



The Hon Catherine King MP
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Local
Government



The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Transport Infrastructure
Minister for Public and Active Transport

MEDIA RELEASE

NORTH EAST LINK TUNNEL BORING MACHINES MARK HALFWAY POINT

The Australian and Victorian Governments are continuing to make significant progress on Melbourne's North East Link Tunnel, with the project's two massive Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) now well over the halfway point on their journey from Watsonia to Bulleen.

Federal Minister Catherine King and Victorian Minister Gabrielle Williams today announced TBM Gillian and TBM Zelda have excavated nearly 60 per cent of the three-lane twin tunnels, which will take 15,000 trucks off local roads every day.

The TBMs began their journey in Watsonia in 2024, they are 15.6 metres in diameter and 90 metres long, and have travelled more than three kilometres each.

Along the way the TBMs have installed more than 25,000 pre-cast concrete tunnel segments made in Benalla, Victoria.

The TBMs will continue digging throughout 2025 helping to build the 6.5 kilometre long twin tunnels, finishing their journey at the site of the future Manningham interchange next year.

Set to become Victoria's longest twin road tunnels, they will slash travel times by up to 35 minutes.

The first permanent section of the new Bulleen Road interchange is now open on the Eastern Freeway, while significant work is also underway at the Manningham interchange to prepare for the arrival of the TBMs at the end of their journey.

More than 8,000 people are currently working across the North East Link project, with 10 per cent of work hours being delivered by apprentices, trainees and cadets.

The project is set to create more than 12,000 jobs in total and is due to be completed in 2028.

The North East Link tunnels, M80 Ring Road Completion and Eastern Freeway Upgrades are jointly funded by the Australian and Victorian governments.

Quote attributable to Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Catherine King:

"This milestone shows we are getting on with building the missing link in Melbourne's motorway network, which will transform the way people move across the north-east."

Quote attributable to Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure and Minister for Public and Active Transport Gabrielle Williams:

“The North East Link will slash travel times and make our suburbs more connected for working families, while also taking 15,000 trucks off local roads each day.”

Quote attributable to Federal Member for Jagajaga Kate Thwaites:

“People in Melbourne’s north-east will welcome this milestone for this project meaning it’s closer to completion – when it will deliver less time stuck in traffic and more time at home with family.”

Quote attributable to Victorian Member for Bundoora Colin Brooks:

“The North East Link will make a massive difference to local traffic by getting trucks off our local roads and making it easier to get around.”

Quote attributable to Victorian Member for Ivanhoe Anthony Carbines:

“This is a game-changing project for our community – delivering jobs now, cutting congestion and building the transport links we need for the future.”

10 OCTOBER 2025

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