GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MEDIA STATEMENT

Saturday, 3 October 2026



Hon. Roger Cook MLA
Premier; Minister for Tourism, Trade and Investment



Hon. Don Punch MLA
Minister for Racing and Gaming



Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC
Minister for Regional Development

Government creating jobs, driving tourism ahead of Golden Saddle

- Cook Labor Government investment helped deliver recently completed upgrades to Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club ahead of the 2026 Golden Saddle Race Round
- Improvements to bring more tourists to the Goldfields, supporting regional jobs and local hotels, restaurants, and pubs
- Funding delivered through $25.2 million program which is improving 24 regional racing venues across Western Australia

The Cook Labor Government has helped deliver critical infrastructure upgrades at Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club, supporting local jobs and helping draw thousands of visitors to the Goldfields ahead of the 2026 Golden Saddle Race Round.

The first stage of a $700,000 infrastructure package has been completed through the Cook Labor Government's $25.2 million Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund (RRIF), helping to strengthen racing facilities, support local jobs, and boost regional tourism.

A new $100,000 training sand track was also completed in June, providing improved training facilities ahead of the second annual Golden Saddle.

Further works, including upgrades to training-track lighting and the club's swab box, which plays a key role in maintaining racing integrity, will be delivered as part of the broader infrastructure program.

The upgrades form part of the Cook Labor Government's commitment to putting Western Australians first by supporting regional industries that create local employment opportunities and deliver economic benefits to communities across the State.

The Golden Saddle, to be held on 3 October, has quickly become a feature event on the Western Australian regional racing calendar and is Australia's richest regional slot race, offering $1 million in prize money.

The 1,200-metre feature will be run alongside the $150,000 Kalgoorlie Cup and the $150,000 Hannans Handicap as part of the club's annual Race Round.

The events are expected to attract thousands of visitors to the Goldfields, providing a significant boost for local businesses, accommodation providers, hospitality venues, and tourism operators.

The Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club upgrades form part of a broader program of infrastructure improvements being delivered through the RRIF, with projects underway at 24 regional thoroughbred and harness racing venues throughout WA.

Comments attributed to Premier Roger Cook:

“The Golden Saddle is more than just a race.

“It's a major tourism drawcard which brings thousands of visitors to the Goldfields every year, creating more jobs for regional Western Australians by supporting local hotels, restaurants and pubs.

“That's why my government continues to invest in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club as part of our Seven Cities vision to unlock a new wave of regional economic development and deliver quality infrastructure and services throughout WA.”

Comments attributed to Racing and Gaming Minister Don Punch:

“The Cook Labor Government is putting WA first by investing in regional racing infrastructure that supports local jobs, strengthens communities, and helps drive regional tourism.

“These upgrades will provide safer, modern facilities for participants while helping ensure Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club stays a key part of the Goldfields racing industry for years to come.

“With the Golden Saddle continuing to attract visitors and competitors from across Australia, this investment will help deliver economic benefits for local businesses and showcase the Goldfields as a premier regional racing destination.”

Comments attributed to Regional Development Minister Stephen Dawson:

“Regional racing is more than a day at the track.

“Events like the Kalgoorlie Cup create jobs, attract visitors to the region and bring local communities together.”

“Through the Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund, the Cook Labor Government is ensuring regional racing clubs have the infrastructure they need to continue supporting local economies and communities into the future.”

Comments attributed to Kalgoorlie MLA Ali Kent:

“The Goldfields has a proud racing history, and this investment will help ensure local families, volunteers, trainers, and racing participants continue to enjoy high-quality facilities for years to come.

"Major events such as the Golden Saddle are about more than racing.

“They create opportunities for local businesses, attract visitors to our region and provide a significant boost to the Goldfields economy.”

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