

# Media Release

**The Hon Danny Pearson MP**  
Minister for Government Services  
Assistant Treasurer  
Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC  
Minister for Consumer Affairs



Friday, 24 March 2023

## **BACKING AUSTRALIA'S MOST ACCESSIBLE MAJOR MUSIC EVENT**

Technology will give Victorians of all abilities the chance to enjoy a silent disco at Saturday's groundbreaking Ability Fest music festival in Melbourne, due to support from the Andrews Labor Government and the TAC.

Ability Fest is proudly Australia's first all-accessible music festival and one of the leading inclusive events in the country.

Hilltop Hoods, Alex Lahey, DZ Deathrays, Broods, Sampa the Great and Meg Mac will entertain thousands of fans at its new location at Birrarung Marr in yet another national drawcard on the state's packed major event calendar.

Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC Danny Pearson joined Ability Fest founder and 2022 Australian of the Year Dylan Alcott to celebrate a new partnership with the TAC that will make the all-access silent disco possible.

Silent discos are a festival staple where people listen to music through headphones rather than a speaker, but Ability Fest patrons, including people with hearing impairments, will have the option of wearing a haptic vest or strap to feel the beat of the music, allowing them to take part in the dance party.

There will also be a TAC chill-out zone providing a space for everyone to rest and recharge.

Through the new partnership, the TAC is also providing clients with volunteer opportunities at the festival, creating valuable work experience.

The TAC supports thousands of people living with a range of disabilities and is focused on finding new and innovative ways to support all Victorians to continue enjoying the things they love, such as live music.

The not-for-profit Ability Fest started in 2018 and has hosted some of the biggest names in music while raising almost \$500,000 for the Dylan Alcott Foundation. These funds have helped young Australians living with a disability fulfil their potential through a grant program.

Ability Fest features elevated viewing platforms, pathways, quiet zones, a designated sensory area, companion ticketing, AUSLAN interpreters and much more, ensuring a fun experience for all festivalgoers.

The Labor Government is backing Ability Fest alongside a packed calendar of major events such as the Australian Grand Prix, Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, ACMI Goddess and the FIFA Women's World Cup that bring thousands of visitors into the city while supporting local businesses and jobs.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC Danny Pearson**

*"Ability Fest is an absolutely brilliant Victorian event in a packed field of attractions, and we're delighted that it will be even more inclusive this year."*

*"All music fans should be able to enjoy a great day out and the partnership with the TAC is a perfect fit."*

### **Quote attributable to Transport Accident Commission CEO Joe Calafiore**

*"The TAC is always looking at ways to help Victorians with disabilities to continue doing the things they love, and we're excited to be bringing an all-accessible silent disco to the amazing event that is Ability Fest."*

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## **Quotes attributable to Ability Fest founder Dylan Alcott**

*“Ability Fest is a festival for all. It is my favourite day of the year getting to see everyone enjoying themselves in an inclusive environment celebrating live music.”*

*“It’s incredibly special to see so many people come out to support the Dylan Alcott Foundation with 100 per cent of proceeds helping young Australians living with disability fulfil their potential.”*