

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**

Minister for the Coordination of Jobs, Precincts and Regions – COVID-19  
Minister for Industry Support and Recovery  
Minister for Trade  
Minister for Business Precincts  
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events  
Minister for Racing



Tuesday, 1 September 2020

## AGILE MANUFACTURERS CREATE NEW VENTILATOR INDUSTRY

Victoria's world-leading manufacturers have created a ventilator production industry from scratch with Ballarat's Gekko Systems to start making the country's first Australian-designed machines within weeks.

Gekko has made its name as a manufacturer of mining equipment since its establishment by Sandy Gray and Elizabeth Lewis-Gray in the mid-1990s. It will now harness its local suppliers and 100-strong workforce to build the GeVentor ventilator, which Mr Gray designed in his shed with help from Ballarat anaesthetist Doug Paxton.

The Victorian Government provided development grants to Gekko Systems and three other groups in the early stages of the pandemic. The outcome has proven the agility of Victorian manufacturers, bolstered confidence in planning for future public health emergencies and provided a potential new avenue for export earnings.

Health Purchasing Victoria has placed an order for 170 ventilators with Gekko Systems after the company's machine was provided with a production exemption from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

Gekko has reported interest in its GeVentor machine from humanitarian organisations for potential use in developing countries. With the success of its ventilator initiative, Gekko has now created a medical arm with a view to producing a range of equipment to supply local, national and international markets.

Health Purchasing Victoria has also placed orders for 200 ventilators that are being produced by Grey Innovation. The company established a consortium of local companies to build its transportable Notus Vivere Emergency Ventilator, with components coming from manufacturers ANCA, Marand, Hosico, Bosch Australia and Hydrix.

Grey Innovation is also producing machines under licence to fill an order from the Commonwealth Government.

Two other Victorian companies – Planet Innovation and Compumedics – are in the final stages of the TGA process for their ventilators.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry Support and Recovery Martin Pakula

*"Creating a local ventilator industry in a matter of just months is testament to the excellence and agility of Victorian manufacturers."*

*"We have seen an amazing response to the challenges posed by the pandemic and that has helped to shore up jobs and place the state in the best position possible to recover once the health crisis is behind us."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford

*"It's terrific to see a Ballarat company leading the country in designing and producing ventilators – it means continued jobs not just for Gekko but for companies all along the supply chain."*

### Quote attributed to Gekko Systems chair and co-founder Elizabeth Lewis-Gray

*"The Gekko group of companies is delighted to have designed and developed the GeVentor ventilator and, as a result, to launch a start-up medical technology company, Gekko Medical, in regional Victoria."*

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