

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



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OWNERS ALLOWED AT COX PLATE UNDER STRICT HEALTH PROTOCOLS

Connections of horses running in the Cox Plate carnival will be allowed on course under strict health and safety protocols.

After public health advice provided by Chief Health Officer, a limited number of owners will be allowed to attend Moonee Valley for Friday night's Manikato Stakes meeting and the Saturday's 100th edition of the Cox Plate – on top of the jockeys, trainers and support staff required for the event.

A detailed COVIDSafe Plan will be in place for the event, and will include a range of stringent measures including caps on numbers, staggered arrivals, time limits and temperature checks.

Up to 500 connections will be able to attend each of the Manikato Stakes and Cox Plate race days with a maximum of 1,250 people on course for each meeting including jockeys, club operations staff, security, COVIDSafe marshals and media.

Owners and connections will be kept distant from areas used by essential racing personnel including the mounting yard and horse stalls. Social distancing will be required and enforced.

No more than 1,000 people will be permitted on course at any one time – in normal times, the venue can host 38,000 people. Food and beverage service will be take-away only – in line with existing directions for metropolitan Melbourne.

Limits will also be placed on how long owners can attend on racedays. These limits are still to be finalised and will be reviewed and determined by public health officials.

The Moonee Valley Racing Club will provide further advice to owners, including the requirement for permitted work permits to be obtained.

Changes to directions from the Chief Health Officer that allow persons with a business need to attend race meetings mean that connections will be able to attend metropolitan tracks that have COVIDSafe Plans in place ongoing, under set conditions.

Owners were able to return to meetings in regional Victoria earlier this month under similarly strict conditions.

The Government remains in discussion with the Victoria Racing Club around arrangements for the Melbourne Cup Carnival.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Racing Martin Pakula

"This will give connections the chance to see their horses compete under strict health protocols."

"The change has been closely considered by health officials, who will monitor the implementation of the plan to ensure the health and wellbeing of everyone involved."

"We have taken the advice of the Chief Health Officer – I know that connections will follow the lead of jockeys, trainers and stable workers and follow all protocols to the letter."

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