



Mike Baird MP

Premier of NSW

Minister for Infrastructure

Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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NWRL \$300 MILLION UNDER BUDGET SO FAR AS MAJOR TUNNELLING MILESTONE REACHED

NSW Premier Mike Baird and Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian today announced the North West Rail Link is running ahead of schedule and is \$300 million under budget so far, as the landmark project reached another major tunnelling milestone.

Mr Baird and Ms Berejiklian joined local MPs onsite as the first mega Tunnel Boring Machine, Elizabeth, broke through into the future Norwest Station area - just days after the fourth and final machine, Maria, started digging.

“This is an exciting day for Sydneysiders and another clear sign that construction of this critical rail link is powering ahead,” Mr Baird said.

“It was only in September that we launched this first massive machine at Bella Vista – in that time it has tunnelled 2.1 kilometres to reach today’s historic breakthrough at Norwest.

“All four 900 tonne machines are now in the ground digging Australia’s longest railway tunnels.

“We are wasting no time delivering this world class infrastructure project and doing it ahead of schedule and under budget.”

Ms Berejiklian said turn-up-and-go rapid transit services on the North West Rail Link were on track to begin for customers in the first half of 2019.

“I want to pay tribute to all the workers on this project for their dedication and commitment to safety. After months underground, I am sure the team will be as pleased as the community to see that cutter head break through at Norwest.

“The North West Rail Link includes eight new railway stations, 4,000 commuter car parking spaces and a train every four minutes in the peak, or 15 trains an hour.

“I am pleased that as a result of good planning, hard work and our commitment to deliver a world-class project the people of the North West will be able to catch these services in the first half of 2019 and we have been able to deliver savings.

“The project is now running \$300 million under budget and I am confident there will be further savings for taxpayers as the project progresses.”

In tunnelling to Norwest from the Bella Vista tunnelling site, TBM1 Elizabeth has:

- Excavated more than 206,000 tonnes of crushed rock, both sandstone and shale;
- Installed more than 7,300 concrete segments to line the new rail tunnel;
- Been home to 85 workers, including tunnellers, maintenance crews, geologists, surveyors and engineers, who combined have spent more than 25,000 hours underground; and
- Had 40 hardened steel cutters on her cutter head replaced, worn down from the harsh forces of cutting the Sydney sandstone and shale.

Over the coming weeks, Elizabeth will be moved through the Norwest Station area, before setting off again towards Showground Station as the other three machines Florence, Isabelle and Maria continue their work.

For more information visit: <http://www.northwestrail.com.au/>