



EARLY START ON AIRPORT ROUNDABOUT UPGRADE

Premier Anna Bligh today signalled the official start to construction on the Queensland Government's \$327 million Airport Roundabout Upgrade (ARU) project, four months ahead of schedule.

Ms Bligh said the early start was good news not just for motorists currently suffering long delays on the Airport Roundabout, but for hundreds of Queenslanders who would gain jobs as a result of the project.

"Around 200 people will work on the Airport Roundabout Upgrade and they'll all be celebrating this early start," said Ms Bligh.

"At its peak 2600 full time workers will be employed by the projects' contractors Thiess John Holland across Airport Link, Northern Busway and Airport Roundabout Upgrade.

"This is Australia's largest infrastructure project and it will create 10,000 direct and indirect jobs.

"The Airport Roundabout Upgrade and flyover construction will provide work in civil and structures construction, design engineering and landscaping.

"Motorists heading to and from Brisbane Airport will have a much faster journey from mid-2011.

"This critical project will solve the problems of South East Queensland's most congested intersection.

"The upgrade is expected to save motorists more than 10 minutes on trips to and from Brisbane Airport during peak periods."

The project, which is being designed and constructed for BrisConnections by Thiess John Holland along with the Airport Link toll road and the second stage of the Northern Busway, is part of a massive \$4.8 billion infrastructure investment on Brisbane's northside.

Infrastructure and Planning Minister Stirling Hinchliffe said upon completion of the 750 metre overpass (which will be 20 metres high) and other works, the Airport Roundabout will be handed back to the Department of Main Roads. It will not be tolled.

"The current roundabout will be replaced with a massive bridge and a new intersection with traffic lights," said Mr Hinchliffe.

"Not only will this solve problems for local traffic, we expect an improvement in travel times along the East West Arterial, Gateway Motorway and Kingsford Smith Drive.

"During construction every effort will be made to minimise disruption to drivers by scheduling works outside of peak times."

Early works and the final detailed design work for the project are now underway.

The CEO of BrisConnections, Mr Ray Wilson, welcomed the early start on construction of the ARU project.

“We have received excellent cooperation from the Brisbane Airports Corporation (BAC) and the necessary planning approvals from both the Commonwealth and the State were dealt with very efficiently and delivered early,” Mr Wilson said.

“In developing the detailed design of the ARU structures we have been able to introduce a number of innovative changes which will enhance both the function and aesthetic appearance of the new interchange.”

The project involves the upgrade of the roundabout itself and the intersection at East-West Arterial and Nudgee roads and includes:

- Improved connections to the airport precinct, the Gateway Motorway and Kingsford Smith Drive
- Widening of the East-West Arterial Road to three traffic lanes in each direction
- Replacing the existing Gateway Motorway overpass at the roundabout with a new four lane overpass
- Replacing the existing roundabout with a high capacity signalised intersection
- Constructing a new four lane 750 metre bridge linking the East-West Arterial Road and the Airport Drive over the Gateway Motorway overpass and
- Surface road improvements to Airport Drive.

Anyone interested in working on the Airport Roundabout Upgrade project should log onto www.brisconnections.com.au.

Residents and businesses in the local area have received briefings and information on the project. Anyone wanting more information can go to www.brisconnections.com.au or the Visitor Information Centre at Centro Lutwyche shopping centre, Lutwyche Road.

A model of the project design is available at the Visitor Information Centre.

Premier's office: 3224 4500

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