

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Thursday, 31 May, 2018

BUILDING VICTORIA'S MASSIVE TUNNEL BORING MACHINES

Some of the largest tunnel boring machines (TBMs) in the world are on track to arrive in Melbourne on time in early 2019 to build the West Gate Tunnel and Metro Tunnel.

Premier Daniel Andrews today visited Herrenknecht's tunnel boring machine manufacturing site in Nansha, China, to see first-hand the massive machines being built before they are shipped to Melbourne and start work building two of Victoria's biggest transport projects.

The custom-built TBMs will operate like moving underground factories, using their giant cutting heads to burrow through Melbourne's soil and rock while progressively installing a watertight concrete lining behind them to create the new tunnels.

After taking 12 months to build and test, the massive machines will churn day and night for the next two to three years, building the Metro and West Gate Tunnels.

The custom-built machines include offices, kitchens and bathrooms to support crews of up to 14 people during a round the clock operation.

The size of the TBMs is staggering. The West Gate Tunnel machines will weigh in at around 4,000 tonnes each and will stand 15.6 metres in diameter – as tall as a five-story building – and will be 90 metres long.

The Metro Tunnel TBMs will be 100 metres long, weighing up to 1,000 tonnes and have a diameter of 7.2 metres.

The local community will have the opportunity to name the TBMs and follow their progress deep under Melbourne over the coming years.

The Metro Tunnel will transform Melbourne's public transport network, allowing us to create a new end-to-end rail line from Sunbury to Cranbourne/Pakenham and delivering five new underground stations – freeing up the city loop so we can run more trains more often between the city and suburbs each day.

The West Gate Tunnel Project will provide a vital alternative to the West Gate Bridge, slashing travel times, taking trucks off local roads and creating 6,000 new jobs for Victoria.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"These massive tunnel boring machines will soon be hard at work 24/7, digging tunnels that will be used to get Victorians where they need to be, sooner."

"Work on these tunnel boring machines is on track and on time. We're not wasting a minute getting on and building the Metro Tunnel and West Gate Tunnel."

"This is yet another example of our strong relationship with China, and how we can work together on projects that create jobs and boost economic growth."

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