

Media Release

The Hon Dan Andrews MP
Premier



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Wednesday, 20 February 2019

MASSIVE TUNNEL BORING MACHINE TAKING SHAPE

Assembly is underway on the first of the two massive tunnel boring machines (TBM) that will build the West Gate Tunnel.

Premier Daniel Andrews joined the Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan at the project's northern portal site in Yarraville today to see the progress of the massive machine that will build Victoria's alternative to the West Gate Bridge and get trucks off local streets.

It will take around 75,000 working hours to assemble the TBM – Bella – with up to 30 people per shift working around the clock.

The 15.6 metre diameter cutter head, one of the last pieces to be assembled, will be moved into place by a 500-tonne gantry crane, one of the largest of its kind in Australia.

To reduce disruption to local business traffic as works ramp up, a footbridge for workers is now in place over Somerville Road between the project's two major Whitehall Road construction sites. The 11-tonne, 8 metre-high footbridge is made from Australian structural steel and was fabricated by Melbourne company, Calbah.

With major tunnelling works set to start this year, legislation will also be introduced into parliament this week that will provide the framework for the management of the road when it opens in 2022.

The legislation also enables the Andrews Labor Government to finally deal with the issue of trucks on roads in the inner west by enshrining enforceable truck bans in law, removing 9000 trucks from these roads for good.

Fines collected from truck ban offenders will be reinvested in local transport projects and programs that benefit local communities via the Better Freight Fund, with a focus on those who may be impacted by changes in the truck numbers.

The West Gate Tunnel Bill and amendments to the CityLink Concession Deed will provide a fairer tolling regime for all for Victorians and remove historical clauses that would see Transurban compensated for State projects that divert traffic off its network.

An exposure draft of the West Gate Tunnel Bill and CityLink Concession Deed was released in 2017 when contracts were signed for the West Gate Tunnel Project, as part of a range of documents released for the project.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"All it takes is one crash to turn the West Gate Bridge into a car park. We desperately need this second river crossing and we're not wasting a minute delivering it."

"The Westgate Tunnel will slash travel times, create thousands of jobs and get trucks off local streets in Melbourne's west."

Quote attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

"We're not wasting a minute getting on with delivering a much-needed alternative to the West Gate Bridge – that will slash travel times to get locals home sooner and improve bike paths and trails for cyclists."

Media contact: Hayley Bester 0424 753 775 | transportmedia@minstaff.vic.gov.au