

# 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



Wednesday, 1 June 2022

## NEW CHANGE ROOMS FOR NEXT GENERATION OF FEMALE JOCKEYS

Thirteen racecourses across Victoria will receive jockey room upgrades to cater for the growing number of female jockeys, thanks to funding from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Racing Martin Pakula today visited the Horsham and District Racing Club to announce \$667,000 from the *Victorian Racing Industry Fund* for the project, with Racing Victoria, Country Racing Victoria and the participating clubs also contributing funding to the \$1.3 million project.

The upgrades are needed to support the growing participation of female jockeys in the industry with the number of horses ridden by female jockeys increasing by over 15 per cent last year.

This project – expected to create 55 jobs during construction – will significantly improve the working environment and help encourage more women to participate in racing. Works across the state were informed by consultation with Victorian Jockeys Association (VJA), led by senior jockey and VJA Board Member Christine Puls. Upgrades at the clubs, will see several existing rooms extended and modernised to increase their capacity for all jockeys.

The racecourses receiving upgrades are a mix of large and smaller racecourses across the state. They include Ararat, Avoca, Bairnsdale, Benalla, Colac, Donald, Geelong, Horsham, Kilmore, Sale, Tatura, Terang and Wodonga. Combined these clubs host 109 race meetings a year and are used by around 90 trainers and 350 horses.

While at the racing club, Minister Pakula also announced that the Labor Government is investing more than \$44,000 from the Victorian Racing Industry Fund to support renovations and equipment upgrades.

The thoroughbred racing industry in regional Victoria generates more than \$715 million for the economy and helps sustain more than 6,100 full-time-equivalent jobs.

### Quote attributable to Minister for Racing Martin Pakula

*“We’re investing in upgrading racecourses around Victoria to provide improved facilities for female jockeys and I look forward to seeing more women leading from the front in our racing industry.”*

### Quote attributable to the Victorian Jockeys Association CEO Matthew Hyland

*“Upgraded facilities will be welcomed by all jockeys and further cement Victoria as a state that continues to promote and support jockeys.”*

### Quote attributable to Racing Victoria CEO Giles Thompson

*“Female Jockeys have continued to both grow in numbers and success on the track. Upgrades like these mean that we can continue to promote and support female jockeys and encourage increased participation.”*

### Quote attributable to jockey and Victorian Jockeys Association Board Member Christine Puls

*“Improved and expanded facilities will mean a lot to many jockeys in particular my fellow female jockeys.”*

**Media contact:** Anthony Templeton 0475 256 383 | [Anthony.Templeton@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:Anthony.Templeton@minstaff.vic.gov.au)