



## **'ROCKSY' FINISHES HER JOURNEY AT LUTWYCHE**

The Airport Link project giant Tunnel Boring Machines (TBM) are expected to complete their work later this week.

'Rocksy', the first Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) working on the Airport Link project, has today broken through finishing her journey at Lutwyche on schedule 343 days after her launch from Kalinga Park.

The second TBM 'Sandy' is just days behind. The end of TBM tunnelling will be a major milestone with the project nearly 80 percent complete.

Premier Anna Bligh and Treasurer and Minister for State Development and Trade Andrew Fraser said today's breakthrough was a massive achievement for the tunnelling teams which have been working around the clock, seven days a week.

"Airport Link will be a congestion busting tunnel, eliminating 18 sets of traffic lights, providing six new lanes for drivers between Bowen Hills and Kedron and four new lanes between Kedron and Toombul," Ms Bligh said.

"Rocksy has tunnelled over 2.5 kilometres and progressed along the alignment at rates of up to 110 metres a week.

"I congratulate the 200-odd workers who have been involved in driving this massive machine deep underground."

Treasurer Andrew Fraser thanked local residents for their patience as the massive project took shape.

"It is an extremely large and complex project and I would like to acknowledge the challenges that residents have faced and thank them for their patience," he said.

Twenty million hours have been worked to date and the projects have surpassed their expected peak employment bringing the jobs total to more than 4,300. The projects are creating 12,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Thiess John Holland Project Director Gordon Ralph said that work is continuing on the fit out of the excavated tunnels.

"Inside the excavated tunnels, back-up work has commenced on the tunnel cross passages," he said.

"Seventeen cross passages have now been excavated and work is also progressing on the installation of ventilation fans, traffic management devices and tunnel safety systems."

BrisConnections CEO Dr Ray Wilson said today's breakthrough brought the team one step closer to the operation of Airport Link in mid-2012.

"Around 80% of the project is now complete and when Airport Link opens in mid-2012, it will be the first major motorway connecting Brisbane city with the airport and northern suburbs," he said.

The project, which is being designed and constructed by Thiess John Holland, along with the Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) and the Airport Roundabout Upgrade, is part of a massive \$4.8 billion infrastructure investment on Brisbane's Northside.

### **Airport Link TBM - Fast Facts**

- Model: Earth Pressure Balance
- Cutterhead diameter: 12.48 metres (largest machines ever used in Australia)
- Weight: 3,600 tonnes
- Length: 195 metres long, slightly longer than Suncorp Stadium playing field
- Cost: \$45 Million and took 12 months to build and a further 3 months to assemble at Toombul.
- Cutterhead contains up to 80 x 17 inch cutters made of hardened steel
- Approx. 22 workers to operate a TBM
- Travels up to 55m below the surface
- Equipped to install full-circle concrete tunnel lining during excavation

### **Media contact:**

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**Media Note:** A major media opportunity will be provided for those interested when the second TBM breakthrough occurs (expected later this week). As much notice as possible will be provided before the event. Please call Thiess John Holland on 1800 721 783