



## **NEW AIRPORT FLYOVER OPEN TO MOTORISTS A YEAR EARLY**

The new Airport Flyover is expected to open to traffic on the weekend, a year before the original scheduled completion date of November 2011.

Premier Anna Bligh said that, weather permitting, the eastbound lanes will open to cars early Monday morning while westbound lanes of the flyover are expected to be opened before Christmas.

Brisbane's newest bridge opens on the second anniversary of construction beginning on the Airport Link projects – Airport Link, Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) and the Airport Roundabout Upgrade.

Ms Bligh said the State Government's entire \$327m Airport Roundabout Upgrade project is on track for an early completion, with the new "fast diamond intersection" also expected to begin operation in coming weeks.

"Once the worst congestion black spot in Queensland's South East, construction work since April 2009 has seen the problem solved a year early," Ms Bligh said.

"Motorists travelling on the Airport Flyover will save more than 10 minutes on trips to Brisbane Airport during peak periods.

"When all the lanes on the flyover are open later this year, 3,600 vehicles an hour will be able to cross the overpass to get to and from the Airport."

In the two years since the Premier turned the sod to mark the beginning of construction of the Airport Link projects (which include the Airport Link tunnels, the Airport Roundabout Upgrade projects and the North Busway) thousands of workers have:

- Completed 60 % of construction
- Worked more than 12 million hours
- Completed over 7 kilometres of tunnels
- Driven nearly 16,000 piles
- Excavated 80% of all the spoil that will be generated by the project
- Distributed more than half a million community notices

Minister for Infrastructure and Planning Stirling Hinchliffe said the progress was great news for Brisbane drivers and local residents and business.

"Now that the Airport Flyover is almost complete, the focus for workers has shifted to completion work such as asphaltting, road barrier placement, kerbing and landscaping along East West Arterial Road, Airport Drive and Nudgee Road," he said.

"Once complete, the 20m-high flyover will be handed to the Department of Transport and Main Roads to manage and will be free for all drivers.

"When all three projects are complete local communities will enjoy faster, safer travel and it is predicted local streets will carry less traffic. Construction on this scale is causing difficulty for some residents and businesses and I want to thank them for their on-going patience.

"The project is currently employing around 3,600 people. This is 1000 more than predicted. Directly and indirectly more than 12,000 people are earning an income as a result of the largest road infrastructure project ever built in Australia."

Thiess John Holland Project Director Gordon Ralph congratulated the team of up to 400 workers who had contributed to the Airport Roundabout Upgrade project since construction began in April 2009.

“Our workers have not only constructed the new 750 metre Flyover, they have built a new four lane overpass for Southern Cross Way and demolished the existing bridge structure, all the while maintaining traffic flow at the roundabout, “Mr Ralph said.

“To construct the Airport Flyover a balanced cantilever construction method was used. The flyover relies on 12 piers each varying in height for support- the tallest standing 19.5 metres.”

CEO of BrisConnections Dr Ray Wilson said on completion, the Airport Flyover will connect with the Airport Link toll road from entry and exit ramps located on East West Arterial Road, allowing drivers to choose a faster way to travel from the CBD to Brisbane Airport avoiding up to 18 sets of lights.

"When the Airport Link project is finished in 2012, access to the Brisbane Airport for motorists will be better than any other airport in Australia," Dr Wilson said.

The project involves:

- Constructing a new four lane 750m bridge linking East West Arterial Road and Airport Drive over the Gateway Motorway overpass
- Replacing the existing Gateway Motorway overpass at the roundabout with a new four lane overpass
- Replacing the existing roundabout with a high capacity signalised intersection
- The upgrade of the intersection at East West Arterial and Nudgee Roads
- Widening of East West Arterial Road to three traffic lanes in each direction
- Improved connections to the airport precinct, the Gateway Motorway and Kingsford Smith Drive and
- Surface road improvements to Airport Drive.

Visit [www.brisconnections.com.au](http://www.brisconnections.com.au) to register for SMS and email updates on traffic changes and project progress.

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