



# Gladys Berejiklian MP

Minister for Transport

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **FLORENCE HOT ON THE HEELS OF ELIZABETH AS SECOND NORTH WEST TUNNEL BORING MACHINE ARRIVES**

Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian today announced the second North West Rail Link tunnel boring machine has arrived in Sydney and will be named Florence, after Australia's first female engineer and architect Florence Mary Taylor.

Ms Berejiklian said work on the North West Rail Link is powering ahead and with construction well underway and a \$3.7 billion operations contract now in place, the project is on track to open for customers in the first half of 2019.

"After more than a decade of broken promises from Labor, I am pleased that not only have we delivered the first tunnel boring machine in the ground four months ahead of schedule, the second machine has now arrived in the North West," she said.

"Florence is being assembled right now at the Bella Vista construction site by a crew of around 70 people and is expected to start digging before the end of the year.

"Florence is the second of four huge tunnel boring machines which will deliver Australia's longest railway tunnels, with the first tunnel boring machine Elizabeth already more than 90 metres along on her underground journey to Cherrybrook.

"The first two tunnel boring machines will dig 9km twin tunnels to Cherrybrook, with the other two TBMs digging the 6km from Cherrybrook to Epping."

Florence arrived at the Bella Vista tunnelling site in 18 shipping containers and a further 27 large pieces, including the 105-tonne cutter head, which was transported overnight under a police escort.

All four mega machines have been specifically designed to tunnel through Sydney's geology – mostly Sydney sandstone and shale – and will gradually build up to a full tunnelling production rate of about 120 metres a week, on average.

Ms Berejiklian said a competition helped to name the second tunnel boring machine under the theme: 'Women who have made a positive contribution to life in Sydney'.

"Florence Taylor was Australia's first female architect, structural engineer and civil engineer after completing a draftsman's course at Sydney Technical College at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century," she said.

“A qualified town planner and reportedly the first woman to fly in Australia in 1909, she even proposed the idea of a tunnel under Sydney Harbour – something this Government plans to duplicate if we receive a mandate next March, this time for the city’s new rapid transit railway network.

“On major tunnelling projects around the world, underground workers look to Saint Barbara for protection and, because of that, machines that work underground are traditionally given female names.

“The North West Rail Link will change public transport in Sydney forever, so it’s fitting that these massive machines have been named after women who have made a positive contribution to life in this great city.”

The NSW Government anticipates the third tunnel boring machine will be in the ground at Cherrybrook before the end of this year.