

Commonwealth Games MI transport snarl-ups is to urge motorists not to use it.

Main Roads Minister Mark Bailey yesterday revealed a publicity blitz in the lead-up to next April's sporting extravaganza will urge motorway users to give themselves plenty of time so they are not rushing, and to drive safer and slower.

Games goers will also be

events, he said.

"Fundamentally it is about acknowledging the problem is part of the solution - having the discussion about the MI and making sure people give themselves plenty of time, that people are careful when driving during those Games times.

"We will be saying if you are going to Games, if you can stay on the Gold Coast and be near

from Brisbane on the MI, don't be in a rush, take it easy, be part of the solution - that is going to contribute also to a good outcome," Mr Bailey said.

The public appeal will be part of a multi-pronged approach to avoiding potential gridlock - and a global PR disaster - during the Games.

LNP's Shadow Main Roads Andrew Powell is panning it.

transport disaster.

"What's next, Gold Coasters under house arrest as part of Labor's Games crowd control strategy? It's Annastacia Palaszczuk's job to make sure our roads are ready for the Games, not the general public.

"If the people needed any more evidence there will be total transport chaos during the Games they got it today."

Vehicles with athletes under escort will be able to use the MI shoulder from Southport's Smith Street to Hope Island if congestion stops them being on time.

It was given what Mr Bailey called a "dry run" when Prince Andrew visited last week. His motorcade used shoulder lanes to get to Bond University after a pedestrian was killed.

ing from Mudgeeraba to Varsity Lakes and planning of the Varsity Lakes to Tugun stretch - will ease congestion.

Mr Bailey said LNP had ignored the MI during its previous term in power.

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Thai monk Luang Por Pumee blesses the Surf Life Saving Queensland Westpac helicopter.

Picture: RICHARD GOSLING

### SAVING LIVES ON A WING AND A PRAYER

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WITH a highly trained crew and multi million dollar equipment Surf Life Saving Queensland's Westpac helicopter felt a Thai Buddhist blessing for luck would be an added bonus.

So they called in monk

Luang Por Pumee to mark the \$5.5 million helicopter with blessed water yesterday.

SLSQ hoped news of the ceremony might even save a few lives by reminding Thai people to swim between the red and yellow flags at the beach.

SLSQ figures reveal 30

foreign nationals have drowned on Queensland beaches in the past 10 years which lead the organisation to identify international tourists, travellers, and migrants as a high-risk group for coastal drownings.

Five monks from the Gold Coast Thai Temple visited SLSQ's Carrara hangar.

Pumee - a 55-year-old who is known for making two month long barefoot journeys through jungles in Thailand for spiritual reasons - also blessed three helicopter crew members including chief training officer Andrew McNeilly.

He said he admired the monks for the visit.

"Watching the monks bless the helicopter was unique, it was quite humbling to have them take time out of their day, out of their meditation, to do that for us," Mr McNeilly said.

"It's an opportunity to get that message across, to swim between the flags and be safe on the beach."

## Gotham heads for the Bay

NORTHERN Gold Coasters are in for a treat when the company behind some of the Gold Coast's most popular restaurants opens a new venue at Runaway Bay.

The multi-level restaurant, which will also feature a rooftop bar, is called Gotham Grill

and Rooftop Bar and is slated to open early next year on Bayview Street next to Caffene Break.

It is currently being built by The Ridgeway Group, who also own Little Truffle, five BIN restaurants and Rivea Italian at Pacific Fair.

The development application submitted to council reveals the Runaway Bay site is 534sq metres and four storeys high. "We can say that it's going to be a very special and exciting venue for the northern end of the Gold Coast," owner Daniel Ridgeway said.



The new Gotham restaurant.

## Train track closures

GOLD Coasters heading to Brisbane over the long weekend will need to plan ahead with track closures scheduled.

From 7.30pm on tomorrow until the last service on Monday, there will be track closures on the Gold Coast line.

Buses will replace trains between Beenleigh and Varsity

Lakes stations. TransLink recommends allowing an additional 60 minutes travel time.

Normal train services will resume from the first service next Tuesday.

The track works are part of the Helensvale to Coomera duplication project.