

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**

Tuesday, 21 May 2019

FEMALE FOOTBALL REACHES NEW HEIGHTS IN VICTORIA

From under-9s to open age and veterans, female football is flying in Victoria with team numbers tripling in three years to smash through the 1,000 mark.

Backed by Andrews Labor Government support stretching from bush ovals to AFLW stadiums, women and girls have broken new ground with 1092 teams turning out to play in 2019.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula today joined Minister for Women and Youth Gabrielle Williams, AFLW stars Katie Brennan and Kaitlyn Ashmore, players from new Richmond Junior Football Club teams and Auskickers at Richmond's Citizens Park to applaud the remarkable growth.

In 2010, there were just 58 female teams. Now there are more than 28,500 women and girls playing each week with community leagues booming, mirroring the success of the AFLW.

The Labor Government has delivered for female footballers by supporting top-quality facilities from grassroots to the elite level, so more women and girls can get involved.

More than \$630 million has been invested in community sport and recreation facilities since 2014, including new female-friendly facilities at 150 locations across the state.

The Government is also supporting elite competition, investing \$45 million to upgrade AFLW venues for the current crop of stars – and the youngsters who dream of making the big time.

A \$20 million investment in Ikon Park will turn the stadium into a women's footy hub, \$13 million will enable Moorabbin Oval to accommodate St Kilda's new AFLW team, while Casey Fields (\$5 million), Whitten Oval (\$5 million) and Victoria Park (\$2 million) have also benefited.

The \$7.2 million *Change Our Game* campaign is helping level the playing field for women and girls in all sports and across every field of recreation – led by ambassadors including AFLW icon and new Richmond recruit Katie Brennan.

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

"Whether you're going down to your local club to try footy for the first time or you're an established AFLW star, we're making sure women and girls get a fair go."

Quote attributable to Minister for Women and Youth Gabrielle Williams

"The surge of women and girls into footy is fantastic to see – sport is an important frontier in the fight for gender equality."

Quote attributable to Head of AFL Victoria Ricky Bell

"Our objective is to be the most accessible sport for all Victorians, regardless of age and gender, and having over 1,000 female football teams across the state indicates that we are achieving that goal."

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