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FLETCHER MP**

Minister for Communications,
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Victorian Minister for Regional
Development



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Deputy Mayor of City of
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BACKING GEELONG'S EVENTS INDUSTRY TO GROW

Victoria is cementing itself as the global destination for events with the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Trust to operate the much-anticipated Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCEC).

Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas and Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula today announced the Trust would run the waterfront centre when it is complete.

As leaders in the industry, the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Trust, who manage the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC), will bring their expertise in drawing guests from across Australia and around the globe to Geelong.

The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre is a major contributor to Victoria's economy, and over the past 25 years has hosted more than 20,000 events attracting millions of local, national and international visitors.

Both Geelong and Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centres will be managed by the Trust, to increase opportunities for collaboration across each centre.

The Trust will work closely with Geelong's business and events network, which will include working with events and hospitality businesses from Geelong, supporting local jobs and boosting the region's economy.

The name and function of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Trust will be reviewed to ensure it reflects its expanded focus and footprint in Geelong.

The Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCEC) will be a major driver of jobs and economic growth for the City of Greater Geelong and surrounding areas, supporting 600 jobs during construction and an additional 270 ongoing jobs through operation.

The Victorian Government is investing more than \$260 million into the project as part of the Geelong City Deal, creating a total project value of \$294 million including contributions from the Commonwealth Government and City of Greater Geelong.

The broader precinct will include the construction of the purpose-built Convention and Exhibition Centre, incorporating a 1000 seat plenary venue and at least 3700 square metres of flexible event space so that large and small events can run at the same time, as well as a 200-room upscale hotel.

Significant progress is being made to deliver the world-class facility and precinct with an Expression of Interest (EOI) process underway for interested parties capable of delivering this large and complex project.

This follows an industry briefing on the design and construction of GCEC and the wider precinct.

The GCEC is the centrepiece of the Geelong City Deal, a \$500 million commitment between the Australian and Victorian governments and the City of Greater Geelong to revitalise the city and regional economy, encouraging visitors to spend more time in the region by capitalising on its natural assets.

For more information on the Geelong City Deal visit www.infrastructure.gov.au/cities/city-deals/geelong/.

Quotes attributable to Victorian Minister for Regional Development, The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

“The Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre will showcase regional Victoria’s capacity to host great events, creating more jobs and boosting the local economy.”

“We’re proud to invest in this city-shaping project because we know it will deliver big benefits for local businesses now and into the future.”

Quotes attributable to Victorian Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events, The Hon Martin Pakula MP

“The Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre is set to bring far reaching benefits to Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula, driving more visitors to the region.”

“The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre and the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre will work together to cement Victoria as a premier global destination for events.”

Quotes attributable to Federal Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, The Hon Paul Fletcher MP

“The Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre, with its prime waterfront location and proximity to Avalon Airport, has the potential to attract major national and international events that would otherwise be the exclusive domain of our capital cities.”

“The GCEC is a great example of how the City Deal has brought all three levels of government together to drive Geelong’s economic growth and unlock its potential as it transitions away from traditional industries.”

Quote attributable to Member for Geelong, Christine Couzens MP

“With the expertise of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Trust, the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre will become a magnet for events from across the state, the country and internationally.”

Quote attributable to Senator for Victoria the Hon Sarah Henderson

“The GCEC, a feature of the Geelong City Deal, is vital to attracting major events and driving our visitor economy.”

Quote attributable to Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre Chief Executive Peter King

“We have more than 25 years’ experience hosting and delivering world class business events and we’re excited to bring this experience to Geelong and the Bellarine. We look forward to engaging the local community, businesses, and event organisers as the Centre is developed.

Quote attributable to City of Greater Geelong Deputy Mayor Cr Trent Sullivan

“The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Trust has a strong reputation as being a knowledgeable and experienced operator and this expertise will ensure the long-awaited Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre is a success.”

Quote attributable to Executive Director Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine Brett Ince

“The Centre is one of our region’s most significant projects and plays an important role in central Geelong’s revitalisation and in bolstering the future of our local visitor and business events markets.”

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