



**THE HON KATE ELLIS MP
MINISTER FOR SPORT**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Rudd Government funds Skilled Stadium upgrade

The Rudd Government's commitment of \$14 million to upgrade Skilled Stadium in Geelong will help ensure the Cats continue to fly high.

The Minister for Sport, Kate Ellis and the Member for Corio, Richard Marles confirmed the Government's funding commitment today, saying the grant would improve stadium facilities for players and spectators.

"The upgrade will include the demolition and reconstruction of the current Ross Drew Stand, increasing the stadium capacity by about 3,000 seats," Ms Ellis said.

"As supporters of other AFL teams well know, away games at Skilled Stadium are already formidable encounters. Imagine what the stadium will be like with another 3,000 Geelong supporters cheering along."

The redevelopment of Skilled Stadium will also increase the size of the existing high performance gym by 50 per cent, and implement important water management and water recycling technologies to better utilise rainwater and grey water.

Capturing and using rain and grey water will help with the irrigation of the central playing surface and nearby playing fields.

The total cost of the redevelopment is \$28 million, with contributions also being provided by the Victorian Government (\$6 million), the AFL (\$2.5 million), Geelong Football Club (\$3.5 million) and the City of Greater Geelong Council (\$1.5 million).

"Sport plays a vital role in the social and cultural life of Geelong and surrounding regions, and Skilled Stadium is very much a focal point for the local community," Mr Marles said.

"The 2007 AFL premiership win will live long in the memories of all Cats fans, and players and fans deserve a home ground with first rate, modern facilities".

"The Rudd Government is delivering on its 2007 election commitment to support the redevelopment of Skilled Stadium, and I look forward to coming back when the project is completed."

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