

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Jobs, Innovation and Trade
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Racing



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Friday, 22 February 2019

STAWELL GIFT BACK ON TRACK

The Stawell Gift, one of Australia's oldest footraces, will again light up Central Park this Easter long weekend, thanks to a new agreement between the Andrews Labor Government, Northern Grampians Shire Council and the Stawell Athletic Club.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula today announced that the three parties have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, providing additional support from the Government and Council.

The agreement will restore prize money levels and retain broadcast arrangements for the 2019 Stawell Gift.

The Government, Council and the Stawell Athletic Club have also agreed to work in partnership to determine a sustainable operating model for the event into the future.

This year will see the 138th running of the Stawell Gift, which is an integral part of the Stawell Easter Festival, delivering more than \$4 million in economic activity to the region each year.

The Labor Government will invest up to \$138,000 to ensure continuity of the event, while the Council will contribute a further \$60,000 and additional labour.

Additional funding has been provided on the understanding that future funding support will be conditional on significant changes being made to the commercial, governance and non-racing related elements of the event.

The Club has, in turn, acknowledged that the operating model for the event requires major reform and has agreed to participate in an independent review following the 2019 event.

Over the last four years the Labor Government has provided \$600,000 to support the Gift. The Council also already provided \$130,000 in cash and in-kind support each year.

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

"As an iconic event in Australian sport, the Stawell Gift holds a special meaning for so many people. This agreement will ensure it remains that way."

Quote attributable to Mayor, Northern Grampians Shire Council Kevin Erwin

"Council is very happy to be working with Stawell Athletic Club and the State Government to secure the long-term future of the Stawell Gift. It's great to see the prize money, broadcast and prestige restored to the Gift."

Quote attributable to President, Stawell Athletic Club Darryle Harrison

"We're grateful to the Victorian Government and Northern Grampians Shire Council for their support in getting the 2019 Stawell Gift back on track, and we look forward to working in partnership to ensure the future of the event."