



Speech by

Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

Hansard Tuesday, 8 June 2010

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Airport Link

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.08 am): The Bligh government's commitment to infrastructure and jobs for Queenslanders is evident in the progression of the combined Airport Link projects. The \$4.8 billion project, which includes the Airport Link roundabout upgrade, the Airport Link tunnel and the Northern Busway from Windsor to Kedron, is the largest infrastructure endeavour underway in Australia.

Close to 3,000 workers are currently working on nine separate work sites. Thanks to their efforts, the elimination of Brisbane's worst bottleneck—the airport roundabout—is this week one step closer. Following the opening of the new Gateway Motorway overpass in recent weeks, demolition has begun on the old structure. The staggered removal of the old Gateway Motorway overpass will allow for the ongoing construction of a 750-metre-long overpass between the East-West Arterial and Airport Drive—a structure that will allow motorists to completely avoid the intersection. In addition, this project will see the old roundabout eliminated and replaced with a signalised fast diamond that recognises and responds to traffic as it arrives. Infrastructure underway at the intersections is expected to save motorists 10 minutes to and from the airport.

The other Airport Link projects—the Airport Link tunnel and the Northern Busway from Windsor to Kedron—will create a new underground highway that enables motorists to bypass 18 sets of traffic lights. That is six new lanes between Bowen Hills and Kedron and four new lanes between Kedron and Toombul as well as a vital addition to our public transport network with the busway. The Bligh government promised infrastructure and jobs, and that is what we are delivering. We made a plan and we stuck to it. It has not always been easy, but this plan will see travel times slashed in a city currently experiencing some of Australia's worst peak-hour traffic. This plan is also producing jobs. This project is expected to create close to 10,000 direct and indirect positions. The combined Airport Link projects are, as planned, delivering much needed infrastructure and generating thousands of jobs.