

## The week that was in Victorian politics 24 July 2023

The week beginning 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 in Victorian politics has been significant in delivering substantial reforms to reduce gambling harm caused by electronic gaming machines, or ‘pokies’.

The Government also made the difficult decision to cancel the 2026 Commonwealth Games with excessive revised costs associated with hosting the Games being the reason given; however, it remains committed to delivering on the housing, tourism, and sporting infrastructure the Games were set to deliver regional Victoria.

### **Gambling Reform**

On Sunday 16 July, the Premier and the Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation Melissa Horne announced the introduction of reforms aimed to reduce the gambling harm caused by electronic gaming machines (EGMs).

The reforms will require all EGMs in Victoria to have mandatory pre-commitment limits, carded play, and load up limits. These three aspects of the reforms will be introduced following consultation with the industry through an implementation working group, drawing on trials undertaken interstate and at Crown Melbourne from the end of 2023.

The reforms also include mandatory closure periods between 4am and 10am for all gaming machine areas in a venue, to be introduced mid-2024, and will require all new EGMs to spin at a rate of three seconds per game.

The reforms announced on Sunday build on those introduced following the findings of the Royal Commission into the Casino Operator and Licence which resulted in the establishment of the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC).

This announcement follows the 2023-24 Victorian Budget allocation of \$71 million for the VGCCC to take over most of the functions of the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation from 1 July 2024.

### **Commonwealth Games**

On Tuesday 18 July, the Premier, the Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery Jacinta Allan, and the Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy Harriet Shing announced the Victorian Government’s decision to cancel the 2026 Commonwealth Games that were to be held across regional Victoria.

The decision comes following extensive modelling showed the costs associated with hosting the Commonwealth Games would be more than double the benefit they would have on the Victorian economy, exceeding \$6 billion.

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## *Government Relations Strategy*

Despite the decision to not proceed with the Games, the Victorian Government has committed a \$2 billion package to ensure regional Victoria will still receive the housing, tourism, and sporting infrastructure as promised as part of the Commonwealth Games.

The Victorian Government's substantial commitment to regional Victoria includes:

- a new \$1 billion Regional Housing Fund to deliver more than 1300 new homes across regional Victoria.
- a new \$150 million Regional Tourism and Events Fund.
- the delivery of all permanent new and upgraded sporting infrastructure projects planned as part of the Commonwealth Games.
- a new \$60 million Regional Community Sport Development Fund to deliver new projects for regional communities across Victoria.
- \$40 million for an All Abilities Sport Fund to remove the barriers of entry for people with a disability to get involved in sports through grants, scholarships and mentoring.

The Victorian Government will make further announcement regarding the regional package following consultation with sporting codes, councils, tourism bodies and the community.

### **Further information**

For more information, please contact your Hawker Britton Victorian consultants JP Blandthorn and Emma Webster [here](#).

Further Hawker Britton Occasional Papers on the activities of the Victorian Government are available [here](#).