

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



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NEW SCANNERS TO BOOST HORSE WELFARE

Racehorses in Victoria will soon benefit from some of the best injury-prevention screening services available anywhere in the world, thanks to funding from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Racing Martin Pakula announced more than \$950,000 from the *Victorian Racing Industry Fund* will be invested in new technology to improve animal welfare in the racing industry.

A Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scanner will be purchased for the University of Melbourne Equine Centre in Werribee, along with a standing Computed Tomography (CT) scanner intended to be located at the Cranbourne Training Centre.

The \$1.9 million joint project is supported by Racing Victoria with more than \$700,000 and the University of Melbourne contributing more than \$240,000.

The University of Melbourne, in partnership with Racing Victoria and the Labor Government, has been carrying out world-leading research on the risk factors of injury to racing horses and how to improve prevention.

The Australian first equine PET scanner at Werribee will improve the Centre's ability to identify areas of concerns in horses, further enhancing safety and welfare and will be operational from 2023.

Horses training in Victoria's south-east, including the Cranbourne Training Centre, will have greater access to high quality imaging with this world-leading technology, reducing the need to travel to the equine veterinary facility at Werribee. The installation of the standing CT scanner is expected to occur after this year's Spring Racing Carnival.

The \$950,000 investment in the scanners builds on the \$4.95 million in support provided through the *Victorian Racing Industry Fund* towards the Equine Limb Injury Prevention Program in partnership with Racing Victoria and the University of Melbourne.

The thoroughbred racing industry in Victoria generates \$3.2 billion for the Victorian economy and helps sustain over 25,150 full time equivalent jobs locally.

Quote attributable to Minister for Racing Martin Pakula

"Victoria is producing world-leading research in injury prevention amongst racehorses. This new technology will provide improved care to racehorses that compete in our state, the home of racing in Australia."

Quote attributable to Racing Victoria Chair Brian Kruger

"This project furthers our extensive commitment to equine welfare and ensures that advanced screening technology will be available to more horses year-round in Victoria"

Quote attributable to University of Melbourne Professor Chris Whitton

"We're proud to be leading ground-breaking research which is making a real difference reducing injuries, and the new scanners will help take that to the next level with better diagnostic capability and capacity."

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