

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



Friday, 17 June 2022

CHOCOLATE FACTORY EXPANSION SWEETENS ISLAND ATTRACTION

A popular tourist attraction and chocolate manufacturer on Phillip Island has received support from the Andrews Labor Government to expand its facilities, create more local jobs and boost tourism.

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery Martin Pakula today visited the Phillip Island Chocolate Factory which is being supported by the Labor Government's *Business Competitiveness Program* to expand its production capacity and build new viewing areas for visitors, creating 25 new jobs.

The \$1.4 million project involves bringing in new machinery that will significantly boost production from 35 tonnes to 550 tonnes of chocolate each year – roughly the same weight as a full Airbus A380 airplane.

This will help the business to meet rising demand for chocolate through wholesale and export sales.

The project will also create more viewing areas for the public to see how the company's chocolate treats are made, enhancing the experience for visitors which averaged around 170,000 a year prior to the pandemic.

Tourism is big business in Phillip Island. In 2019, Phillip Island welcomed 2.7 million visitors who stayed 3.1 million nights and contributed \$579 million into the local economy.

Phillip Island Chocolate Factory is one of 28 small to medium-sized manufacturers across the state to receive a grant from the *Business Competitive Program* which aims to improve production and make our manufacturing sector more competitive.

A full list of *Business Competitiveness Program* grant recipients is available at business.vic.gov.au/business-competitiveness-program-round-1.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry Support and Recovery Martin Pakula

"We're supporting businesses like the Phillip Island Chocolate Factory to expand and become more competitive because it drives growth and creates local jobs."

"This program provides Victorian businesses with the support they need to export even more products around the globe – cementing our reputation as Australia's manufacturing state."

Quote attributable to Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale

"The Phillip Island Chocolate Factory is already an iconic part of our region, and this expansion means it can welcome more visitors, provide more jobs for locals and make more delicious chocolate for everyone."

Quote attributable to Phillip Island Chocolate Factory Owner Panny Letchumanan

"We are passionate about chocolate and the support from the Victorian Government allows us to share our passion with more people from around the world and treat them to some Phillip Island sweetness."

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