

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop

Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery



Sunday, 7 August 2022

VICTORIA 2026 TO BE HIGHLIGHTED ON GLOBAL STAGE

The spotlight will be on home-grown talent Baker Boy when he takes centre stage and performs in the Closing Ceremony at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Young Australian of the Year, Danzal Baker OAM, known as Baker Boy, will use his unique style of rap music to help a worldwide audience of up to one billion people turn their attention to regional Victoria – the host of the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Baker Boy will be joined on stage by Vanessa Amorosi, one of Australia's most dynamic singers, and Geelong's own singer-songwriter Taylor Henderson.

Baker Boy's performance will follow the Flag Handover Ceremony when the Commonwealth Games flag will be handed to Her Excellency, the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria.

Victoria's role in the Closing Ceremony will be an electrifying fusion of First Peoples' traditions and contemporary performances celebrating what makes regional Victoria great.

Elders from each of the Traditional Owners - Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung (Melbourne), Wadawurrung (Geelong and Ballarat), Dja Dja Wurrung (Bendigo) and Gunaikurnai (Gippsland) will invite the Commonwealth Games to their lands in 2026.

The Elders will each present a carved message stick to Commonwealth Games Federation President, Dame Louise Martin DBE. The message stick represents an invitation to walk on Country in 2026 when Victoria will stage the Commonwealth Games in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Gippsland.

Baker Boy, Amorosi and Henderson and contemporary dancers will perform against a video backdrop that displays Australian athletes and a highlights package of what regional Victoria has to offer.

Four young Victorians from regional TAFEs were given the once in a lifetime opportunity to be involved in the creation of Victoria's role in the Closing Ceremony.

The students were selected from each of the four host regions and learnt important skills like stage management, administration and event production during the rehearsals in Melbourne.

The video will show a combination of arts, sports culture and breathtaking natural beauty, introducing the world to Victoria's 2026 host cities, its people, diverse culture and hospitality.

The Commonwealth Games will be held in Victoria from March 17-29 and it will create more than 600 full-time equivalent jobs before the Games, 3900 jobs during the games and a further 3000 jobs beyond the closing ceremony.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery Jacinta Allan

"Victoria 2026 will be handed the baton and will be ready to invite athletes and spectators from around the world to experience everything our amazing regions have to offer during the Birmingham Closing Ceremony."

"We are proud that the immensely talented Baker Boy and the four Elders are playing such an important part in the Closing Ceremony in Birmingham."

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Quote attributable to Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy Shaun Leane

“We’re extremely proud of our athletes across the Birmingham Games and we’re inviting visitors and athletes to share in Victoria’s incredible regions.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams

“First Peoples traditional and contemporary culture will be at the heart of our performance in the Handover Ceremony, just as they will be at the centre of the Commonwealth Games in Victoria 2026.”