



Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Sport and Major
Events

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Inquiry into the 2026/27 Budget Estimates**

19 May 2026



Jobs, Skills,
Industry
and Regions

State of the Portfolio – Sport

Sport in Victoria continues to draw significant visitation, entertainment and engagement

- The sport and active recreation sector provides **\$9.2 billion** in Gross Value Add to Victoria's economy annually.
- **71,000** full time equivalent jobs are supported through the sport and active recreation sector.
- Victoria is home to **52** professional sports teams, **32** national sports organisations and over **44** high-performance facilities.
- Melbourne is the premier city for sports and is the only city to host a Tennis Grand Slam and a Formula 1 Grand Prix, alongside an NFL regular season fixture and the iconic Boxing Day Test.



State of the Portfolio – Major Events

- Victoria's major events calendar contributes **\$3.3 billion** to the Victorian economy, supporting local businesses, communities and jobs.
- Major events deliver a range of benefits and attract visitors throughout the year.
- We are maintaining our events advantage into the future through **locking in key events** including:
 - Australian Open tennis – secured until **2046**
 - Formula 1® Australian Grand Prix – secured until **2037**
 - AFL Grand Final – secured until **2059**





Our Achievements – Sport

- ➔ Completed construction of the Hawthorn Football Club's new Kennedy Community Centre ensuring all **10 Victorian-based AFLW teams** have access to upgraded high-performance facilities.
- ➔ 5 State Sporting Entities delivered **hundreds of events** that drew millions of visitors, boosted local jobs and provided significant economic and social benefits to Victoria.
- ➔ **7 Victorian Institute of Sport athletes** were selected for the Australian Winter Olympic Team, with **2 contributing silver medals** for Australia during a record-breaking 2026 Winter Olympic Games.
- ➔ Continued to progress construction of sports venues through the Regional Sport Infrastructure Program, including **5,000 new permanent seats** at Mars Stadium.

Our Achievements – Major Events

- ➔ The 2026 Australian Open was the biggest ever drawing a record crowd of more than **1.368 million** fans.
- ➔ The Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix 2026 attracted a record crowd of **483,934 visitors**, beating the previous record crowds for the fifth year in a row.
- ➔ The Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series reached a major milestone, welcoming **8 million visitors** since the series began in 2004.
- ➔ A record-breaking crowd filled the Melbourne Cricket Ground with **90,307 fans** to watch the British and Irish Lions in July 2025.
- ➔ For the first time, a National Basketball Association team travelled to Australia to play. The series involving the New Orleans Pelicans played 2 sold out games with total attendance of **60,000**.





Budget Initiatives

- **\$13.4 million** over 2 years for the Victorian Convention and Event Trust to support operations and event attraction at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre and Nyaal Banyul in Geelong.
- **\$7.4 million** over 2 years for the Melbourne Convention Bureau, Business Events Victoria, the Regional Business Events Fund and other major events to attract and deliver business events.
- **\$72.3 million** in operational funding and **\$20 million** in capital funding over 2 years to support the State Sport Centres Trust and Kardinia Park Stadium Trust.