

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**  
Minister for Employment  
Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy  
Minister for Small Business  
Acting Minister for Racing



Tuesday, 22 June 2021

## **RACING TO JOIN FOOTBALL, RUGBY LEAGUE, BASKETBALL ON GOOD FRIDAY**

Victorian racing will be brought into line with sports including Australian football, rugby league and basketball with a ban on Good Friday racing to be repealed.

The thoroughbred, harness racing and greyhound codes have indicated they will look to program meetings in regional areas in 2022, to drive tourism and bolster local jobs.

Support for the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal, a feature of marquee AFL, NRL and NBL matches played on the day, would also be part of Good Friday race days.

Racing is conducted on Good Friday in Western Australia and Tasmania and legislation was introduced into Parliament today to remove the prohibition on Good Friday racing in Victoria.

Thoroughbred, harness racing and greyhound meetings will be conducted under the same general guidelines that apply to Good Friday activities involving sport, festivals, restaurants, bars and cinemas – including later starting times.

Racing Victoria and Country Racing Victoria have indicated Benalla, Sale and Echuca would be considered for the inaugural marquee Good Friday thoroughbred meeting, with the meeting to then be rotated amongst regional clubs in following years.

The NRL's Melbourne Storm hosted a match against the Brisbane Broncos at AAMI Park on Good Friday this year while the AFL's Western Bulldogs and North Melbourne played at Marvel Stadium and the NBL's Melbourne United took on Cairns Taipans at John Cain Arena.

Local football leagues also play matches on Good Friday, including the Bellarine and Bendigo leagues in regional Victoria and the Essendon District, Northern and Southern leagues in metropolitan Melbourne.

The *Racing Amendment Bill* makes a number of other administrative changes to aid administration of the *Racing Act*, including simplifying the process for the appointment an Acting Racing Integrity Commissioner should the need arise and making provisions around racing on ANZAC Day uniform between the codes.

The Government has no plan to overturn the prohibition on racing on Christmas Day.

The racing industry in Victoria generates \$4.3 billion for the Victorian economy each year and helps sustain over 33,800 full-time-equivalent jobs.

### **Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Racing Jaala Pulford**

*"Victorian racing will move in line with provisions in other states, and to an equal footing with competitions including the AFL and local football leagues, the NRL and the NBL."*

*"Racing codes have indicated they plan to schedule meetings in regional areas which will provide a boost for tourism, adding an extra dimension for people planning Easter getaways."*