

Thursday 28 February, 2019

## Partnerships ensure a safe and healthy rail corridor

**Arc Infrastructure is committed to maintaining and preserving lands within its operating area, to ensure the safety of surrounding communities and the environmental health of the rail corridor.**

For the past three years, Arc has partnered with Landcare in the Serpentine Jarrahdale area south-east of Perth, to protect and enhance a section of rail reserve that runs through the town of Mundijong.

Back in 2015, Arc Infrastructure identified this section as being of significant bushfire risk, and contracted Landcare to co-ordinate the controlled burn and follow-up weed control in the area. This posed particular challenges due to the lands being classified as a Threatened Ecological Community, containing Declared Rare Flora populations.

Botanists from both the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale and the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions provided advice as to how and when to burn, to ensure native regeneration was aided not hindered.

Various weed control activities were also carried out, in order to reduce ongoing fuel load, as weeds are generally more flammable than native species.

The first burning exercise occurred in October 2015, and continued annually until mid-2017, when the section of reserve containing Declared Rare Flora was burnt in autumn.

Kristy Gregory, Natural Resource Management Officer at Landcare Serpentine Jarrahdale said that the delicate method and timing of the burning allowed it to be used as a tool for regeneration.

“The Declared Rare Flora at the site was expected to respond well to a mild burn, which is why an autumn burn was recommended,” said Kristy. “It gives the plants time to recruit prior to cold soil temperatures and grow sufficiently before competition from other species comes into play.”

Ongoing weed control is continuing at the site, to ensure continuing establishment of native species, and to increase the bushland’s resilience to future weed infestation.

“This project is a great example of collaboration between organisations with complimentary capacity and expertise, underpinned by Arc Infrastructure’s investment in the protection and enhancement of a significant natural area under our management,” said John Morrell, Arc’s Environmental Specialist.

### ***Background – Arc Infrastructure’s bushfire mitigation strategy***

Arc Infrastructure’s 5,500 kilometre rail network traverses numerous local government authorities.

Some areas of Arc’s rail corridor have historically had high bushfire fuel levels in close proximity to residential areas. This could result in either a bushfire initiating in the rail corridor, or bushfire fuel allowing an external bushfire to travel along the rail corridor towards residential areas.

Arc has taken a proactive approach to addressing bushfire risk, conducting network-wide assessments which have identified 35 extreme or very high-risk sites within the rail corridor.

To date, 29 of these 35 sites have been mitigated, mostly by mechanical slashing or mulching, and some by prescribed burning.

Some sites are environmentally sensitive so Arc works with environmental regulators and local communities to design appropriate mitigation and site rehabilitation measures, and gain appropriate environmental permits and approvals prior to action being taken.

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### **ABOUT ARC INFRASTRUCTURE**

Arc Infrastructure is a leading transport infrastructure manager in Western Australia. We currently operate the State’s 5,500km freight rail network, connecting people, commodities and ports across the State with the rest of Australia and the world.

Spread across regional Western Australia, our team of 400 employees keeps the rail network operating 24/7. We live local, buy local and are committed to contributing to regional communities.

Previously called Brookfield Rail, we changed our name to Arc Infrastructure in July 2017 to reflect the aspirations for our future to expand our involvement in transport infrastructure assets. We’re committed to working with industry, our customers, partners and communities to find new opportunities that will support and strengthen our rail network for the benefit of WA.

For more information about Arc Infrastructure, please visit [www.arcinfra.com](http://www.arcinfra.com).

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