

MEDIA RELEASE

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Sky high job opportunities offered at Airport Link launch

Premier Anna Bligh, together with Deputy Premier Paul Lucas, signalled the start of construction for Australia's largest road infrastructure project by turning the first sod at the Kedron construction site today.

Project Director Gordon Ralph, fresh from successfully leading Melbourne's EastLink project, joined the Thiess John Holland and BrisConnections teams to break through ground at the former Department of Emergency Services complex; marking the official start of construction for the Airport Link and Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) projects.

The Thiess John Holland team, based at the new head office at Kedron, has been contracted by ASX-listed BrisConnections to design and construct Airport Link and Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron), together with the Airport Roundabout Upgrade.

Premier Bligh said projects such as Airport Link were essential for addressing the increasing demands of Brisbane's congested road network.

"These are priority infrastructure projects for Queensland, with Airport Link being the first major motorway linking Brisbane city to the northern suburbs and airport precinct, saving motorists and public transport users up to 50% in travel time," she said.

"Projects of this magnitude also strengthen Queensland's job market and allow our people to develop their careers and skills right here in Brisbane for the next four years."

The three projects in one will not only create a transport infrastructure first for Queensland, but also provide more than 10,000 jobs, including approximately 6,500 skilled labour, 1250 staff and a large number of supplier opportunities.

Given South East Queensland's rapid pace of development, skilled workers remain in high demand, prompting Thiess John Holland to launch a nation-wide recruitment campaign to expand their new team.

"We are building a world-class team and drawing on local, interstate and overseas talent to design and construct these projects," said Gordon Ralph.

"We currently have a 600-strong team of design and construction professionals on board ready to start construction. Within the next six months Thiess John Holland will create more than 750 new positions."

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“Our project team has been growing at a rapid rate – twenty new staff every week since July – however, job opportunities will continue to rise for the next 18 months and throughout the life of the projects,” said Mr Ralph.

He expected the extensive range of work would prove attractive to potential candidates.

“The projects encompass a wide range of civil engineering aspects that include roads, bridges, tunnels, structures and pavements.”

“ We are focused on providing career development opportunities for our project staff, and together with the inner city Brisbane location and Thiess John Holland’s impressive safety record, we are confident we can continue to build an outstanding team,” said Mr Ralph.

Site establishment has already started along the projects’ alignment at Bowen Hills, Windsor, Toombul and Kedron.

Construction of a tunnel shaft is underway at the heart of the project, laying the foundation for the Kedron connection to the mainline tunnel.

The combined roads and busway solution, scheduled for completion in mid 2012, will comprise two tunnels and a new airport connection. The projects feature a 6.7km mainly underground road, 3km busway, 750m flyover bridge and fast-diamond intersection to fix the gridlock at the existing airport roundabout.

Airport Link and Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) will be a vital addition to Brisbane’s road network, providing a critical new link between two of South East Queensland’s most important economic centres – the airport and the city.

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