

Thursday 1 April 2010

COALITION TO GIVE GIFT A \$600,000 LIFT

A Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Government will more than double funding for the Stawell Gift to secure the race's future.

The Coalition will provide the Stawell Athletic Club with \$600,000 over four years to stage and market the Gift.

Under a Coalition Government, Australia's most famous footrace will remain in Stawell.

This race is an icon and a major tourist attraction for western Victoria and it should stay in Stawell where it has been run for almost 130 years.

Supporting the growth and development of events in regional Victoria is a priority for the Coalition.

We will continue to look at ways to assist the Stawell Athletics Club to secure the Gift's long-term viability.

With the 130th anniversary of the race next year, the Coalition's commitment will give the club the security it needs to attract new sponsors and market the world-class event.

The weekend carnival is an important date on the calendar for aspiring young athletes.

The Brumby Government withdrew funding for the event earlier this year, reinstating it only after the club revealed it was considering an offer from Ballarat City Council to host the race.

The government's decision to increase funding for the event by \$10,000 a year does little to inspire confidence about its commitment to athletics in Victoria.

The race has a long and proud history of discovering home-grown talent and has given many young athletes their start.

The Coalition's commitment will give the race what it needs to continue to grow and attract new competitors.