

Thursday, March 9th, 2023

Call for caravans to play key role in Games accommodation

March 6, 2023

BY Billy Higgins (<https://timesnewsgroup.com.au/bellarinetimes/author/billyhiggins/>)



Caravan lobbyists think the holiday vehicles could provide ideal short-term boosts for visitor capacity during the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

SCHOOLS, parks and community facilities would become makeshift caravan parks under an idea to temporarily boost accommodation options for the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Caravan Industry Victoria is making its case for recreation vehicles to be part of the Geelong's plan to host the thousands of visitors and spectators expected to flock to the region for the international sporting festival.

The advocacy body's CEO Daniel Sahlberg said the idea followed discussions with regional Victorian organisations that have raised concern about their cities' accommodation capacity ahead of the event.

"They've talked about the pressures on accommodations, particularly with the volume we're talking about with the Commonwealth Games," Mr Sahlberg said.

"Our industry can supply products in multiple places, we've got products that could be built, we've got products that could be rented off consumers and we've got B2B or Airbnb-type services.

"Caravan parks will probably fill up too.

The thought was with those products could be put in school grounds or community spaces and places like that, and then those areas could make an income out of them being there, which also funds the community.

"There's nothing better to do it with than caravans because they're portable and can move easily."

Mr Sahlberg said he would meet with Commonwealth Games Delivery Minister and deputy Premier Jacinta Allan to advocate for increased caravan use in the event's organisation, and said he would also seek support from tourism and economic development bodies.

Mr Sahlberg said the Games could also be a platform for a broader conversation about boosting availability of caravan parks spots.

He said the industry had jumped from 774,000 registrations in 2019 to more than a million today – 200,000 of which are in Victoria – creating a significant opportunity to leverage tourism dollars.

"Our industry has gone gangbusters.

"[It's] evolved from just traditional caravan parks and there's also free camping that's going on in the parks locations.

"We just need more and more of it to allow for people to experience these places."

The Geelong region is hosting nine sports during the 2026 event, including at Torquay and the Bellarine Peninsula.

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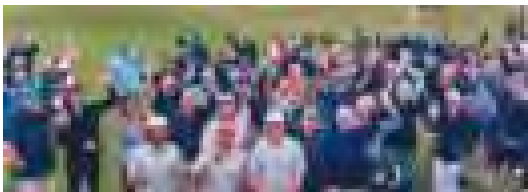
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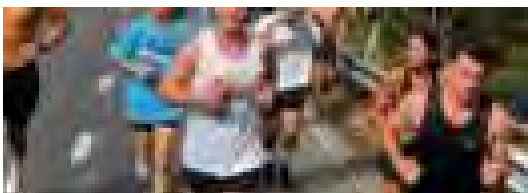
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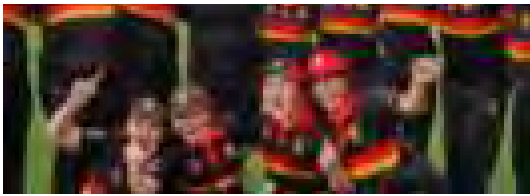


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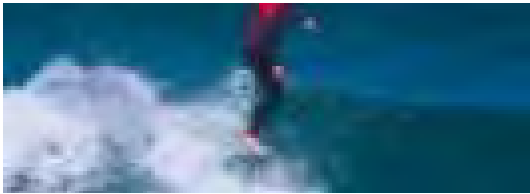
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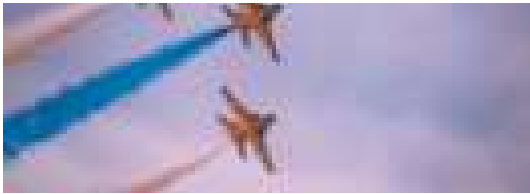
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