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TUNNELLING MACHINE COMPLETES 4.3KM JOURNEY

The first of two massive tunnel boring machines digging Brisbane's Clem Jones Tunnel (CLEM7) today completed its 4.3 kilometre journey from Bowen Hills to Woolloongabba.

Commencing at Bowen Hills on the north side of the Brisbane River, the 4,000-tonne tunnelling machine (named Florence) completed its journey to Woolloongabba in approximately 12 months.

RiverCity Motorway Group CEO Flan Cleary said the construction team had done a tremendous job delivering a high quality tunnel in record time and with an excellent safety record.

Florence will now be pulled apart, removed from the tunnel and transported from the construction site.

The second tunnel boring machine (Matilda) has completed 3.5 kilometres of tunnel and is expected to break through at Woolloongabba by mid 2009.

Mr Cleary said excellent construction progressed had continued during 2009.

Key construction highlights include:

- more than 3 million tonnes of rock has been excavated (85 percent of total rock);
- 50 of 60 (83%) cross passages and substation passages have been excavated;
- all 38,000 tunnel lining segments have been manufactured; and
- all 18 bridges at either end of the tunnel are substantially complete.

Mr Cleary said the excellent construction progress was good news for motorists who are continuing to struggle with the Brisbane's growing traffic problems.

"CLEM7 will provide an additional river crossing. It will bypass the CBD and up to 23 sets of traffic lights, reduce travel times by up to 30%, cut fuel costs, lower stress and improve safety," he said.

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