

Media Release

The Hon Anthony Carbines MP

Minister for Police
Minister for Community Safety
Minister for Victims
Minister for Racing



Friday, 20 February 2026

RACE DAYS TO HONOUR BUSHFIRE RESPONSE EFFORT

The Allan Labor Government is supporting regional race days to honour the volunteers, firefighters and emergency services workers who worked tirelessly through January's devastating bushfires.

Minister for Racing Anthony Carbines today acknowledged the dedication and skill of emergency responders and CFA volunteers at the first Racing for Our Regions event held at the Seymour Racing Club.

The four-day initiative is being delivered by Racing Victoria with almost \$50,000 in support from the Labor Government through the Victorian Racing Industry Fund.

Around 200 volunteers and emergency service workers enjoyed complimentary entry to the Seymour race day, including a dedicated marquee and community barbeque. A Racing Victoria fundraiser at the event will raise additional money for the Country Fire Authority Trust and Strathbogie Disaster Relief Fund.

More events will be held across fire-affected regional locations in the coming weeks including in Towong, Alexandra and Kyneton.

Locals are encouraged to attend their local event, enjoy a day at the races and recognise the extraordinary commitment of emergency services workers who protected their communities.

Victoria's regional racing industry contributes \$1.17 billion to the state's economy each year and supports more than 9,000 full-time equivalent jobs across the state.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Racing Anthony Carbines

"Today we honour the volunteers, firefighters and emergency service workers who spent January on the frontline – sacrificing their time and working through dangerous conditions to keep their communities safe."

"The fires had a major impact on racing – from stables and studs to clubs and officials – coming together shows the industry's resilience and its commitment to supporting its people when they need it most."

Quotes attributable to Racing Victoria CEO Aaron Morrison

"Country racing is deeply embedded in regional communities, and when those communities are hurting, the racing industry feels it too."

"This event at Seymour is about raising much-needed funds for bushfire recovery, but it's also about acknowledging the courage and dedication shown by volunteers and first responders who put themselves in harm's way to protect others, both human and equine."