



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

# **FORMULA 1 LOUIS VUITTON AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX**

## **WELCOME RECEPTION**

### **Thursday 13 March 2025**

#### **Acknowledgments**

**The Honourable Steve Dimopoulos MP**, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events,  
*representing the Premier of Victoria*

**The Honourable Anthony Carbines MP**, Minister for Police, Minister for Community Safety,  
Minister for Victims, Minister for Racing

**The Honourable Danny Pearson MP**, Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs, Minister for  
Finance

**The Honourable John Brumby AO**, Former Premier of Victoria

**Her Excellency Marie-Pascale Boisson**, Ambassador of Monaco to Australia

**The Honourable Martin Pakula**, Chairman, **Travis Auld**, CEO and **Board members** of the  
Australian Grand Prix Corporation

**Stefano Domenicali**, President and CEO, Formula One Group and **other representatives** of  
Formula One, FIA, Motorsport Australia and the Australian Grand Prix Corporation

**Krystina Emmanouilides**, Senior Aerodynamics Correlation Engineer, KICK Sauber F1 Team

**Senior members of the Victorian Public Service and Victoria Police**

**Victorian Senior Officers of the Australian Defence Force**

**Members of the Consular Corps**

**Distinguished guests**

I begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the lands on which this House stands – the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people of the Eastern Kulin Nation – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present.

Nearly 100 years ago, in 1927, Phillip Island sought to host Australia's first Grand Prix.

Australian racing fans were thrilled at the prospect of witnessing such a spectacle on home soil.

There was just one issue: road racing in Victoria was technically not allowed.

Phillip Island decided upon an unorthodox workaround:

They severed from their local council, formed their own and then treated the rules on racing as optional.

A little under a year later, Australia's first Grand Prix was held.

Racing on a dirt road, cars barely averaged a speed of 90 kilometres an hour, and only about half the grid didn't break down at some point during the race.

A journalist in attendance reflected on the Phillip Island race, writing:

*"...there was a carnival atmosphere like that of a European city at Grand Prix time, and it was obvious that road racing was off to a good start in Australia."*

That atmosphere has carried right through to this day.

Since its first Grand Prix – and often serving as the season opener – Albert Park holds a unique place on the calendar.

From Brawn's blistering debut to Webber's charge from 18<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> and the Hill-Villeneuve rivalry ignited in 1996 – Melbourne consistently delivers iconic moments.

This doesn't come by chance – it's down to the efforts of so many people, including many of those here tonight.

Every volunteer, every marshal, every staff member has a role to play – and with nearly half a million spectators attending over race week, it's no easy feat.

Just as it was for Victoria's first Grand Prix nearly a century ago – determination and passion fuel this spectacle.

Nearly everybody in this room will have a favourite driver, and a favourite team.

I'm not asking you to switch sides, but it would be remiss of me to not mention one driver in particular.

Regardless of what colours you'll be wearing on Sunday – I'm sure every Victorian will be cheering Oscar Piastri on.

Before I finish, I wanted to take a moment to recognise Tim Schenken OAM and Carol Armstrong.

Carol was recently recognised by the FIA for her volunteering, which has seen her support 45 Grand Prix's around the world.

For Tim, this race marks 40 years of continuous service to the Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix.

These milestones go to the heart of the dedication from those that make this Grand Prix possible.

Good luck, and best wishes for the race.

I now invite Minister Dimopoulos to address us.