

Joint Statement:

**Premier and Minister for the Arts
The Honourable Anna Bligh**

**Minister for Infrastructure and Planning
The Honourable Stirling Hinchliffe**

Thursday, August 19, 2010

AIRPORT FLYOVER TO OPEN EARLY

The new Airport Flyover is expected to open its first lane to cars in October an incredible 13 months before the original scheduled completion date of Nov 2011.

Premier Anna Bligh said the remaining three lanes on the flyover will be progressively opened after November and the project is expected to be fully open at least six months before the Nov 2011 date.

Ms Bligh said the final bridge segment on the new 750 metre Airport Flyover will be installed at the Airport Roundabout this weekend.

The Airport Flyover is part of the State Government's \$327m congestion busting Airport Roundabout Upgrade project.

"A total of 435 out of 436 bridge segments, some of them weighing up to 52 tonnes are now installed on this vital piece of infrastructure," said the Premier.

"The Airport Flyover is now only one segment away from completion which will then allow workers to begin the installation of concrete barriers, lights, safety screens, asphalt surfacing and line marking.

"Once complete the Airport Flyover is expected to save motorists more than 10 minutes on trips to Brisbane Airport during peak periods."

Premier Bligh said the new flyover was one of the final pieces of a jigsaw to fix what used to be one of Brisbane's worst traffic bottlenecks.

"The first improvement took place in 2008 when traffic lights were installed on Lomandra Drive roundabout on Airport Drive," said Ms Bligh.

"Next up was the \$2.5 billion Gateway Motorway upgrade project and the new Northern Access Road which opened in December 2009. These efforts have already taken roughly 40% of traffic off the old roundabout.

"The flyover is going to be finished in record time and a new high capacity 'fast diamond' signalised intersection to improve travel times even further is now under construction.

"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."

Minister for Infrastructure and Planning Stirling Hinchliffe said it was great news for drivers.

"Now that the installation of the Airport Flyover's segments is almost complete, the focus has shifted to construction of the fast diamond intersection and finishing works on the Airport Flyover," 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."

Thiess John Holland Project Director Gordon Ralph said a balanced cantilever bridge construction methodology was used to ensure minimal disruption to traffic travelling on the busy Airport Roundabout and to minimise impacts to local businesses.

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.

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
- Improved connections to the airport precinct, the Gateway Motorway and Kingsford Smith Drive
- Widening of East West Arterial Road to three traffic lanes in each direction and
- Surface road improvements to Airport Drive.

Visit www.brisconnections.com.au to register for SMS and email updates on traffic changes and project progress.

Media Contact:

Minister for Infrastructure and Planning: 07 3224 4600

Premier's Office: 07 3224 4500