1.0 Executive Summary

This Environmental Assessment (EA) considers the proposed Train Support Facility (TSF) at Hexham, NSW to be established by QR National. QR National is a publicly listed national rail, freight and logistics business which was previously part of Queensland Rail, a government owned entity.

QR National has identified a 255ha study area at Hexham within the Newcastle City Council (NCC) local government area. QR National seeks approval to establish a TSF which will occupy a 38ha portion of the site. The TSF is required to service QR National's growing Hunter Valley coal freight business and accommodate train servicing facilities.

This EA has been prepared to address the Director-General's Requirements (DGR) and in particular considers the full range of environmental, statutory and socio-economic implications of the proposed TSF.

The Proposal

QR National is seeking planning approval to construct and operate the TSF and associated infrastructure at Hexham, NSW. The proposed TSF is located approximately 16km north west of Newcastle CBD.

Key components of the proposed TSF include:

- Construction of new connections to the Great Northern Railway (GNR);
- Construction of 10 new train lines (tracks) and sidings parallel to the existing main railway line (Mainline) to accommodate QR National trains for provisioning, inspections, servicing and maintenance;
- Buildings for the provisioning of QR National locomotives and the maintenance of rollingstock;
- A bulk fuel storage area with capacity for up to 400,000L of diesel fuel;
- Construction of an intersection and a new vehicular access road from the Tarro Interchange;
- Approximately 380,000m^3 of earthworks (import to fill) for the construction of the railway formation, access road, drainage and building foundations;
- Construction of internal vehicular access roads; and
- The protection or diversion of existing utilities.

The estimated cost of the project is $130 million and is planned to be constructed in two stages over approximately 24 months. The proposed TSF is a major investment for the region and will provide significant flow-on benefits.

The Site

The site has a total area of 255ha, with the TSF to be developed in a 38ha portion of the site. The site is bounded by the GNR and the Pacific Highway to the east and the New England Highway to the north. It is also bounded by rural and environmental lands to the south and west, including the Hexham Swamp Nature Reserve. The site is located away from any significant residential area however, there are a small number of dwellings within the local vicinity of the site.

The northern portion of the site has had a history of agricultural use while the southern part of the site (zoned industrial) has a long association with the coal and rail industry and specifically has been used for the storage, preparation and loading and unloading of coal. The proposed development, which is predominantly on the southern part of the site, will continue the site's coal and rail related activities.

The site is strategically located close to the Port of Newcastle, adjoining the GNR with well-established rail links to mines in the Hunter Valley. The strategic importance of the site is recognised by the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy (LHRS) which identifies much of the site as employment lands. The proposed development is consistent with this initiative.

Need for the Proposal

The key purpose of the proposed TSF by QR National is to provide a more efficient and cost effective method of supporting QR National operations in the Hunter Valley Coal Chain (HVCC) by providing daily train running requirements and rollingstock maintenance needs.

Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) is encouraging "above rail operators", including QR National, to re-establish their current train provisioning facilities outside of the Port Terminals to minimise rail congestion on the approach to the dump stations. ARTC documented these requirements in the 2012-2021 Hunter Valley Corridor Capacity Strategy.

The removal of existing QR National rail facilities from the Newcastle Port Terminals will improve the efficiency of coal loading operations at Kooragang Coal Terminal (KCT). The Hunter Valley Coal Chain Coordinator (HVCCC) has provided a letter in support of QR National's TSF application.

Newcastle is presently the largest coal exporting harbour in the world, exporting over 97Mt of coal in 2009–10 with plans to expand annual capacity to 180Mt by 2013. Mining of black coal is one of Australia's most important industries, creating significant employment in regional Australia, fuel for low-cost electricity generation and steel-making and vital export income. Australia is the world's biggest coal exporter, and black coal is Australia's largest export, worth more than $A50 billion in 2008-09.

The TSF initiative is part of the process of continuous improvements associated within the HVCC network. The proposed QR National TSF will ultimately result in improved efficiency in the transport of coal to market.

Justification for the Proposal

The proposed TSF is intended to support the projected increase in coal export by establishing a facility where train running requirements and rollingstock maintenance needs could be undertaken away from the Port of Newcastle.

The proposed TSF will incorporate provision for:

- Operation and management of QR National trains;
- QR National trains undergoing statutory and routine maintenance inspections;
- Locomotives and wagons to be attached/detached to QR National trains;
- Locomotives to be provisioned;
- Locomotives and wagons to be serviced;
- Locomotives and wagons to be stabled; and
- Spare parts to be held for locomotives and wagons.

The TSF initiative is consistent with the ARTC strategy of continuous improvement associated with the Hunter Valley Corridor Capacity Strategy. The development will result in the relocation of existing QR National rail facilities on Kooragang Island, providing for more efficient coal loading operations. The proposed TSF will allow for trains to be maintained and serviced away from the Newcastle Port operations alleviating the congestion of trains queuing on the Mainline before entering the KCT.

In this context the proposal is vitally important to the local, regional and national economies as it supports the efficient and competitive delivery of coal for export. Strong world demand for coal is encouraging major investment across the entire coal chain; this includes the establishment of new mines, increasing investment in the rail system and initiatives to increase the coal export capacity of the port.

The site is located in close proximity to the Newcastle Port, major transport routes and the Hunter Valley coal mines. The site is free of any significant constraints and it is considered to be an ideal location for the proposed TSF.

Project Alternatives

In 2011 a Location Constraints Analysis review was undertaken by QR National to confirm the preferred location in the Hunter Valley for the TSF. Some 54 sites were considered as part of the investigations with seven sites, including the preferred site at Hexham, examined in detail.

Further to the review of suitable sites, a number of design investigations were also undertaken to achieve an optimal TSF layout at Hexham that met the QR National operational requirements while minimising environmental impacts.

An outline of the seven alternative sites is included in the table below.

Alternative Site Options Assessed		
Option	Location	Details
Option 1	Hexham	This site has a frontage of 3.30kms adjoining the Main Northern Line at Hexham (Down Main)
Option 2	Rutherford	This site has a frontage of 4.71 km along the Down Main at Rutherford
Option 3	Allandale	Option 3 has a frontage of 3.10km along the Down Main at Rutherford.
Option 4	Belford East	Option 4 has a frontage of 3.33km along the Down Main at Belford
Option 5	Belford West	Option 5 has a frontage of 3.42km along the Down Main at Belford
Option 6	Whittingham	Option 6 has a frontage of 3.00km along the Down Main at Whittingham
Option 7	Singleton	Option 7 has a frontage of 3.08km along the Down Main at Singleton

Three options were considered for the track layout of the TSF within the Hexham site, these being the parallel, extended and compressed options. The parallel option was selected because it is best suited to the site's constraints, the design parameters for the TSF and is the most widely used layout option throughout the rail industry.

Options Assessment Criteria

QR National considered seven alternative site options and a 'do nothing' option for further detailed operational modelling and environmental and economic analysis.

QR National used criteria that included strategic locality, accessibility, topography and logistical concerns as well as environmental, servicing and operational considerations to score the sites' suitability in order to select a preferred option. Following this, Option 1 (the proposed TSF) was selected as the preferred option based on the following:

- The locality has had a long association with industrial activity associated with coal processing and rail transport facilities;
- Excellent accessibility to the routes between the coal mines and the Port of Newcastle coal loading terminals;
- The site adjoins a 3km straight length of the Mainline;
- Flat topography and little vegetation cover;
- Separation from heavily populated residential areas, minimising potential issues associated with noise, dust and vibration;
- Close proximity to the Newcastle and Hunter Valley area workforce;
- Direct access to the New England Highway for fuel deliveries; and
- The use of existing disturbed land to minimise environmental impact.

Consultation

QR National developed a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to inform Government, the community and other stakeholders about the proposed TSF, and to address all relevant environmental, social and economic issues raised by stakeholders and the community in the EA.

The community consultation undertaken as a part of the EA process included:

- Special interest groups;
- State and local government authorities including NCC, ARTC, Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), Hunter Water Corporation (HWC) and Hunter Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority (CMA);
- Local community of Hexham and Tarro;
- Landowners identified as directly adjacent to the proposal; and
- Utility providers including Ausgrid, Jemena, Telstra, HWC, and Optus.

The QR National Community information line will be utilised and a project email address will be established to ensure that project information is continuously collected and appropriately dealt with.

The following activities will be undertaken once the proposal has been submitted for exhibition:

- EA public notification (Newspaper advertisement);
- EA project newsletter;
- EA exhibition notification letter;
- EA exhibition static display (hardcopy available for viewing); and
- EA community information session.

Issues raised by Government, the community and stakeholders have been addressed in the relevant sections of the EA.

The ARTC is progressing a development proposal for the Hexham Relief Roads Project (HRR), a State Significant Infrastructure Project involving the establishment of five new rail tracks which is also designed to reduce congestion and improve the efficiency of operations in and around the Newcastle Port. The HRR development proposed will be located on land currently owned by QR National between the site for the proposed TSF and the GNR. QR National is liaising closely with ARTC to coordinate the approval process and development works associated with the two projects.

Assessment of Environmental Impacts

Outlined below is a summary of the key environmental impacts associated with the proposed TSF which have been addressed within this EA.

Ecology

Three endangered ecological communities (EEC) occur in the study area: Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest of the NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner bioregions; Freshwater Wetlands on Coastal Floodplains of the NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner bioregions; and Coastal Saltmarsh in the NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner bioregions.

No threatened flora species were recorded within the study area, though Zannichellia palustris was considered a potential occurrence.

Eleven threatened fauna species were recorded within the study area and an additional four threatened fauna species were considered likely to occur. Six migratory species listed under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) are also considered likely to occur.

The majority of the area proposed to be affected on the site comprises cleared/disturbed land or rehabilitated land (zoned industrial), containing both native and non-endemic species. The proposed development will require removal of 2.72ha of Freshwater Wetlands on Coastal Floodplains which is an EEC. Approximately 25.7ha of the EEC was mapped within the study area. The magnitude of impact on EECs has been assessed and no threatened species or communities are considered likely to be significantly affected by the proposal.

A Biobanking Assessment of the proposed development and proposed offset lands was completed to determine if sufficient credits would be generated on the offset lands to achieve the 'improve or maintain' outcome according to the methodology.

The proposal will achieve a no net loss outcome for two of the four communities, with a mitigated loss for Swamp Oak Swamp Forest and Coastal Floodplain Sedgelands, Rushlands, and Forblands of the North Coast. Overall, the offset will deliver a surplus of 170 credits. QR National have committed to the protection and management of 53.63ha of native vegetation and habitat on site in perpetuity.

Approximately 5.69ha of degraded SEPP14 Coastal Wetlands will be directly affected by the proposed TSF. An appropriate offset has been provided for this impact. A referral of the project under the EPBC Act has been made. The project has been determined to not be a controlled action.

Flood Impact

The results of the modelling and flood impact assessment have confirmed that Peak 1% Annual Exceedence Probability (AEP) flood levels for existing conditions are estimated to vary from 3.7m AHD at the northern end of the site to 3.5m AHD at the southern end. The majority of the proposed development would be subject to significant inundation in major flood events where typical 1% AEP flood depths across the site are of the order of 1.5 – 3.0m. Corresponding peak

flow velocities for the 1% AEP event under existing conditions are typically in the order of 0.5m/s, but locally higher. Development of the proposed TSF is not considered to have a significant impact on the existing flooding regime as the intention is to mimic the natural flows of the site.

The site is to be raised to a level above that of the 2% AEP flood level but largely below the 1% AEP flood level. Local increases in peak flood level of up to 0.1m upstream of the proposed access road alignment are simulated for the 2% AEP event with peak flood level increases of less than 0.05m being typical for other design events. Elsewhere localised increases in peak flood level can be addressed through adequately designed cross drainage infrastructure.

Climate change considerations of increased tailwater levels and rainfall intensity increased the 1% AEP flood level by 0.32m.

Stormwater

Two discharge locations were identified that are likely to affect EECs sensitive to changes in low flow events, these being Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest and Coastal Saltmarsh. The impact to EECs is considered to be negligible, these areas are relatively waterlogged and/or semi-permanent submerged environments, in large, flat, open areas where depth changes are insignificant, or are within areas where the proposed development represents relatively minor changes to significantly larger catchments. Erosion and sediment control measures have been identified to address areas considered sensitive to minor changes in flow rates.

Modelling has indicated that there are opportunities for stormwater management on the site to assist in creating favourable conditions for restoration of suitable environments as an offset for the area of the site lost due to the proposed development. This can be achieved by changing the discharge and overflow locations and frequencies to specific areas as part of the ongoing design.

Modelling has also indicated that the proposed treatment trains will achieve the adopted stormwater treatment targets for the site. The adopted treatment measures are considered conservative and have not included the significant additional benefits of the removal of grazing and certain areas of effluent irrigation from the site.

Investigations undertaken concluded that the proposed TSF can feasibly be developed in accordance with current guidelines, and will not have a significant impact on the adjacent areas.

Effluent Disposal

There is sufficient area available for onsite effluent disposal allowing for independence and separation from the existing irrigation area. Conventional control of design of the system falls under Section 68 of the Local Government Act, with NCC as the consent authority. QR National, through the design of the TSF, has proposed an environmentally sound wash down facility including water recycling and rainwater tanks.

Traffic and Access

Access to the project area is proposed via an access road from the Tarro Interchange to the subject site. Extensive consultation with RMS has been undertaken with regard to providing access to the site.

The access proposal off the Tarro Interchange will provide a good level of service for traffic access to the proposed development site. Whilst traffic flows on the New England Highway are high at peak times, the relatively low number of staff and shift work operations means that there will be little, if any, impact upon the existing traffic flows along the New England Highway at this location during operation. The future extension of the F3 Freeway to the Pacific Highway at Heatherbrae will reduce flows along the New England Highway in the vicinity of the proposed TSF.

Construction traffic will peak to around 170 vehicles per day entering the site during this period. The peak daily traffic volume is predicted to be in the order of 340 vehicle movements per day, which will be spread over a period of 7 – 8 hours. This peak would be temporary, predicted to occur over a 2 – 4 month period of the 18 month construction program.

Traffic in the peak construction period is mitigated by the arrival of site staff prior to the morning peak period and departing after the afternoon peak period. Materials movements will occur after the morning peak period optimising the efficiency of supply movement.

Geotechnical and Acid Sulphate Soils

Field testing found that a clay crust is present over the site which is generally about 0.5m to 1m thick. The subgrade significantly reduces in strength below this level. It is recommended, where possible, that minimal excavation into the surface crust be carried out to avoid exposing underlying, softer soils. Due to the relatively low strength of the clay soils and associated long term total settlements, buildings will need to be founded on piled foundations.

A preliminary geotechnical analysis of the settlement and slope stability of the proposed rail embankment has been undertaken. It is noted that ground improvement may be required to increase both the shear strength of the clay soils and slope stability depending on the final embankment slope and findings from further detailed analysis on slope stability that will be undertaken during the detailed design phase.

Acid sulphate screening tests have been conducted at the site. Test results have established that the Acid Sulphate Soils Advisory Management Committee (ASSAMC) action criteria for excavations above and below 1,000 tonnes has been exceeded, confirming that potential acid sulphate soils (PASS) are present within the TSF site.

For construction purposes, the disturbance of soils through excavation and dewatering within natural soils (excluding fill) should be treated as PASS and thus must be managed under the Acid Sulphate Soils Management Plan (ASSMP). The ASSMP provides analysis of the acid sulphate soils and appropriate mitigation necessary for excavation activities during construction.

Groundwater

A conceptual groundwater model has been developed for the proposed TSF indicating that the majority of groundwater flow is expected to occur in the filling areas and will be driven by infiltration of rainfall and irrigated water on the more elevated parts of the site, in particular, the existing coal tailings stockpiles which are located to the west of the proposed TSF development area.

Groundwater flow radiates out from near the centre of the coal tailings area, however much of the groundwater flow from this area towards the north, west and east would be expected to be intercepted by the existing perimeter drainage, rather than flowing to the groundwater beyond. The intercepted water is diverted towards the Hexham Swamp to the west.

Some fluctuations in groundwater levels within the filling could be expected due to the close proximity to the Hunter River. Based on an average water level in the Hunter River of about RL 0.0 or slightly higher and a distance of between 600m and 900m to the River, the available hydraulic gradient towards the Hunter River will be limited.

There is limited use of groundwater in the vicinity of the site. Registered wells in the vicinity of the site are limited to nine monitoring bores installed in 2011 at the perimeter of the site for the purpose of monitoring groundwater quality and levels. The wells were installed as part of site investigations for the proposed TSF development. It is understood that there are no wells registered for beneficial use within 3km of the site. Therefore, no impacts to groundwater levels from the TSF development are expected to occur at such a proximity to the site.

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs) are highly disturbed from previous land uses and remain in relatively poor condition due to weed invasion. Given the improvement of GDE's in the offset lands, any possible detrimental effects locally are not significant in terms of the Hunter Estuary.

Contamination

Results of a preliminary contamination assessment indicated the absence of gross contamination within the soil, groundwater and surface water samples tested. Elevated levels of nutrients and faecal coliforms were encountered in groundwater and surface water samples taken at the site. Based on field observation and laboratory testing, it is considered that the elevated nutrient and faecal coliform concentrations may be attributed to the infiltration of irrigated treated effluent from neighbouring sewerage treatment operations and historical agricultural use. It is noted that the detected concentration of nutrients are significantly lower than the estimated nutrient and organic loading rates of the treated effluent.

In addition, slightly elevated levels of heavy metal contamination were encountered in groundwater and surface water samples taken at the site. Based on field observations and laboratory testing in soils, no apparent impact was observed on the site to suggest gross heavy metal contamination within soils.

It is considered that there is a potential for offsite migration of groundwater and surface water containing elevated heavy metals, hydrocarbons, nutrients and faecal coliforms. It is proposed that such contamination will be addressed through appropriate management within a Water

Quality Management Plan. Effluent irrigation activities at the site could be contributing to the impacts on waters at the site. It is understood that effluent irrigation carried out by the sewerage treatment operator is proposed to continue under Environmental Protection Licence (No 816) for the interim. Additional sampling and laboratory analysis would be required to confirm the source/type and significance of impacts and potential for offsite migration of waters from the site.

A Remedial Action Plan (RAP) has been prepared to identify where remediation of contaminated land is necessary.

Servicing Infrastructure

Potential connections to existing water, telecommunications and gas services can be achieved to service the proposed TSF.

Waste water will be treated using an onsite treatment system with onsite effluent disposal. Additionally a dedicated recycling system is included to wash down locomotives prior to maintenance.

As part of the proposed TSF, relocation/protection of services is required and negotiations have commenced with the relevant authorities.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The Awabakal Descendants Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council, and the Awabakal Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation were consulted during the preparation of the Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment.

Searches of the statutory and non-statutory registers returned 93 results for listed Aboriginal sites under the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) database within a 10km radius of the study area.

In 2011 McCardle Cultural Heritage, in consultation with the relevant Aboriginal Stakeholders, identified a Potential Cultural Deposit (PCD) on the proposed TSF site. Investigation undertaken by Australian Museum Business Services (AMBS) identified an Archaeological Site (HS1) surface extent and sub-surface extent and a potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD) on the site as part of their work in relation to the adjoining ARTC HRR Project. Site HS1 was not identified during a second site visit by McCardle Cultural Heritage following its identification by AMBS, notwithstanding this, the assessment has assumed that the Site HS1 is present.

Much of the northern part of the site will not be impacted by the proposed TSF and Site HS1 (surface extent) will be completely avoided.

Works are proposed in the PCD and it is proposed that these areas would be tested prior to any work to minimise any impact. If required, excavation and salvage of artefacts would be undertaken prior to any work taking place.

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP) would be developed, in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders, and implemented prior to construction.

European Heritage

The proposed TSF was found to have very minimal inherent impact on European heritage values of the site. While several items associated with previous uses, such as the dairy ruins, remnant trackwork, coal preparation plant footings and conveyor support footings, will likely be demolished, these have a very limited level of significance and their loss will not be detrimental.

Development of the proposed TSF may necessitate disturbance, concealment or removal of a range of built items. These include some remnant items of track work which are associated with the Minmi to Hexham Railway which is recognised as a Local Heritage Item within Schedule 5 of the Newcastle LEP 2012. Whilst these items provide evidence of previous use of the area, none of these items are considered to be of high heritage significance.

QR National is committed to interpreting as much of the site's history as possible within the parameters of modern needs. This has been demonstrated by QR National's commitment to mitigation which includes; salvage of undamaged bricks from the control cabin for reuse and the provision of a plaque on site providing details of the site's history, and a Construction Non-Indigenous Management Plan. Also, the appointment of an Excavation Director and excavation of relics may be undertaken where appropriate.

In heritage terms, the site has been found to be suitable for the proposed TSF. For over 130 years the site has been associated with the coal and rail industries. These associations will be preserved by the revival of the site's previous use (industrial uses) being the transportation of coal.

Noise and Vibration

Operational noise levels from the proposed TSF are predicted to meet the project specific noise criteria at all receiver locations under prevailing weather conditions. The acoustic report determines that the number of traffic movements associated with the proposed development is insignificant in acoustic terms and that compliance with the NSW Road Noise Policy (RNP) is predicted to be met.

Construction noise levels are predicted to be below the relevant guidelines at the closest residential receivers. The additional traffic associated with construction activity will result in a negligible change to the existing road traffic noise level generated on the New England Highway and therefore are predicted to meet the requirements of the RNP.

With regard to vibration, the distance between both construction and operational sources will mean that the proposal is below the criteria for risk of cosmetic damage to residential and commercial properties.

Air Quality

A number of potential sensitive receptors surrounding the proposed TSF site have been identified, in particular, residents of the Hexham and Tarro areas. The closest sensitive receptors are located in the Hexham area adjacent to the western boundary of the site, to the north of the site, and in Woodlands Close, Clark Street and Old Maitland Road.

In undertaking an Air Quality Assessment, estimates of background concentrations of criteria pollutants were derived from the Beresfield monitoring site for 2011, with the exception of carbon monoxide for which the Newcastle data set was used. ARTC HRR modelling results at sensitive receptor locations have also been considered in assessing operation and construction activities relating to the proposed TSF.

The Air Quality Assessment has considered both operational and construction activities relating to the proposed project and a range of air pollutants has been considered including nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, and particulate matter. Air toxics associated with fuel storage and diesel exhaust from locomotives has also been considered.

Dust generated in association with construction and impacts of nitrogen dioxide from diesel locomotive exhaust emissions are the most significant sources of air pollutants associated with the proposed TSF project.

Operation of the TSF is expected to have a minimal impact on air quality at the location of the sensitive receptors. The cumulative impact of the TSF and adjacent ARTC operations are also expected to have a minimal impact on air quality at the location of the sensitive receptors.

Impacts from dust emissions during construction will be minimised through the implementation of industry accepted best practice dust mitigation measures addressed within this EA. The low volume of trains using the TSF suggests that diesel exhaust emissions associated with onsite activities are unlikely to have a significant impact on local air quality.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the proposed TSF have been assessed in terms of potential direct emission (Scope 1), potential indirect emission (Scope 2) and potential significant upstream/downstream emission (Scope 3). A GHG Assessment has been undertaken to consider the predicted impact of the proposed TSF in comparison to that currently experienced as a result of the current QR National operations at KCT. The construction of the TSF is short term in nature and it is anticipated that GHG emissions during the operation of the facility will be higher than those generated during construction. Therefore, the assessment of the construction of the TSF has not been considered in detail within the GHG Assessment.

The GHG Assessment has found that the principal source of GHG emissions during the operational phase of the proposed TSF is the onsite usage of diesel, however when compared to NSW and Australian emissions totals, the increase associated with the proposed TSF is not considered significant.

Comment on the EA for the Hexham TSF

Comments on any aspect of the proposed TSF or this EA document can be made by making a written submission to Department of Planning and Infrastructures (DP&I) during the exhibition period. The submissions will be treated as public documents unless confidentiality is requested.

The EA can be downloaded from the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure's website http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au or viewed at its offices at 23-33 Bridge St, Sydney. Copies would also be available in the Newcastle Council office and library.

The address for written submissions is:

> *Train Support Facility - Hexham Redevelopment Project (MP 07_0171)*
> *Department of Planning and Infrastructure*
> *GPO Box 39, SYDNEY NSW 2001*

Submissions can also be made online through the DP&I's website.

Next Steps

Following exhibition of the EA, the issues raised in submissions will be considered and addressed by QR National. A Preferred Project Report (if required) may be completed to address any changes to the proposal.

In order to proceed with approval for the proposed TSF, the EA Submissions Report and Preferred Project Report (where necessary) would be submitted to DP&I for assessment. DP&I would examine the information provided and prepare an assessment report for the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure would then determine the proposed TSF application. If approved, conditions of approval would be set to outline necessary control measures based on the Statement of Commitments addressed within this EA.

It is anticipated that the community and project stakeholders would continue to be engaged/consulted throughout the detailed design and construction phases of the project.