Albany Highway bridge to take shape over the winter months

Artist’s impression: Albany Highway looking south towards the Albany Ring Road Interchange

Over the next month, bridge construction will commence at the Albany Highway and Albany Ring Road interchange. The bridge will be the team’s key focus over the winter period.

In the coming weeks the most noticeable activities will be the construction of bridge footings and the installation of Mechanically Stabilised Earth (MSE) walls on either side of Albany Highway. These critical activities will pave the way for beam installation later in the year.

**Bridge footings**

Footings are all important to ensure the bridge will be built on a stable, strong foundation. The following activities may be visible to road users while the footings take shape:

* Installation of a large concrete pad, known as blinding concrete, to create a level base to work from.
* Steel reinforcing bars will be put into place on top of the blinding concrete to strengthen the footings.
* Formwork will be erected to give the footings shape.
* Concrete footings will be poured.

The footings are made with specially designed and tested concrete as it has to withstand the weight of the bridge and traffic, and prevent extreme settlement.

The concrete footings will need to be cured, prior to the erection of the bridge walls.

# Mechanically Stabilised Earth (MSE) walls

Once the footings are cured, the mechanically stabilised earth (MSE) walls will be erected on each side of the Albany Highway and the bridge abutments will be built up on each side, compacting the fill material behind the walls.

Strong metal reinforcing strips will be attached to the facing wall at regular intervals, laid out behind and the soil layers and compacted around them the make the structure stable.

# What road users should expect

Albany Highway will be slightly realigned to allow bridge works to take place while minimising disruption to passing traffic. The lanes may be slightly narrowed but will still accommodate large vehicles.

The speed limit will be reduced to 60km in the immediate vicinity of the bridgeworks and the Menang Drive intersection. This will allow normal two-lane traffic flow to be maintained for the majority of the time during the bridgeworks, though intermittent, traffic management will apply at times when construction activities are undertaken close to the road.

The right hand turning lane from Albany Highway, northbound to Menang Drive will not be in place. However, right hand turns can still be made due to reduced traffic speed.

**Project hits safety milestone**

The Albany Ring Road construction team have reached a significant milestone with 190 days of Lost Time Injury-free operations achieved on the project. This milestone was achieved on 11 May 2021 and is testament to the effort and commitment towards Health, Safety and Wellbeing of the team.

The project’s commitment to the safety and wellbeing of staff, contractors and the community provides a workplace that values people who speak up and act when hazards are identified.

The team is looking forward to continuing with Zero Harm efforts for the rest of the project duration.

**Local contractors secure Ring Road works packages**

The Albany Ring Road project is committed to using local businesses and employing local people on the project as far as possible.

In the months since the contract was awarded, the project has engaged over 35 local contractors and suppliers in disciplines ranging from electrical and earthmoving, to office supplies and waste management.

16 members of the Decmil workforce call Albany home and 17 percent of the overall construction workforce are Aboriginal.

The project is working on strategies to increase the number of local employees and subcontractors working on the Albany Ring Road as construction progresses.

# Further information

Project information is available at www. mainroads.wa.gov.au/projects, or by emailing enquiries@mainroads.wa.gov.au or phoning 138 138. You can also register for project updates by heading to our project webpage and subscribing for email updates.