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**ASX RELEASE**



**Macquarie Infrastructure Group**

**M6 TOLL ANNOUNCEMENT**

Please see below an announcement made by the M6 Toll in Birmingham, UK yesterday.

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Draft

**PRESS RELEASE**

9 December 2004

**PUBLIC BACKS THE M6 TOLL  
16 MILLION VEHICLES IN FIRST YEAR**

The driving public and the road transport industry have resoundingly backed the M6 Toll with over 16 million vehicles using the 27-mile route since it opened last year, operator Midland Expressway Limited (MEL) said today on the first anniversary of Britain's only tolled motorway.

MEL also announced that:

- In 2005, on a date to be fixed, M6 Toll will donate all tolls collected over a 24 hour period to selected local charities under a 'Drive for Charity' initiative.
- The current £5.11 + VAT discounted toll for heavy goods vehicles, due to end on 31 December 2004, will be extended until further notice.

Tom Fanning, Managing Director of MEL, said the M6 Toll was playing a major role in keeping the region moving; relieving the M6 and cutting congestion across the West Midlands.

"People now have a real choice," he said. "They can stay on the M6, use a local road, or they can choose the M6 Toll. Traffic figures for November show that around 47,000 people a day are choosing the M6 Toll. That's 47,000 vehicles that are not on the M6, so everyone wins.

"The investment in this road, some £905 million, was huge. Consequentially so was the risk, but the public has supported the M6 Toll in substantial numbers from day one and continue to do so."

Continued

Mr Fanning said MEL and its shareholders are fully committed to playing a part in the growth and economic prosperity of the region.

He said: "I am delighted to announce today that from next year the M6 Toll will be contributing an entire days toll revenue to charitable causes and community projects within the local region.

Macquarie Infrastructure Group's initiative in Australia "Drive for Charity" is being established here. The M6 Toll will donate tolls collected over the 24 hour period to selected charities that provide much needed services to the region.

Each chosen charity will receive an annual donation for three consecutive years, as part of "Drive for Charity".

MEL has also decided to extend the discounted toll for HGVs following an encouraging response to the initial trial from hauliers, said Mr Fanning.

Since the £5.11 + VAT daytime rate (£4.26 night rate) was introduced in late July 2004, there had been a significant increase in the number of lorries on the M6 Toll.

"The response to our initial five-month trial has been very encouraging and we want to build on that success," he said. "Our volumes are noticeably up as more hauliers have chosen to use the motorway, recognising the commercial benefits it offers.

"However, we are also aware that many companies are still in the early stages of trialling the M6 Toll and have given their drivers discretion to use us when the M6 is severely congested – and that is why we have decided to extend the trial until further notice.

We are making this move now to enable hauliers to have the opportunity to plan ahead into 2005 with some degree of certainty.

Continued

Mr Fanning said a sizeable number of companies and drivers had chosen to open tag accounts, the M6 Toll's electronic payment method that enables drivers to pass through toll stations without stopping. The recently opened dedicated tag lane adds to the benefits of opening a tag account, as tagged vehicles can pass without waiting behind cash paying vehicles.

"The haulage industry is well acquainted with this technology and it will further reduce their journey times so we would urge drivers who currently pay by credit card or cash to consider giving it a try and sign up for tag accounts."

Mr Fanning said that both the Road Haulage Association and the Freight Transport Association had been very supportive of the discounted toll, recognising it represented value for money.

Nigel Barton, Director of Operations TNT Express Services UK & Ireland, said: "Having undertaken extensive trials we are making average savings of up to 10 minutes per TNT journey when using the M6 Toll.

"Whilst the trial was ongoing, MEL initiated a price reduction and introduced dedicated tag lanes, which further encouraged us to open a Tag account. We now have over one hundred in regular use. This has led to increased reliability and operational efficiency on TNT routes which incorporate the toll road. The M6 Toll is the route of choice for TNT."

The £5.11 + VAT toll was introduced on 23 July 2004 and will now run until further notice.

#### **Notes to editors**

- MEL will select charities for "Drive for Charity" based on specific criteria, including type of charity and its regional impact. MEL will not accept any written requests from charities in respect to the Drive for Charity day.
- MEL currently supports the County Air Ambulance and the Green Arc Partnership.
- Each Toll Plaza has one dedicated tag lane. At the main Toll Plazas at Weeford Park and Great Wyrley, tag holders use the Wide Load Lane which doubles as a dedicated tag. At the local junctions, one standard toll lane is dedicated to tags.

- A £905 million development, the M6 Toll is Britain's first privately funded motorway.
- It stretches for 27 miles from Junction 11a on the M6 near Cannock, Staffordshire, rejoining the M6 at Junction 4 at Coleshill, Warwickshire.
- For each journey on the M6 Toll drivers pass through one station, either on the M6 Toll or at a junction.
- Customers can choose an attended or automatic toll lane, paying by cash or credit card, or in advance using an M6 Toll tag which enables them to drive through without stopping.
- The M6 Toll has a motorway service station at Norton Canes, between Junctions T6 and T7. Developed by Midland Expressway Limited, it is operated by RoadChef.
- Traffic figures for the M6 Toll are published each month on the website.
- Midland Expressway Limited (MEL) is a private company with the government concession to design, build and run the M6 Toll until 2054.
- The M6 Toll is regulated in the same way as any other motorway in the UK and normal highway rules apply.
- MEL was named Best Business 2004 in the Tamworth and Lichfield Business Awards 2004.
- MEL is jointly owned by the Macquarie Infrastructure Group and Autostrade SpA.
- Further information on the M6 Toll is available on [www.m6toll.co.uk](http://www.m6toll.co.uk)

- Ends -

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