

# Media Release

**The Hon Jacinta Allan MP**

Deputy Premier

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop

Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery



Saturday, 20 August 2022

## CHAIR AND BOARD TO DELIVER A REGIONAL GAMES

The trailblazing president of the Richmond Football Club Peggy O’Neal AO is taking a lead role in delivering a successful Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games in regional Victoria.

Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery Jacinta Allan today announced the appointment of the Chairperson Peggy O’Neal AO and the other foundational Directors of the Board of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee.

Peggy, who became the AFL’s first female club president in 2013, will bring a wealth of knowledge from the corporate and public sectors through to community and professional sports.

The Board will support the Organising Committee to build a world class Commonwealth Games in regional Victoria that leaves a valuable legacy for our state.

The Board will benefit from the experience of respected professionals, including Belinda Duarte, an accomplished leader in elite sport, social equity and First Nations communities, and Lisa Gray, a highly accomplished executive in the corporate and public sectors.

Representatives from the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) and Commonwealth Games Australia (CGA) will also join the Board, bringing their experience as athletes and their significant leadership skills: Dame Louise Martin DBE, President CGF; Katie Sadleir, CEO CGF; Ben Houston, President CGA; and Craig Phillips, CEO CGA.

The close partnership between the Victorian Government, the CGF and the CGA will deliver a Games like no other, in a place like no other, and showcase regional Victoria to the world in 2026.

Victoria 2026 will see four regional hubs established in Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat and Gippsland, each with their own athletes’ village and sports program. The regional hubs will host athletes, officials and fans following an Opening Ceremony at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, using Melbourne as the gateway to regional Victoria.

Victoria 2026 will extend far beyond sporting competition, with the Queen’s Baton Relay, warm-up tournaments and training camps, an extensive cultural program, live sites and activations in towns and cities across the state.

It is estimated the 2026 Commonwealth Games will contribute more than \$3 billion to Victoria’s economy, creating more than 600 full-time equivalent jobs before the Games, 3,900 jobs during the Games and a further 3,000 jobs beyond the Closing Ceremony.

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

*“The Board members will give a depth of experience to the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games and provide invaluable leadership to deliver this global event to be hosted across regional Victoria.”*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy Shaun Leane

*“Peggy has made a significant contribution to the Victorian community through gender equality and developing female leaders in sport – we’re excited to bring her leadership to the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games.”*

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**Quote attributable to Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee Chair Peggy O'Neal AO**

*"I love sport and what it means for communities across Victoria. I am delighted to be part of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games and to work with the Board, to ensure that the diverse voices in our State are heard as we make decisions throughout the delivery of the Games."*

**Quote attributable to Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee CEO Jeroen Weimar**

*"I am looking forward to working with Peggy and the Board to deliver a fantastic Commonwealth Games across regional Victoria and we will be taking the next steps in the coming months to finalise the sporting program, village and venue locations."*