

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Outdoor Recreation



Friday, 26 December 2025

MELBOURNE TAKES CENTRE STAGE AT ICONIC TEST

The eyes of the sporting world will once again be on Melbourne today, with an epic Ashes edition of the Boxing Day Test attracting fans from around the globe.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today joined Cricket Australia CEO Todd Greenberg and MCC CEO Stuart Fox to reveal more than 100,000 tickets have been sold to international or interstate fans across the course of the Test, providing a huge boost to the visitor economy.

Around 90,000 people are expected to attend each of the first three days of this year's blockbuster, off the back of a record-breaking 373,691 people through the gates across five days at last year's thriller against India.

Hotel occupancy in the Melbourne CBD during this year's Test is forecast to be more than 15 per cent higher than comparable days a week earlier and 11 per cent higher than the same time last year.

Fans can also soak up the atmosphere beyond the boundary at 'Summer Fest' in Yarra Park, which is supported by the Allan Labor Government and features live music and family-friendly activities including free games, giveaways and skills challenges.

This year's Boxing Day Test will also build momentum towards the MCG hosting the historic 150th Anniversary Men's Test between Australia and England in March 2027.

The 150th Anniversary Test will be the first men's test match played under lights at the MCG, adding a modern twist to the legacy of the famous Centenary Test in 1977, which Australia won by 45 runs – the same margin as 100 years earlier.

Cricket Australia and the Shane Warne Legacy will once again raise awareness for heart health and diabetes during this year's Test, with fans able to take a free health check at any of the 56 stations in and around the MCG.

The quick and easy checks measure key metrics such as blood pressure, body composition, BMI, resting heart rate and five-year diabetes risk, helping people understand their risk factors for heart disease and diabetes.

The partnership between the Labor Government and Cricket Australia has boosted fan engagement and increased marketing to drive bigger crowds, with the MCG locked in as the home of the Boxing Day Test until at least 2030.

Fans looking for last-minute Boxing Day Test tickets or for more information about the 150th Anniversary Test can visit cricket.com.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"The next week will be a huge boost for the visitor economy, because we'll have thousands of visitors from interstate and overseas flocking here, both to watch the cricket and to discover the best of our food, wine and natural beauty."

"The Boxing Day Test isn't just an overnight success. There is year-round work done to market this blockbuster event to visitors, which helps attract huge crowds that fill hotels, bars, restaurants and venues right across the state."

Quote attributable to Minister for Community Sport Ros Spence

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"We're also proud to support the free Summer Fest fan zone, which extends the excitement to outside the 'G – with activities and entertainment to help inspire the next generation of participants and fans to pick up a bat and ball."

Quotes attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

"Melbourne is at its most vibrant in summer, creating demand among visitors who can take a short walk from the CBD to our sporting precinct to be part of the atmosphere."

"Hosting the 150th anniversary Test under lights in 2027 gives Victoria another chance to shine on the global stage as the ultimate destination for sport and culture."

Quotes attributable to Cricket Australia CEO Todd Greenberg

"The NRMA Insurance Boxing Day Test holds a special place in Australian cricket with the huge MCG crowd creating an occasion that has witnessed some of the game's greatest moments."

"We're enormously grateful to the Victorian Government and all those who have not only nurtured this historic occasion but elevated its status as a world class sporting event."

Quote attributable to Melbourne Cricket Club CEO Stuart Fox

"As the birthplace of International Test cricket, the Boxing Day Test at the MCG remains one of Victoria's great sporting traditions and we look forward to hosting hundreds of thousands of MCC members and cricket fans across all days of the match again this year."