



Speech by

Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Wednesday, 20 May 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Infrastructure Projects

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.08 am): The number of Queenslanders working on the Airport Link, Northern Busway and airport roundabout upgrade projects continues to climb. There are now more than 1,500 workers on the job. On Monday night, work on Australia's largest road infrastructure project really kicked into gear, with the start of 24-hour tunnelling at the Bowen Hills and Windsor construction sites. This highlights the enormous progress on the project since the Premier announced the winning bidder in May last year. One year on, two road headers are now working underground at Bowen Hills and at Truro Street, Windsor. Crews of seven operators will run them day and night for the next two years as they create six kilometres of tunnels.

Since the official start of construction last November more than 1.7 million hours have been worked. Seven major work sites are now operational, including the flyover that will eliminate the airport roundabout, where the Premier signalled the start of work last month, some four months early. The project will cut travel times for motorists heading to and from the Brisbane Airport from mid- to late 2011. And we ain't seen nothing yet!

Later this year, the first of two 3,000-tonne tunnel-boring machines—the TBMs that I have spoken to the House about before—will arrive from Germany to begin tunnelling south from Toombul. By mid-2010 a total of 13 pieces of tunnelling machinery will be carving out Australia's largest infrastructure project.

Over the next three years, the Airport Link projects are expected to create some 10,000 direct and indirect job opportunities. When it is complete in mid-2012, the Airport Link project will allow motorists to drive between Bowen Hills and the Brisbane Airport in six minutes, avoiding 18 sets of traffic lights along the way. This vital addition to Brisbane's road network will provide a critical link between the northern suburbs and two of South-East Queensland's most important economic centres—the CBD and the airport. Not only will it provide work for thousands of Queenslanders; it will truly be a congestion buster for all of us who use those roads daily.