

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Acting Premier

Minister for Transport and Infrastructure

Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop

Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery



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TEST TRAINS CLOSER WITH TRACKS LAID IN THE METRO TUNNEL

The final tracks have now been laid on the Andrews Labor Government's Metro Tunnel, paving the way for test trains to begin running deep beneath Melbourne's CBD in the second half of the year.

Acting Premier and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Jacinta Allan today visited Parkville Station to inspect the completed tracks on the city-shaping project that will deliver a world-class 'turn up and go' rail network.

Workers laid the final lengths of Australian-made steel rail on the tracks this month, the culmination of nine months of work along the twin nine-kilometre tunnels and stations.

The process began in mid-2022, when crews started installing 4,000 high-performance concrete panels to create an even base for the rail and ensure it was properly aligned.

The panels were cast in 300 different shapes to match the curvature and elevation of the tunnels as they wind from Kensington to South Yarra, up to nearly 40 metres underground. The 236 lengths of steel rail are extremely strong, but flexible enough to curve along the tunnels where needed.

With the track in place, the team is now preparing for the first test trains to run through the tunnel in the second half of this year, kicking off a period of meticulous testing to ensure the Metro Tunnel is safe and ready for passengers in 2025 – a year ahead of schedule.

The testing will make sure the Metro Tunnel's complex systems are working together with the new bigger, better trains, alongside the wider network's existing signalling system – an incredibly complex process.

Meanwhile, work will continue to fit out the five new stations with lifts, escalators, security systems, CCTV, passenger information displays and emergency phones.

Once complete, the Metro Tunnel Project will create capacity for more than half a million extra passengers each week during peak times and save passengers in the suburbs up to 50 minutes a day on a return trip.

Metro Tunnel services will also run direct from the heart of the CBD to the airport in around half an hour when SRL Airport opens in 2029.

Quotes attributable to Acting Premier and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

"This is an incredibly significant milestone for the Metro Tunnel project, one of the biggest rail infrastructure projects in Victoria's history and for the future of our train network."

"The Metro Tunnel is supporting thousands of jobs and will support thousands more when it's up and running – delivering turn-up-and-go trains to the city, the suburbs and, eventually, the world via Melbourne Airport Rail."