

# Final inspection of metro by mid-January

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**Chennai:** The commissioner of metro rail safety is likely to inspect the final stretch of metro rail phase-1 in three weeks. If he clears the 9.5km stretch between Washermenpet and AG-DMS this time, the 45km metro phase-1 will be completely operational before the end of January, 2019.

“Our officials have submitted all the required documents to the commissioner. We are expecting the inspection to take place before January 15,” an official said. Trial runs are underway on stretches linked through eight underground stations— Washermenpet, Mannadi, High Court, Central Metro, Government Estate, LIC, Thousand Lights and AG-DMS.

When the line opens for public, it will mark the end of phase-1 that took nearly a decade to construct. With this Chennai Central will be connected to the airport via arterial Anna Salai, and passengers can take a direct train between the two travel

hubs which will now be just 45 minutes away. At present, commuters boarding a train from Central Metro to Airport take a round-about route via the line along Poona-mallee High Road, crossing Shenoy Nagar, Anna Nagar, Koyambedu and Alandur.

At the eight underground stations between Washermenpet and AG-DMS, officials said, much of the construction work and installation of critical systems like ventilation, air-conditioning, communication and signals have been completed. Officials are inspecting the integration of these systems during trial runs. Engineers are testing signal systems that have been linked to train communication systems and platform screen doors at underground stations.

Along the 35km stretch now open, metro rail operates 25 trains during peak hours and 20 during non-peak hours. A total of 42 trains were planned for operation in the 45km phase-1. The last set of trains was delivered to CMRL earlier this month.