide further project updates and written notification to the councils during the design, environmental assessment and construction phases.

Topics covered during the consultation workshops included:

- revisiting issues previously raised by the councils and other local stakeholders
- sharing technical data relevant to refinement of the alignment
- identifying lessons learnt from previous projects in the region
- seeking input regarding key local stakeholder groups to be engaged through future consultations
- identifying new opportunities and issues associated with the delivery of Inland Rail at a local level.

Consultation with individual members of the community has been limited and has involved organising access to properties for environmental investigations.

### **Proposed consultation**

Formal consultation is ongoing and will be undertaken with the following key stakeholders in accordance with the Community and Engagement Plan Parkes to Narromine:

- State and Federal representatives
- representatives of the Council and executive management at Parkes and Narromine councils
- Australian and State government departments and agencies
- business and tourism stakeholders (e.g. Parkes Chamber of Commerce)
- agricultural stakeholders (e.g. NSW Farmers Association, Graincorp)
- freight stakeholders
- environment stakeholders (e.g. Macquarie Valley Landcare Group)
- service providers (e.g. community, medical, emergency)
- Indigenous groups
- community groups.

### **2.7 A staged development or component of a larger project**

The Australian Government has committed to building significant new national transport infrastructure by constructing an inland railway between Melbourne and Brisbane, via central-west New South Wales (NSW) and Toowoomba in Queensland. The Inland Rail project is a major national project that will enhance Australia's existing national rail network and serve the interstate freight market. While the Inland Rail project will be constructed between Melbourne and Brisbane, the proposed action subject to this referral is the Parkes to Narromine section of the Inland Rail programme.

## 3 Description of environment & likely impacts

### 3.1 Matters of national environmental significance

#### 3.1 (a) World Heritage Properties

##### Description

A search of the EPBC Act Protected Matters Database (searched on 01/04/2016, refer to **Attachment 1**) identified that there are no World Heritage Properties listed within 10 kilometres of the boundary of the referral area. The closest world heritage property is the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The western extent of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area is approximately 180 kilometres to the east of the referral area, at the closest location.

##### Nature and extent of likely impact

The proposed action will not impact on the World Heritage values of any World Heritage property, either directly or indirectly.

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#### 3.1 (b) National Heritage Places

##### Description

A search of the EPBC Act Protected Matters Database (searched on 01/04/2016, refer to **Attachment 1**) identified that there are no National Heritage Places listed within 10 kilometres of the boundary of the referral area. The nearest National Heritage Place to the referral area is the Greater Blue Mountains Area NSW National Heritage Area which is approximately 180 kilometres west of the referral area.

##### Nature and extent of likely impact

The proposed action will not impact on the National Heritage values of any National Heritage Places, either directly or indirectly.

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#### 3.1 (c) Wetlands of International Importance (declared Ramsar wetlands)

##### Description

The following four wetlands of international importance were identified in the EPBC Protected Matters Report:

- Banrock station wetland complex
- Coorong and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert
- Riverland
- Hattah-Kulkyne Lakes and
- The Macquarie Marshes.

Banrock station wetland complex, Coorong and Lakes Alexandrina and Albert and Riverland located in South Australia approximately 600-900 kilometres (straight line distance) from the referral area. The Hattah-Kulkyne Lakes occur in Victoria between 500-600 kilometres from the referral area. The Macquarie Marshes occur in NSW approximately 100 – 150 km upstream from the referral area.

##### Nature and extent of likely impact

The proposed action is not expected to impact on the ecological character of any Ramsar wetlands.

The referral area is also located within the Murray Darling Basin. The proposed action is not expected to result in changes to regional flow regimes and is unlikely to impact on the Murray Darling Basin and associated wetlands.

### 3.1 (d) Listed threatened species and ecological communities

#### Description

The threatened species and ecological communities known or likely to occur within the referral area were identified through appropriate database searches and preliminary field surveys. The database searches included:

- EPBC Protected Matters Search Tool (07/09/15, 29/10/15 and 01/04/2016, refer to **Attachment 1**)
- OEH Atlas of NSW Wildlife (08/09/15, 29/10/15 and 01/04/2016)
- NSW DPI - Fishing and Aquaculture – Threatened and protected species record viewer (29/04/16).

**Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3** below identify the protected matters identified during the database searches and preliminary field inspections within the referral area that were targeted during detailed surveys of the referral area.

**Table 3.1 – Protected Matters Identified from Protected Matters Database Search within 10 Kilometres of the Referral Area**

Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs)			
TECs	Name		EPBC Status
	Grey Box ( <i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i> ) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia		E
	Weeping Myall Woodland		E
	White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland		CE
	Coolibah – Black Box Woodland of the Darling Riverine Plains and the Brigalow Belt South Bioregions		E
	Natural Grassland on Basalt and Fine-textured Alluvial Plains of Northern NSW and Southern QLD		CE
Threatened Species			
Flora	Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Status
	<i>Species or Species Habitat Likely to Occur</i>		
	<i>Austrostipa wakoolica</i>		E
	<i>Swainsona murrayana</i>	slender darling-pea, slender swainson, Murray swainson-pea	V
	<i>Tylophora linearis</i>		E
	<i>Species or Species Habitat May Occur</i>		
	<i>Austrostipa metatoris</i>		V
Fauna	<i>Species or Species Habitat Known to Occur</i>		
	<i>Grantiella picta</i>	painted honeyeater	V
	<i>Polytelis swainsonii</i>	superb parrot	V
	<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>	koala (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory)	V
	<i>Species or Species Habitat May Occur</i>		
	<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	Australasian bittern	E
	<i>Maccullochella macquariensis</i>	trout cod	E
	<i>Maccullochella peelii</i>	Murray cod	V
	<i>Macquaria australasica</i>	Macquarie perch	E
	<i>Species or Species Habitat Likely to Occur</i>		
	<i>Aprasia parapulchella</i>	pink-tailed legless lizard	V
	<i>Leipoa ocellata</i>	malleefowl	V
	<i>Lathamus discolour</i>	swift parrot	E
	<i>Rostratula australis</i>	Australian painted snipe	V
	<i>Nyctophilus corbeni</i>	south-eastern long-eared bat	V
<i>Pseudomys novaehollandiae</i>	New Holland mouse	V	

Foraging, Feeding or Related Behaviour Likely to Occur			
	<i>Anthochaera Phrygia</i>	regent honeyeater	CE
	<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>	grey-headed flying-fox	V

**Status (EPBC Act):**

CE Critically Endangered  
E Endangered  
V Vulnerable

**Table 3.2 Protected Matters Identified from OEH Atlas of NSW Wildlife within 10 kilometres of Referral Area**

Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Status	Number of Records
<i>Austrostipa wakoolica</i>	a spear-grass	E	4
<i>Dichanthium setosum</i>	bluegrass	V	2
<i>Philotheca ericifolia</i>		V	2
<i>Tylophora linearis</i>		E	1
<i>Leipoa ocellata</i>	malleefowl	V	1
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	curlew sandpiper	CE	2
<i>Polytelis swainsonii</i>	superb parrot	V	33
<i>Grantiella picta</i>	painted honeyeater	V	1
<i>Phascogalea cinerea</i>	koala	V	4
<i>Nyctophilus corbeni</i>	south-eastern long-eared bat	V	1

**Status (EPBC Act):**

CE Critically Endangered  
E Endangered  
V Vulnerable

**Table 3.3 Protected Matters Identified from DPI Threatened and Protected Species Database within 10 kilometres of Referral Area**

Scientific Name	Common Name	EPBC Status	Number of Records
<i>Maccullochella peelii</i>	Murray cod	V	3
<i>Bidyanus bidyanus</i>	Silver perch	V	1

**Status (EPBC Act):**

V Vulnerable

Field surveys of the referral area, for the purposes of identifying biodiversity values and to inform preliminary project planning of the proposed action were undertaken by Umwelt in September 2014, July, November and December 2015 and January and May 2016. These surveys involved full BioBanking quadrat/transect sampling and targeted threatened flora and fauna surveys in accordance with the *NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy of Major Projects* and Framework for Biodiversity Assessment and the Department of the Environment's species-specific survey guidelines for nationally threatened species. A description of the field surveys is provided below.

### **Vegetation Community and Threatened Flora Species Surveys**

Rapid field surveys of the referral area were undertaken during September and October 2014, November and December 2015 and January and May 2016.

A total of 218 rapid vegetation assessments were completed across the referral area. At each of these points the dominant canopy species, understorey species, vegetation structure, soil type, landform and condition were recorded on standard proformas. Photographs were taken and notes on the referral area were made. This method was designed to allow rapid collection of data that informed vegetation community mapping and the early planning stages and detailed design of the proposed action.

In addition to rapid assessments, the identification and mapping of vegetation communities across the referral area was facilitated by surveying systematic floristic plots. A total of 44 plots were surveyed across the referral area where data was collected on the flora species present, cover and abundance, and structure. The survey also included the collection of biometric site value data according to the BioBanking methodology (BBAM 2014) at each of the systematic floristic plots.



### Targeted Threatened Fauna Species Surveys

Targeted threatened fauna surveys were undertaken in July, November and December 2015 with consideration of the survey guidelines for Australia's threatened mammals (DSEWPC 2011), bats (DSEWPC 2010), birds (DSEWPC 2010b), fish (DSEWPC 2011b), reptiles (DSEWPC 2011c) and frogs (DSEWPC 2010c). In order to identify the range of threatened fauna species occurring in the referral area the following survey methods were utilised:

- habitat assessment
- diurnal bird area searches
- diurnal reptile/amphibian area searches
- nocturnal spotlighting
- nocturnal amphibian surveys in appropriate freshwater wetland habitat
- nocturnal call playback surveys
- nocturnal Anabat surveys targeting micro-bat species
- targeted fauna species inspections of cavities and expansion joints of timber, steel and concrete bridges, and
- targeted species surveys including swift parrot (*Lathamus discolor*) and regent honeyeater (*Anthochaera phygia*).

Opportunistic observations were also undertaken during all other aspects of the field surveys.

Standard aquatic assessment proformas were used to record assessments of aquatic habitats within the referral area. These comprised creeks and rivers which crossed the rail line.

### Survey Result Summary

The following 10 vegetation communities were identified in the referral area. **Table 3.4** details the vegetation community name, the total area of the community occurring within the referral area and the proportion of the community that comprises temporary or permanent disturbance as a result of the proposed action. Temporary disturbance relates to construction impacts associated with construction facilities such as laydown areas, temporary access tracks and vehicle parking areas. Native vegetation occurring in these areas may not be fully impacted (i.e. may not be cleared) but will be subject to some disturbance and is expected to recover. Areas of permanent disturbance relate to permanent works (including rail formation works, drainage works, culverts and associated scour protection) that require the clearing of vegetation.

Four of the vegetation communities conform to threatened ecological communities listed under the EPBC Act as endangered or critically endangered, where condition thresholds are met. Approximately of 712 hectares within the referral area comprises disturbed land or non-native vegetation.

**Table 3.4 Vegetation Communities within the Referral Area and the Extent of Permanent and Temporary Disturbance Associated with the Proposed Action**

Vegetation Community	Total Area (ha)	Permanent Disturbance Area (ha)	Temporary Disturbance Area (ha)	EPBC Act Status Equivalent
PCT-26_BVT-CW205, LA212_Weeping Myall Open Woodland_Moderate/Good	3.47	3.16 (of which 0.99 meets the Weeping Myall Woodlands Listing Advice)	0.31 (none of which meets the Weeping Myall Woodlands Listing Advice)	Weeping Myall Woodlands (EEC)
PCT-36_BVT-CW183, LA193_River Red Gum Tall to very Tall Open Forest / Woodland_Moderate/Good	0.87	0.87	0	
PCT-36_BVT-CW183, LA193_River Red Gum Tall to very Tall Open Forest / Woodland_Low - Regeneration	0.62	0.62	0	

PCT-55_BVT-CW104, LA105_Belah Woodland_Moderate/Good	1.12	0.94	0.18	
PCT-55_BVT-CW104, LA105_Belah Woodland_Moderate/Good - Derived Native Grassland	7.12	6.13	0.99	
PCT-70_BVT-CW220, LA223_White Cypress Pine Woodland_Moderate/Good	1.95	1.54	0.41	
PCT-76_BVT-CW145, LA154_Western Grey Box Tall Grassy Woodland_Moderate/Good	10.13	8.58 (7.89 meets the criteria of the EPBC Act EEC)	1.55 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act EEC)	Grey Box ( <i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i> ) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia (EEC)
PCT-76_BVT-CW145, LA154_Western Grey Box Tall Grassy Woodland_Moderate/Good - Derived Native Grassland	32.23	23.64 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act EEC)	8.59 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act EEC)	Grey Box ( <i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i> ) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia (EEC)
PCT-105_BVT-CW171, LA177_Poplar Box Grassy Woodland_Moderate/Good	3.38	1.41	1.97	
PCT-105_BVT-CW171, LA177_Poplar Box Grassy Woodland_Moderate/Good - Derived Native Grassland	14.45	1.20	13.25	
PCT-201_BVT-CW138, LA145_Fuzzy Box Woodland_Moderate/Good	1.88	1.50	0.38	
PCT-267_BVT-CW213, LA218_White Box - White Cypress Pine - Western Grey Box Woodland_Moderate/Good	3.24	3.12 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act CEEC)	0.12 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act CEEC)	White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland (CEEC)
PCT-267_BVT-CW213, LA218_White Box - White Cypress Pine - Western Grey Box Woodland_Moderate/Good - Derived Native Grassland	9.46	9.35 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act CEEC)	0.11 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act CEEC)	White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland (CEEC)
PCT-276_BVT-CW226, LA226_Yellow Box Grassy Tall Woodland_Moderate/Good	7.16	3.40 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act CEEC)	3.76 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act CEEC)	White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland (CEEC)
PCT-276_BVT-CW226, LA226_Yellow Box Grassy Tall Woodland_Moderate/Good - Derived Native Grassland	13.96	10.32 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act CEEC)	3.64 (all meets the criteria of the EPBC Act CEEC)	White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland (CEEC)
<b>Total</b>	<b>111.04</b>	<b>75.78</b>	<b>35.26</b>	

CEEC = Critically Endangered Ecological Community

EEC = Endangered Ecological Community

EPBC Act = Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

Ha = hectare

PCT – Plant Community Type

BVT-Biometric Vegetation Type

As a result of the database searches and targeted field surveys, a total of three TECs and one threatened species (listed in **Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4** above) were recorded within the referral area.

**Figures 3.1(a-e)** outline the extent and spatial arrangement of EPBC Act listed endangered or critically endangered ecological communities occurring in the referral area.

A total of 62 fauna species were recorded in the referral area and surrounds during the surveys undertaken for this assessment. This included 50 bird species, 4 amphibian species and 8 species of mammal. Of these recorded,

one (1.6%) was an introduced species. One threatened fauna species listed under the EPBC Act, the superb parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*), was recorded flying over the referral area at three survey locations (refer to **Figure 3.1**).

### **Nature and extent of likely impact**

#### **Threatened Flora Species**

Extensive field surveys were undertaken within the referral area across a range of seasons and years. The survey design considered seasonality issues associated with maximising the opportunity of identifying threatened plant species within the corridor. None of the threatened flora species that are known to occur in the local area or region were recorded and the likelihood of threatened flora species occurring is low.

The proposed action is not expected to result in a significant impact on threatened flora species.

#### **Threatened Ecological Communities**

Detailed field surveys recorded three listed TECs within the referral area. An assessment of significance in accordance with the Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 (DoE 2013) was prepared for:

- Approximately 33.82 hectares of White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland
- Approximately 41.67 hectares of Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia
- Approximately 0.99 hectares of Weeping Myall Woodland.

Assessments of Significance (refer to **Attachment 3**) found that the proposed action is likely to result in a very small incremental reduction in the extent of each ecological community listed above and negligibly increase the level of fragmentation of each of the ecological communities. The proposed action is not likely to interfere with the recovery of the ecological communities and is unlikely to have a significant impact on any of the above listed communities due to the very small percentage decrease in the area of each community. Given the lineal nature of the proposed action, the impacts exist as small areas of clearance scattered along an approximately 106 kilometre distance rather than one single area of impact. These areas of impact occur across 2 CMA regions and 3 CMA subregions.

#### **Threatened Fauna Species**

For those EPBC Act listed threatened fauna species recorded or considered to be potentially impacted by the proposed action (refer to **Attachment 2**), an Assessment of Significance has been undertaken (refer to **Attachment 3**), according to the Significant Impact Criteria in the Significant Impact Guidelines (DoE 2013).

Fauna species for which an Assessment of Significance were undertaken comprise the superb parrot, painted honeyeater, koala and south-eastern long-eared bat. Potential habitat exists within the referral area for all four of these fauna species and includes eucalypt woodland and derived native grassland areas. Assessments of Significance revealed that all four of these species are unlikely to be significantly impacted by the proposed action.

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### 3.1 (e) Listed migratory species

#### Description

**Table 3.5** below lists the migratory species that were listed on the protected matters database and known or potentially occurring within 10 kilometres of the referral area.

**Table 3.5 – Migratory Species Identified on the Protected Matters Database Search within 10 Kilometres of the Referral Area**

Migratory Species	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Species or Species Habitat Known to Occur</i>			
	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	osprey	B
	<i>Myiagra cyanoleuca</i>	satin flycatcher	B
	<i>Ardea alba</i>	great egret, white egret	J
<i>Species or Species Habitat May Occur</i>			
	<i>Ardea ibis</i>	cattle egret	J
	<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	Latham's snipe, Japanese snipe	C, J, R
	<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater	J
	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	yellow wagtail	C, J, R
<i>Species or Species Habitat Likely to Occur</i>			
	<i>Apus pacificus</i>	fork-tailed swift	C, J, R
	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needletail	C, J, R
	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	marsh sandpiper	B, C, J, R

#### Status EPBC Act

- B Bonn Convention for Migratory Birds (Bonn)
- C China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA)
- J Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA)
- R Republic of Korea-Australia Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA)

**Table 3.6** below lists the migratory species that have been recorded within 10 kilometres of the referral area on the OEH Atlas of NSW Wildlife Database.

**Table 3.6 – Migratory Species Identified from OEH Atlas of NSW Wildlife within 10 kilometres of Referral Area**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Number of Records
<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	sharp-tailed sandpiper	B, C, J, R	22
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	curlew sandpiper	B, C, J, R	2
<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	red-necked stint	B, C, J, R	2
<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	Latham's snipe	C, J, R	8
<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	gull-billed tern	C	2
<i>Glareola maldivarum</i>	oriental pratincole	C, J, R	1
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needletail	C, J, R	1
<i>Limosa limosa</i>	black-tailed godwit	B, C, J, R	2
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater	J	24
<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	glossy ibis	B	13
<i>Tringa glareola</i>	wood sandpiper	B, C, J, R	2
<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	common greenshank	B, C, J, R	4
<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	marsh sandpiper	B, C, J, R	7

#### Status EPBC Act

- B Bonn Convention for Migratory Birds (Bonn)
- C China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA)
- J Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA)
- R Republic of Korea-Australia Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA)

As a result of the database searches and field surveys, a total of 18 migratory species are considered to have the potential to occur within the referral area.

### **Nature and extent of likely impact**

The likelihood of each migratory species occurring in the referral area was assessed by comparing the habitat requirements of each species against the available habitat within the referral area. All migratory species considered to have the potential occur within the referral area were assessed against the level of suitable habitat available within the referral area to determine if a significant impact was considered likely (refer to **Attachment 2**). No migratory species were considered to have the potential to be significantly impacted by the proposed action as little or no suitable habitat is present within the referral area.

No migratory species listed under the EPBC Act will be significantly impacted by the proposed action.

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### **3.1 (f) Commonwealth marine area**

(If the action is in the Commonwealth marine area, complete 3.2(c) instead. This section is for actions taken outside the Commonwealth marine area that may have impacts on that area.)

#### **Description**

No Commonwealth marine areas were identified in the EPBC Act Protected Matters Report, based on a 10 kilometre search radius from the boundary of the referral area. The nearest Commonwealth Marine area is off the east coast of NSW, approximately 300 kilometres east of the referral area.

### **Nature and extent of likely impact**

The proposed action will not impact on any Commonwealth marine area, either directly or indirectly.

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### **3.1 (g) Commonwealth land**

(If the action is on Commonwealth land, complete 3.2(d) instead. This section is for actions taken outside Commonwealth land that may have impacts on that land.)

#### **Description**

The results of the protected matters search identified several Commonwealth owned land within 10 kilometres of the referral area. These included:

- Australian Postal Commission
- Australian Telecommunications Commission
- Australian Telecommunications Corporation
- Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research organisation;
- Commonwealth Trading Bank of Australia and
- Defence –Parkes Training Depot.

The referral area is not known to include any areas of Commonwealth land.

### **Nature and extent of likely impact**

The proposed action is not expected to impact on any Commonwealth land, either directly or indirectly.

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### 3.1 (h) The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

#### Description

The referral area is not located within or in the vicinity of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

#### Nature and extent of likely impact

The proposed action will not impact on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, either directly or indirectly.

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### 3.1 (i) A water resource, in relation to coal seam gas development and large coal mining development

#### Description

The proposed action is not a coal seam gas development or large coal mining development.

#### Nature and extent of likely impact

The proposed action is not a coal seam gas development or large coal mining development.

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### 3.2 Nuclear actions, actions taken by the Commonwealth (or Commonwealth agency), actions taken in a Commonwealth marine area, actions taken on Commonwealth land, or actions taken in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

3.2 (a)	Is the proposed action a nuclear action?	X	No
			Yes (provide details below)
If yes, nature & extent of likely impact on the whole environment			
3.2 (b)	Is the proposed action to be taken by the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth agency?	X	No
			Yes (provide details below)
If yes, nature & extent of likely impact on the whole environment			
Section 528 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 defines Commonwealth Agencies. Section 528 also defines what are not included as Commonwealth Agencies and relevantly states that in clause j <i>a company prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph</i> . The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000, Clause 19.02 states <i>for paragraph (j) in Section 528 of the EPBC Act</i> the following companies are prescribed			
<i>(c) Australian Rail Track Corporation Limited (ABN 75 081 455 754, ACN 081 455 754)</i>			
3.2 (c)	Is the proposed action to be taken in a Commonwealth marine area?	X	No
			Yes (provide details below)
If yes, nature & extent of likely impact on the whole environment (in addition to 3.1(f))			
3.2 (d)	Is the proposed action to be taken on Commonwealth land?	X	No (refer to discussion in section 3.1(g)).
			Yes (provide details below)
If yes, nature & extent of likely impact on the whole environment (in addition to 3.1(g))			

3.2 (e)	Is the proposed action to be taken in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park?	X	No
			Yes (provide details below)

If yes, nature & extent of likely impact on the whole environment (in addition to 3.1(h))

### 3.3 Other important features of the environment

#### 3.3 (a) Flora and fauna

A database review and field surveys of the referral area identified five TECs and 23 threatened species listed under the EPBC Act have been recorded within 10 kilometres of the referral area or are predicted to occur within 10 kilometres of the referral area.

The field surveys revealed that much of the referral area exists as a managed rail line easement and a large portion of the remainder of the referral area exists as cultivated land. Assessment of the potential habitat suitability of the referral area identified 11 of the 23 threatened species with potential to occur (refer to **Attachment 2**). A search of the OEH Atlas of NSW Wildlife database and Primary Industries Fishing and Aquaculture Records Viewer identified 33 NSW listed threatened fauna, four threatened fish species and seven threatened flora species recorded within 10 kilometres of the Parkes to Narromine rail corridor.

Patches of native vegetation exist sporadically within the referral area and are typically associated with TSRs, road verges or small woodland patches on farmland. These patches generally comprised a woodland community with the dominant canopy species including inland grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*), fuzzy box (*Eucalyptus conica*) and yellow box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*). Patches of weeping myall (*Acacia pendula*) were also recorded within the referral area.

The referral area occurs in a landscape dominated by crop land and introduced pastures, and contains a small proportion of woodland and scattered tree cover. The referral area occurs in a belt of cleared land that lacks medium and large woodland areas that extends from Parkes to Narromine. To the east the nearest large woodland patch is Goobang National Park approximately 9 kilometres away, and to the west the nearest medium sized woodland remnants occur approximate 20 kilometres from the referral area. Due to the isolated and fragmented nature of the small woodland areas occurring along the referral area, many typical woodland species are unlikely to occur in the referral area. The fauna species recorded during the targeted field surveys consisted of mainly common grassland bird species and macropods.

#### 3.3 (b) Hydrology, including water flows

The proposed action crosses 29 waterways. These include creeks (such as Burrill Creek, Stanfords Creek, Barrabadeen Creek, Tomingley Creek and Yellow Creek) and other watercourses, some of which are ephemeral.

The southern extent of the proposed action (at Parkes) is situated in the Lachlan River basin and north of the Lachlan River, with the nearest named watercourse being Goobang Creek. The northern extent of the proposed action is situated in the Macquarie River floodplain. The proposed action is situated approximately one kilometre south of the Macquarie River at Narromine. The northern extent of the proposed action is located within an area that has been subject to significant floods.

Flows within the Macquarie River catchment at Narromine have been impacted by the construction of significant water storages since the floods of the 1950s. The storages include Burrendong Dam and Cudgong Dam (NSW Office of Water, 2015).

Groundwater levels within the study area are anticipated to be typically between 4.8 m and 47 m below ground level, and generally greater than 20 m below the ground surface (GHD, 2014).

A review of the NSW Water Information Database on 24 September 2014 identified more than 189 registered groundwater bores within about one kilometre of the proposed action. The depths of the bores extended up to 132 metres below ground level (m bgl) with standing water levels measured between 7.3 m bgl and 57.9 m bgl. Drillers' logs indicated geology generally comprising alternating layers of alluvium, clay, gravel, sand and rock to the base of the bores. Bedrock primarily described as basalt, granite and/or shale was noted at varying depths (GHD, 2014).

### **3.3 (c) Soil and Vegetation characteristics**

The proposed action is located within the Central Lachlan Fold Belt. Near surface materials include Tertiary to Quaternary aged red silty alluvium over folded and faulted Silurian and Ordovician aged sedimentary and minor metamorphic sequences which outcrop intermittently along the alignment (GHD, 2014).

Thick reactive brown and grey clay soils are predominantly associated with the near level terrain north of about Peak Hill while moderately thick red and brown sandy and silty clay soils are typically associated with the undulating terrain south of about Peak Hill (GHD, 2014).

Given the distance of the alignment from the coast and the elevation of the areas (>10 metres Australian Height Datum (AHD)), no acid sulfate soils are expected or known to occur along the alignment (GHD 2014).

As noted in earlier sections, patches of native vegetation exist sporadically within the referral area and are typically associated with TSRs, road verges or small woodland patches on farmland. These patches generally comprised a woodland community with the dominant canopy species including inland grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*), fuzzy box (*Eucalyptus conica*) and yellow box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*). Patches of weeping myall (*Acacia pendula*) were also recorded within the referral area.

### **3.3 (d) Outstanding natural features**

There are no outstanding natural features within the referral area or in its immediate vicinity. The nearest outstanding natural feature is Goobang National Park approximately 9 kilometres to the east of the referral area.

### **3.3 (e) Remnant native vegetation**

The referral area is occupied by an existing rail line and associated rail corridor and as such most of the referral area has been subject to substantial disturbance in the past. Beyond the managed rail easement, the referral area is largely occupied by cultivated areas and other agricultural activities such as grazing.

Patches of native vegetation exist sporadically within the referral area and are typically associated with TSRs, road reserves or farm woodland remnants. These patches generally comprised a woodland community with the dominant canopy species including inland grey box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*), fuzzy box (*Eucalyptus conica*) and yellow box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*). General fauna movement through the referral area would be most suitable for large mobile animals such as macropods. The small, disjunct patches of vegetation may provide cover for small birds when dispersing however success for this group would be limited by the distance between these fragments, and the habitat provided within each.

### **3.3 (f) Gradient (or depth range if action is to be taken in a marine area)**

The referral area is dominated by open flat plains that grade from Parkes at an approximate altitude of 330 m above sea level (ASL), down towards Narromine at an approximate altitude of 230 m ASL.



### **3.3 (g) Current state of the environment**

The proposed action comprises an upgrade of an existing rail line and as such most of the referral area has been subject to substantial disturbance in the past. Outside of the area currently disturbed by existing rail infrastructure, the referral area is in relatively poor condition with a long history of broad scale cultivation and other agricultural activities. Weed species are considered to be in moderate to high density across most of the referral area. It is considered that pest species such as rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) and red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) would occur in moderate to high densities.

Some patches of woodland within the referral area, that are associated with TSRs, are in moderate to good condition whilst the remaining native vegetation is in low-moderate condition.

### **3.3 (h) Commonwealth Heritage Places or other places recognised as having heritage values**

Given the works associated with the proposed action will be predominantly contained within the rail corridor, the proposed action is unlikely to impact any heritage listed items.

No World Heritage properties or National Heritage Places were identified by the Protected Matters Search Tool or are known to occur in the referral area.

### **3.3 (i) Indigenous heritage values**

The proposed works will involve the disturbance of some previously undisturbed areas and has the potential to impact both known Aboriginal sites and unidentified Aboriginal sites and landforms with potential to contain sites and areas of cultural heritage value.

Further archaeological survey work and assessment will be undertaken to ensure recorded archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive landforms are assessed and managed appropriately.

### **3.3 (j) Other important or unique values of the environment**

Most of the proposed action is located within the existing rail corridor, with these areas dominated by railway uses. The study area is dominated by agricultural industries, with significant cotton, wheat and livestock industries. The referral area traverses a predominately rural area, with rural properties surrounding the vast majority of the referral area. Parkes and Narromine are the main towns in the vicinity of the referral area, with the smaller towns including Peak Hill in close proximity to the proposed action.

Goobang National Park is located approximately 9 kilometres to the east of the referral area.

### **3.3 (k) Tenure of the action area (eg freehold, leasehold)**

Most of the proposed action is located within the existing rail corridor which is owned by the NSW Government (Transport for NSW). As discussed in **Section 2** the proposed action may require works outside the rail corridor including those associated with curve easing and level crossing rationalisation. These works are anticipated to be generally in close proximity to the rail corridor subject to further design.

Land ownership surrounding the existing rail corridor is a mix of freehold and leasehold land.

### **3.3 (l) Existing land/marine uses of area**

Most of the proposed action is located within the existing rail corridor, with these areas dominated by railway uses.

### **3.3 (m) Any proposed land/marine uses of area**

Most of the work associated with the proposed action would be undertaken within the existing rail corridor. During construction, there may be temporary changes in land use from the existing use of the referral area (for example, from rail uses, disused transport corridor) to construction purposes. During operation, direct land uses impacts would result from any change in use associated with the operation of the proposed action and its associated facilities. There is the possibility that some limited land outside of the rail corridor but within the referral area) may be required for the proposed action, such as for curve easing, resulting in conversion of these areas from their existing use to a railway corridor.

## 4 Environmental outcomes

As discussed in **Section 3.0** above, the proposed action is unlikely to result in a significant impact on the EPBC-listed Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). Assessments of Significance were undertaken for MNES that have been recorded within or adjacent to the referral area or that have the potential to occur within the referral area (refer to **Attachment 3**). It was found that the proposed action is unlikely to have a significant impact on the following MNES that occur or have the potential to occur in the referral area:

- White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland and Derived Native Grassland – critically endangered ecological community (CEEC) under the EPBC Act
- Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia endangered ecological community (EEC) under the EPBC Act
- Weeping Myall Woodlands EEC under the EPBC Act
- Painted honeyeater (*Grantiella picta*) - vulnerable under the EPBC Act
- Superb parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*) – vulnerable under the EPBC Act
- Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) combined populations of Qld, NSW and the ACT – vulnerable under the EPBC Act
- South-eastern long-eared bat (*Nyctophilus corbeni*) – vulnerable under the EPBC Act.

Despite this, it is acknowledged that the proposed action will impact areas of mainly low-quality habitats for some of these protected matters. As a result, a range of avoidance, mitigation and offsetting measures have been proposed to minimise and compensate for these losses in biodiversity (refer to **Section 5.0** below).

**Table 4.1** below outlines a range of environmental outcomes from these measures and why they are beneficial for the MNES outlined above.

**Table 4.1 – Environmental Outcomes for MNES**

Measure	Environmental Outcome	Protected Matters Benefited
Pre-clearance surveys and a tree felling procedure	Minimisation of fauna death and injury as a result of vegetation clearance. Minimisation of clearing during works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• koala</li> <li>• south-eastern long-eared bat</li> </ul>
Weed management during construction and operation	Minimisation of weed spread into native vegetation communities and habitats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland and Derived Native Grassland CEEC</li> <li>• Grey Box (<i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i>) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands EEC</li> <li>• Weeping Myall Woodland EEC</li> <li>• painted honeyeater</li> <li>• superb parrot</li> <li>• koala</li> <li>• south-eastern long-eared bat</li> </ul>

These measures will be further detailed in the Environment Impact Assessment and subsequent Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP will include the above measures with environmental outcomes that will be detailed with reference to the SMART (specific, measureable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) criteria as outlined in the draft *Outcomes-based Conditions Policy 2015* and *Outcomes-based Conditions Guidance 2015* (DoE 2015).

## 5 Measures to avoid or reduce impacts

The proposed action involves the upgrade of an existing rail line. As such, the impact of the proposed action is considerably less than if it was to take an alternate route. Although the general alignment of the rail line has been established, other aspects such as lay down areas, will be outside the existing rail corridor. These areas will be identified during the detailed environmental assessment and planning phases for the proposed action and will be preferably located in existing disturbed areas where possible to minimise impacts within the corridor.

The ecological assessment to be prepared for the proposed action will include an assessment of impacts and the provision of biodiversity offsets for the permanent impacts of the proposed action in accordance with the NSW Framework for Biodiversity Assessment (FBA). Part of this process includes identifying appropriately sized and strategically located biodiversity offsets to mitigate residual impacts.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be prepared for the construction phase of the proposed action. Within the CEMP will be a range of impact mitigation measures including, but not necessarily limited to:

- pre-clearance inspections of native vegetation
- a tree felling protocol
- erosion and sediment controls
- weed management
- demarcation of vegetation prior to clearing to avoid accidental clearing.

## 6 Conclusion on the likelihood of significant impacts

### 6.1 Do you THINK your proposed action is a controlled action?

X	No, complete section 6.2
	Yes, complete section 6.3

### 6.2 Proposed action IS NOT a controlled action.

The proposed action will impact areas of mainly low-quality habitat and due to the lineal nature of the proposed action, the impacts exist as small areas of clearance scattered along an approximately 100 kilometre distance rather than one single area of impact. To assess the potential for a significant impact to occur, assessments of significance were undertaken for MNES that have been recorded within or adjacent to the referral area or that have the potential to occur within the referral area (refer to **Attachment 3**). As discussed in **Section 3.0**, the assessments found that the proposed action is unlikely to result in a significant impact on any MNES.

### 6.3 Proposed action IS a controlled action

#### Matters likely to be impacted

	World Heritage values (sections 12 and 15A)
	National Heritage places (sections 15B and 15C)
	Wetlands of international importance (sections 16 and 17B)
	Listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 and 18A)
	Listed migratory species (sections 20 and 20A)
	Protection of the environment from nuclear actions (sections 21 and 22A)
	Commonwealth marine environment (sections 23 and 24A)
	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (sections 24B and 24C)
	A water resource, in relation to coal seam gas development and large coal mining development (sections 24D and 24E)
	Protection of the environment from actions involving Commonwealth land (sections 26 and 27A)
	Protection of the environment from Commonwealth actions (section 28)
	Commonwealth Heritage places overseas (sections 27B and 27C)

The proposed action will impact approximately the following amounts of the three following threatened ecological communities:

- approximately 33.82 hectares of White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland
- approximately 41.67 hectares of Grey Box (*Eucalyptus microcarpa*) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia and
- approximately 0.99 hectares of Weeping Myall Woodland.

## 7 Environmental record of the responsible party

**NOTE:** If a decision is made that a proposal needs approval under the EPBC Act, the Environment Minister will also decide the assessment approach. The EPBC Regulations provide for the environmental history of the party proposing to take the action to be taken into account when deciding the assessment approach.

	Yes	No
<p><b>7.1 Does the party taking the action have a satisfactory record of responsible environmental management?</b></p> <p><b>Provide details</b></p> <p>Through implementation of ARTC's Code of Practice, Environmental Management System, and Environmental Management Plans for a variety of construction projects, ARTC has maintained a satisfactory record of responsible environmental management.</p>	X	
<p><b>7.2 Has either (a) the party proposing to take the action, or (b) if a permit has been applied for in relation to the action, the person making the application - ever been subject to any proceedings under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law for the protection of the environment or the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources?</b></p> <p><b>If yes, provide details</b></p>		X
<p><b>7.3 If the party taking the action is a corporation, will the action be taken in accordance with the corporation's environmental policy and planning framework?</b></p> <p><b>If yes, provide details of environmental policy and planning framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ARTC Code of Practice for environmental impact assessment of development proposals in NSW</li> <li>• ARTC Environmental Management System (EMS)</li> </ul>	X	
<p><b>7.4 Has the party taking the action previously referred an action under the EPBC Act, or been responsible for undertaking an action referred under the EPBC Act?</b></p> <p><b>Provide name of proposal and EPBC reference number (if known)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kooragang Coal Terminal Arrival Roads Stage 2 Upgrade, Newcastle, NSW (2014/7229)</li> <li>• Rail Upgrades at Geelong Port Project (2010/5363)</li> <li>• Maitland to Minimbah Third Track Project, NSW (2009/4897)</li> </ul>	X	

## 8 Information sources and attachments

(For the information provided above)

### 8.1 References

- Baker-Gabb, D. 2011. National Recovery Plan for the Superb Parrot *Polytelis swainsonii*. Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne.
- Botanic Gardens Trust (2015). *PlantNET* – The Plant Information Network System of Botanic Gardens Trust, Sydney, Australia (version 2.0). <<http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au>> accessed February 2015.
- DoE – Department of the Environment (2013). Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 – Matters of National Environmental Significance
- DoE - Department of the Environment (2015) Protected Matters Search Tool, accessed 4 April 2016, <<http://www.environment.gov.au/topics/about-us/legislation/environment-protection-and-biodiversity-conservation-act-1999/protected>>
- DSEWPC - Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, 2006a. EPBC Act policy statement 3.5 – White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's red gum grassy woodlands and derived native grasslands. Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.
- DSEWPC - Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, 2006b. Species list for the EPBC Act policy statement 3.5 - White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's red gum grassy woodlands and derived native grasslands. Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.
- (DSEWPC) Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (2010) survey guidelines for Australia's threatened bats: Guidelines for detecting mammals listed as threatened under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- (DSEWPC) Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (2010b) survey guidelines for Australia's threatened birds: Guidelines for detecting mammals listed as threatened under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- (DSEWPC) Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (2011c) survey guidelines for Australia's threatened frogs: Guidelines for detecting mammals listed as threatened under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- (DSEWPC) Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (2011) survey guidelines for Australia's threatened mammals: Guidelines for detecting mammals listed as threatened under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- (DSEWPC) Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (2011b) survey guidelines for Australia's threatened fish: Guidelines for detecting mammals listed as threatened under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- (DSEWPC) Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (2011c) survey guidelines for Australia's threatened reptiles: Guidelines for detecting mammals listed as threatened under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- DSEWPC – Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (2012). *Species Profile and Threats Database*
- GHD (2014), Parkes to Narramine and Narrabri to North Star – MBIR Preliminary Contamination Assessment and Preliminary Soil and Water Management Plan.[http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicspecies.pl?taxon\\_id=82338#population\\_information](http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicspecies.pl?taxon_id=82338#population_information)

- Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) (2015). *BioNET Atlas of NSW Wildlife*, Accessed 1 April 2016.
- Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) (2015). Threatened Species - Species Populations & Ecological Communities of NSW, Sydney, Australia. <[http://www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au/tsprofile/home\\_species.aspx](http://www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au/tsprofile/home_species.aspx)> Accessed September 2015.
- Threatened Species Scientific Committee (2006). Advice to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage from the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC) on Amendments to the List of Ecological Communities under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)
- Threatened Species Scientific Committee (2008). Advice to the Minister for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts from the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC) on Amendments to the List of Ecological Communities under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)
- Threatened Species Scientific Committee (2010). Advice to the Minister for Environment Protection, Heritage and the Arts from the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (the Committee) on an Amendment to the List of Threatened Ecological Communities under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)
- Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited (2014). Melbourne Brisbane Inland Rail Parkes to Narromine and Narrabri to North Star Ecological Investigations. Report prepared for ARTC, October 2014.

## 8.2 Reliability and date of information

The sources of all information contained within **Section 3** have been referenced within **Section 3** and all references are listed in **Section 7.1** above. The dates of all information sources have been listed within **Section 3**. Any uncertainties in the information in **Section 3** have been listed and discussed within **Section 3**.

## 8.3 Attachments

		✓ attached	Title of attachment(s)
<b>You must attach</b>	figures, maps or aerial photographs showing the project locality (section 1)	✓	Attachment 4
	GIS file delineating the boundary of the referral area (section 1)	✓	
	figures, maps or aerial photographs showing the location of the project in respect to any matters of national environmental significance or important features of the environments (section 3)	✓	Attachment 4
<b>If relevant, attach</b>	copies of any state or local government approvals and consent conditions (section 2.5)		
	copies of any completed assessments to meet state or local government approvals and outcomes of public consultations, if available (section 2.6)		
	copies of any flora and fauna investigations and surveys (section 3)		
	technical reports relevant to the assessment of impacts on protected matters that support the arguments and conclusions in the referral (section 3 and 4)		
	report(s) on any public consultations undertaken, including with Indigenous stakeholders (section 3)		



## 9 Contacts, signatures and declarations

**Project title:** Parkes to Narromine section of Inland Rail

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### 9.1 Person proposing to take action

1. Name and Title: Geoff Hudson  
Environment Manager
2. Organisation:  
ARTC<sup>1</sup>
3. EPBC Referral Number  
(if known):
4. ACN / ABN:
5. Postal address 75 081 455 754
6. Telephone: PO Box 14, Sydney NSW 2001
7. Email: 02 8293 5111
8. Name of designated  
proponent (if not the  
same person at item 1  
above and if applicable): Not applicable
9. ACN/ABN of  
designated proponent (if  
not the same person  
named at item 1 above): Not applicable
- Declaration
- I declare that to the best of my knowledge the information I have given on, or attached to this form is complete, current and correct.  
I understand that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.  
I agree to be the proponent for this action.  
I declare that I am not taking the action on behalf of or for the benefit of any other person or entity.
- Signature  Date 21.06.2016
- 

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that ARTC is not a Commonwealth agency for the purposes of the EPBC Act following the amendment of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2000 on 14 November 2009 to exclude ARTC from the definition of a 'Commonwealth agency' under the EPBC Act.

**9.2 Person preparing the referral information (if different from 9.1)**

Name John Merrell  
Title Group Manager Environment & Community NSW  
Organisation Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited  
ACN / ABN (if applicable) 18 059 519 041  
Postal address 75 York St Teralba NSW 2284  
Telephone 02-4950 5322  
Email jmerrell@umwelt.com.au  
Declaration I declare that to the best of my knowledge the information I have given on, or attached to this form is complete, current and correct.  
I understand that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.  
Signature  Date 20/6/16

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