

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Tuesday, 31 August 2021

AFL GRAND FINAL RELOCATED IN THE INTERESTS OF FOOTBALL

The Victorian Government has agreed to the relocation of the 2021 AFL Grand Final from the home of football, the Melbourne Cricket Ground, due to the ongoing effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

We cannot risk the health of Victorians by rushing back to crowds at events before it is safe to do so.

In enabling the Grand Final to be relocated, the Victorian Government has secured an arrangement that locks in the most celebrated Australian sporting event at the MCG for an extra year – until 2059.

In addition, the MCG has been guaranteed an extra eight AFL premiership season matches over the next five AFL seasons, from 2022 to 2026, representing four games over and above the agreement from last year.

These additional matches are on top of the underlying commitment from the AFL to schedule a minimum of 43 premiership matches per season at the MCG.

More football will be taken to regional Victoria, with a guaranteed four AFLW premiership season matches to be played at regional Victorian venues over a three year-period starting with the upcoming AFLW season.

The AFL will also extend Victoria's hosting of the NAB AFL Draft to 2023 as the NAB AFL Draft in 2021 is expected to be held as a virtual event due to the impact of the pandemic.

Should the 2021 AFL Grand Final not be able to be played in front of a crowd, then the MCG remains ready to host the game.

The Victorian Government and the AFL are continuing to work together to reinforce Victoria's position as the home of Australian football as part of the landmark agreement between the parties in 2018 that includes the \$225 million Marvel Stadium upgrade.

In addition to retaining the MCG as the home of Australian Football, the long-term agreement between the Government and the AFL incorporates a partnership to develop multicultural, indigenous and women's football and guarantees AFL matches for regional Victoria.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

"This is a decision made in the best interests of the health and safety of Victorians as we continue to drive down the current outbreak. It's also in the best interests of football – if the Grand Final can be played in front of supporters, then it should be."

"We look forward to the Grand Final returning to its traditional home at the MCG in 2022 and for decades beyond."