

# Media Release

**The Hon James Merlino MP**  
Acting Premier  
Minister for Education  
Minister for Mental Health



Thursday, 11 March 2021

## EARLY FINISH FOR METRO TUNNEL'S EASTERN ENTRANCE

The Metro Tunnel Project's eastern entrance at South Yarra has been completed more than five months ahead of schedule with work now underway to connect the new structure with the project's twin tunnels.

Acting Premier James Merlino and Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan today visited the site, where crews have spent the past two years building the tunnel entrance – which will save commuters up to 50 minutes a day on their journeys when up to 48 trains enter and exit the tunnel each hour.

The work included widening the existing rail corridor, excavating more than 31,000 cubic metres of rock and soil, and building a base slab, internal walls and roof slab using more than 7,700 cubic metres of concrete and almost 8,000 tonnes of reinforced steel.

Workers demolished the old William Street Bridge to build a new, longer single-span bridge, and moved the existing four rail tracks for the Frankston, Cranbourne, Dandenong and Pakenham lines to make space for new tracks into the tunnel entrance.

When the Metro Tunnel Project is complete in 2025, a year ahead of schedule, Cranbourne and Pakenham line trains will enter the tunnel near William Street and pass under the citybound Frankston Line and both Sandringham lines before travelling west underground below Toorak Road and St Kilda Road to the new Anzac Station.

When Melbourne Airport Rail is complete, trains will run from Pakenham and Cranbourne through this tunnel entrance directly to the airport.

In the past week, a section of the nearby tunnel boring machine retrieval shaft – where TBMs Millie and Alice were retrieved after tunnelling from Anzac Station late last year – was demolished, connecting the tunnels to the entrance structure for the first time.

Other construction taking place during 2021 includes an underground substation at the South Yarra Siding Reserve and rail systems equipment rooms at Chambers Street, as well as landscaping at the reserve and Lovers Walk to restore these areas as public open space.

TBMs are continuing work at pace on the project's twin 9km tunnels, with three-quarters of tunnelling now complete. TBM Joan began her final leg in February under Swanston Street towards Town Hall Station, while TBM Meg will soon relaunch to dig a parallel tunnel.

In the east, TBMs Alice and Millie continue their last drive under the Yarra River towards the CBD from the Anzac Station site.

Construction on the Metro Tunnel Project continued throughout 2020, keeping thousands of Victorians in work while adhering to strict coronavirus safety measures in line with Department of Health guidelines.

The Metro Tunnel Project will create additional capacity for more than half a million passengers a week during peak periods and transform the way Victorians travel around Melbourne.

The project will connect the Sunbury Line to the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines up to 30 metres below the streets of Melbourne, with five new underground stations and connections to City Loop services at the new CBD stations of State Library and Town Hall.

### Quote attributable to Acting Premier James Merlino

*"To have the first tunnel entrance completed ahead of schedule is a huge milestone as we stride closer to completing the Metro Tunnel that will bring more trains to our suburbs and slash travel times."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

*"As Victoria recovers from the global pandemic, getting on with projects like the Metro Tunnel supports and creates thousands of jobs at a time where we need them most."*

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