

## MEDIA RELEASE

15 October 2010

### **Airport Link and Northern Busway tunnel network grows with Lutwyche breakthrough**

The network of tunnels under Brisbane's inner northern suburbs is continuing to grow with a major tunnelling breakthrough on Australia's largest road infrastructure project - Airport Link - today.

Thiess John Holland Project Director Gordon Ralph congratulated workers from the Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) project as a massive roadheader machine broke through in the 490 metre long Busway tunnel at Lutwyche.

"This is an exciting time for the Airport Link projects with the network of tunnels beginning to connect across the northern suburbs," Mr Ralph said.

"Seven kilometres of tunnels have been excavated by roadheader machines between Bowen Hills and Woolloowin to date," he said.

"Today, under Lutwyche Road, the Northern Busway tunnel being excavated from Chalk Street broke through to the Busway tunnel being excavated from Truro Street."

Today's milestone is the second 'breakthrough' in roadheader tunnels across the projects. In June roadheaders from the Bowen Hills and Truro Street, Windsor sites met in the northbound Airport Link tunnel.

Still to come this month, roadheaders from the Kedron and Woolloowin sites will meet in the eastbound Airport Link tunnel, another breakthrough between Bowen Hills and Truro Street will occur in the southbound alignment and the southbound on-ramp at Kedron will reach the surface where construction will be completed with cut and cover tunnelling.

"I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Northern Busway team on today's milestone," Mr Ralph said.

"Tunnelling for this 490 metre long Busway tunnel began back in December 2009 with approximately 57,000 cubic metres of rock and soil excavated to date," he said.

"This is an excellent result by the team who should be proud of their progress over the past 10 months and excellent safety record to date.

"A total of 17 roadheaders are being used on the Airport Link projects, the largest number on any Australian project.

"Through a combination of roadheader, Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) and cut and cover methods, the project is excavating approximately 15 kilometres of tunnels and ramps from Bowen Hills to Toombul.



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“Final assembly on Rocky the TBM will be completed soon with the giant machine ready to recommence her journey in the eastbound tunnel from Toombul to Lutwyche, followed by her sister machine Sandy a few weeks later in the westbound tunnel.

Airport Link and the Northern Busway are due for completion in mid 2012, with the Airport Roundabout Upgrade on track to be fully open to traffic more than a year ahead of schedule.

When it opens in mid 2012, Airport Link will be the first major motorway connecting Brisbane city with the airport and northern suburbs.

It will improve travel times in a city currently experiencing the worst peak hour traffic in the country providing six new lanes for drivers between Bowen Hills and Kedron and four new lanes between Kedron and Toombul.

Combined, Airport Link and the Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) are expected to reduce traffic on Lutwyche Road by up to 40%.

The Northern Busway will provide fast, reliable public transport, catering for 47,000 trips per day in 2016 – more than five times the current number.

The \$4.8 billion projects currently employ more than 3,600 people and are creating 12,000 direct and indirect jobs for Queensland.

## **ENDS**

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