

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**

Minister for Jobs, Innovation and Trade

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Friday, 15 February 2019

## PROTECTING OUR BIGGEST TICKETED EVENT FROM SCALPERS

Comedy lovers will be better protected from ticket scalpers, with the Andrews Labor Government officially declaring the Melbourne International Comedy Festival a major event.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula joined comedian, Fiona O'Loughlin at the Comedy Theatre today to remind Victorians to purchase tickets to the world's best comedy shows through an authorised seller to ensure they get a fair price.

The declaration, under the Major Events Act 2009 will make it possible to crack down on ticket scalpers and give genuine comedy fans a fair go at getting tickets for the most popular events.

Under the legislation, tickets to a declared major event cannot be advertised or resold for more than 10% above the original value.

While the internet has made it easier for people to buy tickets, it has also encouraged a thriving resale market.

New authorised ticketing officers will support Victoria Police in enforcing the new law and prosecuting ticket scalpers. Penalties can range from \$806 up to \$483,500 depending on the nature of the offences.

From its humble beginnings in 1987, the Melbourne International Comedy Festival is now the third largest comedy festival in the world attracting up to 770,000 people each year, making it Australia's largest ticketed cultural event.

Major events are crucial to the state's economy, generating around \$1.8 billion each year and bringing visitors from across Australia and around the world to our state.

The Labor Government has invested an extra \$4.5 million in the Major Events Fund to help ensure Victoria's major events calendar remains one of the best in the world.

The Melbourne International Comedy Festival runs from 27 March to 21 April at venues across Melbourne. For more information on ticket scalping laws, visit [economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/fair-go-for-fans](http://economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/fair-go-for-fans).

### Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism and Major Events Martin Pakula

*"The Melbourne International Comedy Festival should be accessible for everyone. That's why we're making sure comedy lovers can access tickets at a fair price."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley

*"This move will ensure that the festival remains accessible for comedy fans from right across our creative state, and beyond. It will also mean that the rights of comedians and artists to a fair commercial return on their work is protected by law."*

**Media contact:** Ben McNair 0409 730 565 | [jobsmedia@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:jobsmedia@minstaff.vic.gov.au)