

9 October 2009

More new ramps to open on the West Gate Freeway from Monday

Two new ramps on the West Gate Freeway will open to traffic on Monday with drivers being able to access more new sections of the \$1.39 billion upgrade.

From Monday morning the new ramp from the Bolte Bridge to the Burnley Tunnel and Power Street exit will open which will eliminate the weaving movement motorists have been doing for many years, making this section of the road safer.

Project Director for the Monash-CityLink-West Gate (M1) upgrade, John Cunningham said the changes to be introduced this weekend also included a new flyover from the West Gate Freeway and the existing Bolte Bridge exit to the exit at Kings Way.

"These are the last of the major directional changes on the West Gate Freeway with the first major changes introduced last Monday," he said.

"The new ramps and changes to the West Gate Freeway have been introduced to reduce the weaving and merging movements on the freeway which in the past have led to stop start conditions and congestion on this busy road.

"The changes to the freeway have also included eliminating short entry and exits to improve flow. This has included eliminating traffic entering the freeway at Kings Way and exiting at Montague Street and vice-versa.

"Motorists can still exit the freeway at Montague Street heading west from Power Street and the Domain Tunnel. They can also exit the freeway at Kings Way heading east from the Bolte Bridge and the West Gate Bridge."

Mr Cunningham also advised motorists heading east from the West Gate Bridge that they will need to use the Montague Street exit opened in late August.

"Motorists coming from the West Gate Bridge will not be able to weave across to Lorimer Street and will need to use this Montague Street exit," he said.

Mr Cunningham said since opening the westbound new ramps last week there had been some noticeable improvements in traffic flow including improved throughput in the Domain Tunnel in the afternoon.

"Improvements in traffic flow heading west have meant that there hasn't been a need to close a lane in the Domain Tunnel due to congestion," he said.

Mr Cunningham congratulated Melbourne drivers on coming to terms with the new conditions after some initial confusion by some motorists.

“Obviously with new road conditions drivers will need to change driving habits which have been imbedded for years and there will be some initial confusion, as we saw last week.

“The message is the same for the changes this week which is plan your journey, allow enough time, look for the signs and pick your lane. If you miss your exit keep going to the next exit and return,” he said.

Mr Cunningham warned motorists there would also be major works right along the M1 this weekend especially on the Monash and West Gate Freeways as works continued on the upgrade.

“On the Monash we will have lane closures day and night during the weekend between Toorak Road and High Street as we do preparation works for resurfacing. There will also be a single lane closure on Southern Link inbound on Saturday between St Kevins and Gibdon Street.

“On the West Gate Freeway we will have major closures in preparation for the opening of the new Bolte Bridge ramp, as well as works on the main freeway as part of the upgrade,” he said.

Works on the West Gate Freeway this weekend included:

- Closure of Bolte Bridge eastbound exit-ramp to West Gate Freeway (access only for Geelong-bound traffic) - 8pm Friday to 4am Monday. Detour via Footscray Road
- Closure of recently-opened Montague Street eastbound entry-ramp - 8pm Friday to 5am Monday
- Closure of Kings Way eastbound exit-ramp (heading to South East suburbs) - 8pm Friday to 5am Monday
- Full eastbound freeway closure from Montague Street to Power Street (heading to the Burnley Tunnel) - 7pm Sunday to 5am Monday.

Motorists are advised to seek alternative routes on the weekend or expect major delays on the sections of the M1 this weekend where works will be undertaken.

Mr Cunningham said there was still a lot of works to be completed on the M1 as part of the upgrade particularly in the coming weeks as resurfacing works began with the warmer weather.

“We continue to thank Melbourne motorists for their patience while we continue the works on one of the State’s busiest roads and we advise them to take care when travelling in construction zones for their own safety and the safety of workers,” he said.

A map of the changes to the freeway and details of works this weekend can be found at m1upgrade.com.au.

For further information contact

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