



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



The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier of Victoria

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

MEDIA RELEASE

NORTH EAST LINK BREAKTHROUGH

A major milestone has been reached on the Albanese and Allan Labor Governments' North East Link, with tunnel boring machine (TBM) Zelda breaking through in Bulleen.

This completes excavation on the first of the two three-lane tunnels: the northbound tunnel.

Zelda is one of two TBMs building Victoria's largest road tunnel from Watsonia to Bulleen.

TBM Gillian is continuing excavation of the southbound tunnel and is expected to break through in the coming months.

The tunnels will provide a direct route for up to 15,000 trucks each day, reducing travel times by up to 35 minutes between Melbourne's north and east.

More than 39,000 precast concrete segments manufactured in Benalla have been installed inside the tunnels.

Crews are now building the road inside the tunnels and installing electrical, lighting and safety systems.

Above ground works are continuing on key connections into the tunnels and the Greensborough Road boulevard.

North East Link is delivering three major road projects, including the new tunnels as well as upgrades on the M80 Ring Road and the Eastern Freeway.

To the north, construction is progressing on the M80 Ring Road Completion flyover bridge.

Traffic is expected to move onto the new Watsonia Road bridge in the coming months.

More than 12,000 jobs are being supported across the project.

North East Link is jointly funded by the Australian Government (\$5 billion) and the Victorian Government (\$21.21 billion) and will open to traffic in 2028.

Quotes attributable to Premier of Victoria Jacinta Allan:

"This breakthrough is a major step towards fixing the missing link in Melbourne's road network.

"This project will deliver faster journeys, less congestion and get Victorians home sooner."

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

“This is a really exciting milestone on this huge project that will transform the way we travel through Melbourne’s north east.

“North East Link will reduce travel times for commuters and freight, while taking trucks off local streets in Melbourne’s northern suburbs.”

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

“North East Link is Victoria’s largest road project and will transform how people and freight move across the city.”

Quote attributable to Federal Member for Jagajaga Kate Thwaites:

“This project will deliver a lasting legacy for local communities in Melbourne’s northeast.”

Quote attributable to Federal Member for Menzies Gabriel Ng:

“The tunnels will take pressure off local roads and improve travel times across the network.”

Quote attributable to Federal Member for McEwen Rob Mitchell:

“This project has provided a huge amount of employment for surrounding communities and will improve travel times for locals and commuters from the extended areas.”

Quote attributable to State Member for Bundoora Colin Brooks:

“This project is supporting thousands of jobs and showcasing Victorian manufacturing and skills.”

Quote attributable to State Member for Ivanhoe Anthony Carbines:

“The project will improve safety and remove heavy freight from local roads across the northeast.”

Quote attributable to State Member for North-Eastern Metropolitan Region Sonja Terpstra:

“This investment will make it easier and faster for people to get where they need to go.”

Quote attributable to State Member for North-Eastern Metropolitan Region Shaun Leane:

“North East Link will deliver better connections and a more efficient road network for Victoria.”

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MEDIA CONTACTS:

PREMIER ALLAN – JEN AITKEN 0467 745 963

MINISTER KING – JACK BEGBIE 0481 759 580

MINISTER WILLIAMS – ALEX WOODS 0422 572 228