

# Media Release

**The Hon Jacinta Allan MP**

Deputy Premier

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop

Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery



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## REGIONAL VICTORIA TAKES THE BATON TO 2026

The Commonwealth Games baton has been passed to Victoria and now it's full steam ahead for the 2026 Games in regional Victoria in 1,316 days.

The Birmingham Closing Ceremony saw digital animation artwork of three regional Traditional Artists brought to life in the stadium and celebrated the best of regional Victoria.

The works of Gippsland artists Eileen Harrison and Ronald Edwards Pepper and Ballarat's Josh Muir were an integral part of the electrifying fusion of First Peoples' traditions and contemporary performances.

Vanessa Amorosi, Baker Boy (Danzal Baker OAM) and Geelong singer-songwriter Taylor Henderson led exhilarating performances that showcased regional Victoria which was seen in the stadium and by a worldwide audience of up to one billion people.

The baton has been handed to Victoria 2026 which will be held between 17-29 March 2026, beginning with the Opening Ceremony at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The Opening Ceremony will be followed by 12 days of competition between the Commonwealth's best athletes across regional Victoria, allowing our regions to shine on the world stage.

Victoria 2026 will introduce a new model delivering sports to four regional hubs in Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat and Gippsland. Each hub will have its own athletes' village and host a range of sports, creating a legacy for Victoria that extends well beyond the competition period.

The Games will see major investment in community infrastructure, including housing and world-class sports facilities. This will leave a legacy of affordable housing for the regions and modern sports infrastructure to encourage Victorians to get active and attract future major events.

Regional Victoria will be activated with a program of cultural and business engagement experiences, highlighting the Commonwealth Games values of humanity, equality and destiny – and embracing Victoria's rich diversity and cultural history.

A Victoria-wide program of live sites and activations will ensure visitors are welcomed in every corner of the state, with the Queen's Baton Relay to traverse the regions in the weeks leading up to the Opening Ceremony.

It is estimated the Commonwealth Games will contribute more than \$3 billion to the state's economy, creating more than 600 full-time jobs before the Games, 3,900 during the Games and a further 3,000 jobs beyond the Closing Ceremony.

For more information, and to express interest in being involved, visit [vic.gov.au/victoria2026](https://vic.gov.au/victoria2026).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery Jacinta Allan

*"The baton has now been passed from Birmingham to Victoria and will super charge the delivery of a sensational Commonwealth Games to be hosted by regional Victoria in 2026."*

*"It has been fabulous seeing the success of the Australian team – especially the 15 athletes from regional Victoria. It gives a real sense of what we can expect in less than four years."*

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## **Quotes attributable to Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy Shaun Leane**

*“Inspirational is the best way to sum up the performance of the Australian athletes – and now we can aspire to go even better with Victoria 2026.”*

*“We’ll be working alongside local communities to ensure we can not only have the best games but also leave a long lasting legacy for regional communities for years to come.”*