

Question on Notice

No. 101

Asked on 17 February 2011

MS GRACE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING (MR HINCHLIFFE)—

Will the Minister update the House on the most recent achievements in construction of the Airport Link project and the immediate benefits they bring to Brisbane Central residents?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Brisbane Central for her question.

While this question was asked of the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, due to recent changes in Ministerial responsibility, I am now the Minister responsible for this matter and therefore provide this response.

Construction on the Airport Link, Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) and Airport Roundabout Upgrade projects is nearly 70 per cent complete and on track to open to traffic by mid-2012. Over 14.5 million hours have been worked by the more than 3,800 people directly employed on the projects.

More than nine kilometres of tunnels have been excavated across the project corridor and in the Brisbane Central electorate, roadheader tunnelling and associated spoil haulage is now complete. The southern end of Airport Link is fully excavated and installation of the tunnels' permanent lining is nearing completion. The mechanical and electrical fit-out of the tunnels will commence in coming months.

An important milestone for 2011 has already been reached in the Brisbane Central electorate, with a new on-ramp from Lutwyche Road southbound to the Inner City Bypass now open to traffic. This is the first of 12 new bridge structures in Bowen Hills that will connect Airport Link and the Northern Busway to the local road network, Inner City Bypass and Clem7. The northbound on-ramp to the Inner City Bypass will open shortly along with a new pedestrian bridge across Enoggera Creek, providing access for local residents to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and the existing Busway station.

Elsewhere through the project corridor, Australia's largest Tunnel Boring Machines, Rocksy and Sandy, have reached an important milestone, with Rocksy breaking through into the Woolloowin caverns on 17 February 2011. This breakthrough marked the halfway point in the machine's journey from Toombul to Lutwyche. Sandy is making excellent progress and is expected to break through shortly.

On the Windsor to Kedron stage of the Northern Busway, construction has commenced on two state-of-the-art Busway stations at Lutwyche and Kedron. The first structures that will provide pedestrian access to the bus platforms are already visible at Lutwyche where the station will be located below Lutwyche Road, providing safe access for pedestrians and cyclists without the need to cross this busy arterial road.

At the other end of the project, the eastbound lanes of the Airport Flyover opened to traffic in November 2010, a year ahead of the original scheduled completion date. The fast diamond intersection that replaces the old airport roundabout has also been in operation since November 2010. All lanes of the Airport Flyover are now open.

The Airport Link, Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) and Airport Roundabout Upgrade comprise Australia's largest road infrastructure project. They are providing vital congestion-busting solutions for South East Queensland while delivering 12,000 direct and indirect job opportunities to the State, and will provide substantial, immediate benefits to the residents of Brisbane Central.