

QR selects builders for Jilalan

ONE of the largest coal rail infrastructure upgrades in Central Queensland is closer to commencement with the selection this week of preferred constructors and designers, QR's acting chief executive officer, Steve Cantwell said yesterday.

Although it has not been fully scoped the Jilalan rail yard upgrade, including train maintenance, is considered to have a total potential worth of \$350 million.

It is an integral part of expansion plans for the Dalrymple Bay/Hay Point ports to provide an increased capacity of over 40% by 2010.

Mr Cantwell said QR had selected preferred constructors Macmahon Holdings Limited and MVM Rail, and preferred designers Connell Hatch and Parsons Brinckerhoff as partners with QR in the upgrade.

Located near Sarina, the Jilalan rail yard is instrumental in enhancing the capacity of the coal rail network and allowing the further growth of coal exports from the Bowen Basin.

"Queensland's coal industry is the largest in Australia, with approximately 85% of the state's coal production exported," Mr Cant-

well said. "This rail yard upgrade is one of the largest of its kind in this region and will result in a massive increase in capacity to the rapidly-growing Queensland coal export market.

"We are very aware of the growing global demands on coal export companies in Queensland and the need for extra infrastructure capacity. This is part of the considerable rail investment to better meet customer needs.

"Benefits will also include the creation of around 350 jobs during construction with 100 jobs required when operational," he said.