



Anna Bligh MP
Member for South Brisbane



**Deputy Premier,
Treasurer and
Minister for Infrastructure**

Media statement

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Four vie for Airport Link and Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron)

South East Queensland's appeal as a global investment hub surged today with four groups expressing interest in delivering two of the biggest transport projects ever planned in Queensland.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure Anna Bligh said the response to the State Government's call for a private sector partner to jointly deliver the proposed Airport Link underground toll road and the Windsor to Kedron section of the proposed Northern Busway was a significant vote of confidence.

"The message from the private sector is loud and clear – South East Queensland is an attractive place to invest and we want to get in on the ground floor," Ms Bligh said.

"It's a clear vote of confidence in the region and in the State Government's ability to deliver much-needed infrastructure in partnership with the private sector.

Expressions of Interest (EOI) in the Airport Link and Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) projects closed yesterday.

The four consortia vying for the chance to deliver the projects in partnership with the State Government are: BrisConnections, Iridium Concesiones de Infraestructuras, NorthConnect Motorway Pty Ltd, and Northern Motorway Pty Ltd.

Ms Bligh said the calibre of the companies vying for the projects was second to none, with the Spanish-based Iridium, owned by one of the world's largest construction companies, a welcome entrant in the Australian Public-Private Partnership (PPP) market.

"These groups are comprised of some of the world's most experienced construction companies and financiers, which means the competition for these projects is going to be tough," she said.

"I'm confident that these companies will have what it takes to submit competitive and innovative proposals that would not only produce an efficient and effective transport solution for Brisbane's northern suburbs but also real value for money for Queensland taxpayers."

Private sector companies were invited in late February to submit proposals outlining how they would finance, design, construct, commission, operate and maintain Airport Link. They were also asked to include in their proposals how they would design, construct and commission the Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron), which would be financed, operated and maintained by the State Government.

Ms Bligh said the EOI responses would be evaluated in the coming months with a shortlist expected to be announced in June 2007.

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BrisConnections

BrisConnections comprises Macquarie Bank, Thiess and John Holland. Members of the consortium have been involved in Sydney's Lane Cove Tunnel and Melbourne's EastLink motorway as well as the Boggo Road Busway, Eleanor Schonell Bridge and Trackstar rail projects in Queensland.

Iridium Concesiones de Infraestructuras and Dragados S.A.

Iridium Concesiones de Infraestructuras S.A. will partner with Dragados S.A. Both are wholly owned subsidiaries of the ACS Group.

The ACS Group has delivered a range of road and other infrastructure projects around the world, including more than 8500km of roads and 2900km of railways and subways. The group has an active presence in South America, North America and Europe.

NorthConnect Motorway Pty Ltd

The NorthConnect Motorway consortium comprises Boulderstone Hornibrook, Abigroup Limited, Bilfinger Berger Civil and Babcock & Brown. Other participants include Bilfinger Berger Services Australia, Hyder-SMEC JV, Coffey Geotechnics and Hassell.

NorthConnect members have been or are currently involved in the procurement, delivery and operation of major Queensland transport projects such as the North-South Bypass Tunnel, Gateway Upgrade Project and Tugun Bypass. NorthConnect's other major project experience includes Sydney's M2, M5 East and M7 motorways, Sydney's Cross City Tunnel, the NSW RailCorp Rollingstock PPP and the Liverpool-Parramatta Transitway.

Northern Motorway

The Northern Motorway consortium is jointly owned by Leighton Contractors and ABN AMRO Australia. Both are currently involved in the delivery of several PPP/infrastructure projects in South East Queensland, including Brisbane's North-South Bypass Tunnel, Gateway Upgrade Project and Southbank TAFE redevelopment.

Other members of the consortium include Japanese firm Kumagai Gumi, Maunsell, GHD, EDAW, Woods Bagot and Golder Associates.

Subject to the outcome of the EOI process and the successful completion of the Airport Link Environmental Impact Statement and the Northern Busway Concept Design and Impact Management Plan, the State Government is expected to invite tenders for the projects in mid-2007.

Construction of the projects would likely begin in late 2008 and be completed in 2012.

Airport Link and the Northern Busway are two of the largest infrastructure projects planned in the first phase of the State Government's *South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program*.

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