

# The Victorian Prospect

June 2020



**Special Edition: Industry Response to COVID-19**



# A message from Grant Anderson

Nearly six months in and it's fair to say 2020 has been unlike anything we've seen before. We have been in a State of Emergency for the most part after bushfires ravaged the country, and then the coronavirus spread like the aforementioned across the world and forced us all indoors.

Back in March, which I must admit feels like years not months ago, as we prepared for the second of our Australian F1 Grand Prix breakfast events word filtered out that the F1 would be cancelled. Given the early hour, we went ahead with Connecting SMEs: Policy in Action until it was official. Thanks again to our speakers and guests who attended under the most unusual of circumstances as we found ourselves quarantined inside Albert Park as thousands of fans were locked out. It must be said the Australian Grand Prix Corporation and security staff were fantastic in ensuring we were safely escorted from the grounds amidst a somewhat chaotic atmosphere at the public entrance.

This was the biggest sign yet that COVID-19 had indeed hit our shores and life as we knew it was about to change, at least in the short-medium term.

We quickly transitioned our organisation to working from home, maintaining our essential service supporting the Victorian Government's response to COVID-19 induced shortfalls including manufacturing PPE, medical equipment and signage.

The whole ICN Network collaborated to establish an ICN Gateway portal [covid19.icn.org.au](https://www.covid19.icn.org.au) for suppliers to register their interest to support the national effort to limit COVID-19 and help us identify supply shortages. More than 650 companies have registered and reporting from this portal has helped all State Governments in their response.

Had all gone to plan, this would be the third Prospect of the year however we decided to wait. It just didn't feel right until we could see the light at the end of the tunnel and devote this edition to some of the inspiring industry stories of pivoting, resilience and stepping up in a crisis to make masks, sanitiser, ventilators and where possible, save jobs.

Finally, I'd like to thank all of our team for their enthusiasm and professionalism during this time. With the help of Teams, Zoom, FaceTime and most importantly, each other, we haven't missed a beat.

As a nation we have done a terrific job to flatten the curve. We specifically chose the vacant Flinders Street Station steps "under the clocks" as the cover for this edition, there are not too many starker images of Melbourne under stage four restrictions. But now, as businesses start to reopen and with that more jobs, we can look forward to a sense of normality returning and greater appreciation for all the little things in life.

Regards



**Grant Anderson**  
Executive Director



# Hi from (most of) our team! 🙌



# We needed masks, two regional Victorian businesses delivered

**Med-Con and Foodmach came together with help from the Australian Defence Force and Department of Industry Science & Technology to fill an immediate need through Project Med-Con**



When a global pandemic results in a shortage of surgical masks where do you look to ensure needs can be met? Regional Victoria, of course, Shepparton and Echuca to be exact.

Med-Con, based near Shepparton is Australia's only surgical mask manufacturer, however with only 5% of the market share due to Chinese competition their production was limited to 2 million masks per year from two operational machines.

In what must have felt like no time at all, demand had increased to 50 million. Med-Con urgently needed equipment.

Med-Con's machines were designed and built nearly 40 years ago with no original drawings available for reproduction. With assistance from the Australian Defence Force and the Department of Industry, Science and Technology, one of Med-Con's machines was pulled apart and modelled.

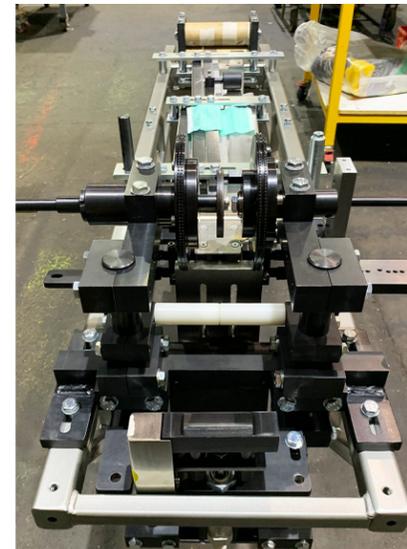
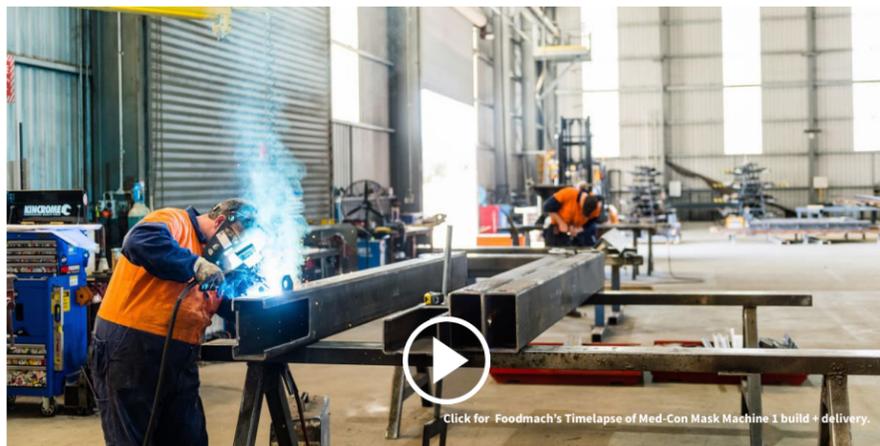
Enter: Foodmach.

Based in Echuca, about one hour's drive from Med-Con, Foodmach is a leading operator in FMCG manufacturing, with expertise in engineering and streamlining production lines. Tasked with reverse engineering this mask-making machine within 60 days, the Foodmach team, understanding the significance

of this project in this profound moment in time provided daily updates via its Project Med-Con Daily Log.

Foodmach's 6,600 square metres of factory and machine shop space allowed its 100-strong team of skilled staff to work around the clock—while maintaining enough distance from each other to manage COVID-19 risks.

Although Foodmach had been provided with 3D modelling by the ADF, the project still required significant engineering and resourcing input to develop. Unique parts required to manufacture had expanded from 182 to 660 between Days 5 and 11 alone. By Day 15,



Foodmach began collecting the first round of unique parts from MAC Manufacturing based in Melbourne. 95% of the parts required were complete by Day 26, with visits from AMTIL and Jason Vandyk (Vandyk Specialist Engineering) in the following couple days – both appointed by the federal government as project consultants. Mind you, the Foodmach team were working practically 24/7 to stay the project course on the very limited timeline.

As they entered the second half of the 60-day period, the machine began to take form. Commissioning, both 'dry' and 'wet', forced the team into various forms of fine-tuning the many intricate parts of the machine. Foodmach had manufactured their first mask by Day 46. Before they knew it, Mask Machine 1 was delivered to Med-Con on May 20th (ahead of schedule), with installation and production enabled within less than two days.

Foodmach, their suppliers and other supporting stakeholders have shown remarkable perseverance, effectiveness and advanced manufacturing capability to execute the development of this brand new machine.

A very special mention must be made of Joe Carmody, the original designer of the three machines at Med-Con that were built almost 40 years ago. Minister Andrews exclaimed at the ABC National Press Club address on Wednesday May 20th "Joe's machines were exported to Finland, the US, the Middle East and many more places. So just imagine how many frontline health workers around the world are being protected right now by an item made through Aussie ingenuity," said The Hon Karen Andrews, Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, at the National Press Club on 20 May.

"When I first called Ray at Med-Con in February, they were the only Aussie manufacturer of face

masks and his normal annual production was around 2 million a year."

"Now, by the end of this year they will have produced 59 million masks. They will have gone from 14 to 98 staff and they will have significantly strengthened our ongoing sovereign capability for this vital product," said Minister Andrews.

Once the Federal Government's contract ends in December, Med-Con would produce an ongoing 10 million masks a year for five years with the option of extending another five years, said Ray Stockwell, CEO of Operations, Med-Con.

"It's been encouraging for our team to receive so much positive feedback from the wider community. The kind words have kept everyone's energy up during the 24/7 shifts we've been running to meet a 2-month deadline. It's a project that would ideally take us 4 or 5 months," said Foodmach Director, Peter Marks.





When we put our hat in the ring for Project Med-Con, we had limited understanding of the complexity of the task. It was much tougher than we thought, but we did it.

We were given eight weeks from the Purchase Order to get Machine 1 ready for testing; we did it in six.

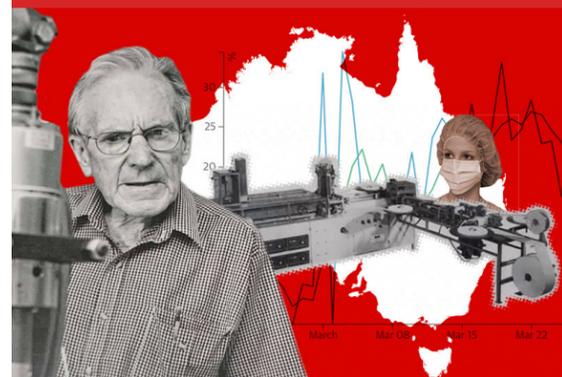
We were given two weeks to get Machine 1 up and running at Med-Con. We did it one day. Med-Con started mask production on its first new machine almost a month ahead of schedule.

Machines 2 and 3 are nearing completion and will be delivered early. The extra order for Machines 4,5,6 and 7 will be rolled out weekly thereafter. Australia's mask manufacturing capacity is secured thanks to

the work of Joe Carmody and many dedicated engineers and technicians. We've proven that our nation's manufacturing capacity is alive and well and that engineering is a career that can save lives.

We hope that the legacy of Joe Carmody and our nation's response to COVID-19 will encourage a new generation of Australians to become inventors, builders, designers, engineers, technicians and tradespeople.

It's been an incredible, combined effort and an inspiring project to have been a part of. Even more amazing for the public support it's received through mainstream and social media. This blog alone has attracted tens of thousands of visitors.



**Protect Your Business**

Combined Building Maintenance, based in Boronia, had typically focussed on mould removal and remediation as their service offering. As part of the remediation, an anti-microbial fog is implemented on the affected areas to ensure surfaces remain germ free for an extended period of time. With the COVID-19 outbreak taking hold in March in Australia, the Combined Building Maintenance team took note of the long periods of time that the virus could remain on a plastic or steel-based surface. Their next step: introducing "Environment Fogging", a non-volatile solution to creating a much lower risk of transmission in office, community, and domestic spaces.

The treatment that is applied as a fog is called Healthguard AMIC and leaves both soft and hard surfaces with a germ-

# Successful pivoting efforts from two businesses in Melbourne's East

**Combined Building Maintenance and Signex adapted early in the pandemic to make products available that would aid public safety efforts and keep their staff employed**

free residue for an extended length of time. A number of businesses and venues have so far utilised this new service, such as Zimmerman Industries (Lilydale), Centenary Park Golf Course (Frankston), Knox City Football Club and Mooroolbark Soccer Club. In conclusion, Combined Building Maintenance have highlighted that cleaning techniques are not necessarily stagnant but can adapt to new challenges as they arise.

**Signex Pivots To COVID-19**

Based in Bayswater, Signex Group specialize in the design and installation of signage, particularly in the events sector. As COVID-19 materialized as a major threat to Australia, the cancellation of events proliferated around the nation, with March 13th acting as the trigger date for large events such

as the Australian Grand Prix. As such, Signex was facing the loss of more than 50% of their revenue, with the recovery point a massive unknown during the last few weeks of March. With 11 staff full-time staff employed, what could be done to keep the business operating?

At this point, Doug Pieper & the team considered their options to continue operations. With a selection of vital services permitted to continue opening, Signex identified their first area to pivot towards: floor decal signage regarding COVID-19 in-store practices. Although they may seem rudimentary to the public, there are detailed government regulations that need to be met for safe implementation, such as slip resistance. The team got to work and partnered with their office supplies supplier for release



to other businesses. With this range up & running, the design team's next opportunity was found to be indicative signage at pharmacies, which quickly became another successful offer to the market.

From this point, Signex expanded its COVID-19 response offering further – development of protective shields for use in retail outlets and a portable sanitiser station. Partnering with a Port Melbourne-based marketing company, Doug explained that orders have been consistently coming through during May. As a direct result of Signex's pivoting efforts, all staff have been retained during the COVID-19 crisis, whilst inputs for new products have concentrated on being sourced locally across the board. In conclusion, this is yet another example of Victorian SMEs proving their ability to rapidly adapt to challenging market conditions during COVID-19.



# Ginned up to answer the call

With a serious shortage of hand sanitiser in Australia it was members of the hopsitality industry, some the hardest hit by COVID-19 that immediately stood up. Here we profile just a few businesses however we have the utmost respect and thanks to all distilleries, breweries and winemakers.



In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic when toilet paper, eggs, pasta, canned goods and sanitiser were in scarce supply there was a specific group of businesses best known for cocktails and good times that stepped up, fast!

Our great Aussie gin distillers that have really grown to prominence over the last five years or so already had the ingredients and the bottles so, many, encouraged by state and federal governments, began making sanitiser or as South Australia's Never Never and most millennials call it Hand Sanny.

As members of the hospitality industry, one of the hardest hit from this pandemic, each of these businesses not only answered the call to produce much needed sanitiser they also wanted to keep as many of their people employed as possible, picking and packing large volumes.

Perhaps Australia's best-known gin distiller, Four Pillars responded to their personal need in early March by producing a few bottles worth of hand sanitiser just for the team and visitors to the cellar door.

Head distiller Cameron Mackenzie told Max Allen in an interview for an article titled 'How craft spirit makers are avoiding sacking staff' published in the Australian Financial Review in early April that he was adamant this was a temporary, small-scale, non-commercial venture. But as the country went on lockdown and the hand sanitiser shortage was becoming a serious problem Four Pillars started making Take Care, a simple sanitiser exclusively for health care professionals and Heads, Tails & Clean Hands, a 'made from gin' sanitiser for everyday Australians that's a bit more aromatic and utilises the by-products of their gin distillations.

Four Pillars quickly sold out of its first allocations and vowed to continue making sanitiser for as long as long Australian's needed it but not a day more. Telling subscribers to their mailing list, "Nothing would make us happier than to see the big chemical and pharmaceutical guys step in and end the sanitiser shortage. Then we can go back to focusing on our gins. But if the call still needs to be answered we'll do what we have to do."

"We've worked bloody hard over the last six-and-a-half years to build this business," Mackenzie told AFR. "It's been pretty tough to see it disintegrate overnight. But by doing this, by diverting a fair bit of our production away from gin to hand sanitiser, we've been able to keep nearly 30 people employed, on the bottling line, packing boxes."



Archie Rose out of Sydney also responded very quickly, their goal to help fulfil the shortfall and keep their staff employed during the hospitality shutdown.

"We're in a unique position to manufacture this essential product - with the required federal licences, dangerous goods approvals, access to raw materials and expertise - and so we're now making hand sanitiser our production focus. We will continue to produce sanitiser for as long as we can, or as long as is required and this will also support the redeployment of as many of our full-time bar staff as possible to assist in filling, packaging and shipping the product," said Founder Will Edwards.

The first allocations sold out very quickly and Archie Rose shared with their mailing list "Best of all, thanks to your overwhelming show of support, we've been able to re-deploy our 20+ bar and hospitality team to the bottling line following the shutdown of our bar last Monday. This is a huge achievement - and so we raise a glass to you for your support."

Adelaide's own Prohibition Liquor Co, a small business offering small batch premium gin began making hand sanitiser for their own use before giving away 100ml bottles of hand sanitiser free with a minimum gin purchase.

Sharing with their subscribers: "Let's start by saying we are not in the hand sanitiser business and don't intend to be in the long term, but we figured if we are going to make it for ourselves, why not make it for the broader Prohibition Family?"

Due to overwhelming demand, PLC eventually made a very limited batch available to purchase but made it clear they were only responding to immediate need and their focus remains producing the very best gin, from the PLC website:

"PLC hand sanitiser is made from the heads and tails of our gin distillation process. Our hand sanitiser is a liquid, not a gel, available in 125ml & 250ml in bottles with a dispensing top. We hope this product keeps you and your family safe, and whilst doing so it has kept our bar team in jobs



during this COVID-19 pandemic." McLaren Vale's Never Never Distilling Co began manufacturing their 'Hand Sanny' Sanitiser for South Australian health care organisations (hospitals, GPs and aged care) in 15L returnable plastic dangerous good containers. They also made a separate product designed for domestic use containing by-products of their gin distillation.

"Like many Australian distillers, we're very glad to be able to switch our production capabilities to assist with an important short term need for hand sanitiser," as stated on the Never Never website.

The last of the gin sanitisers we tried, Melbourne's Patient Wolf teamed up with Wolf of the Willows Brewing to create a Malted Juniper Scented Hand Sanitiser to ease the shortage.

From the Patient Wolf website: "It's the result of distilling XPA malt beer wash with ethanol and a touch of Melbourne Dry gin, and we are pretty damn proud of it. It's 70% alcohol to keep hands and surfaces clean, killing 99.9% of germs."



## Leaves Your Hands Feeling Fresh



Our resident gin lover and Communications Manager, Kate West happily tried each of our test subjects and was delighted with the result: “It was impossible to pick a favourite with each leaving it’s own mark,” said Kate.

Kate was taught at a gin tasting to smell through the mouth rather than sniff so that you’re not overwhelmed with the alcohol vapors. This trick was more valuable than ever when trying these sanitisers that stimulated the senses with well-known botanicals.

“I had to keep my wits about me to ensure I didn’t take a sneaky sip, particularly as they are all liquid, bottled and labelled in familiar ways,” said Kate.

### Archie Rose Hand Sanitiser (Sydney)

Archie Rose has tried its hand at many innovative and experimental ideas over the past couple of years. From smoked gin to a vegemite inspired spirit and most recently a shiraz spirit using the bushfire tainted grapes of the Hunter Valley. It’s little wonder that their hand sanitiser would use classic botanicals like their own natural grapefruit, cassia, cardamom and thyme that transport you to a five star hotel and leaves your hands feeling fresh!

### Four Pillars Gin Heads, Tails & Clean Hands (Yarra Valley)

The success story of Four Pillars Gin is on full display with their hand sanitiser, bottled in the distinctive 1L glass we know and love, and uniquely named for the consumer market. Your mouth can’t

help but water with the notes of juniper, sweet citrus and fragrant spices made from the by-products or heads and tails of their gin distillations. Easy to apply and leaves your hands feeling fresh!

### Never Never Distilling Co Hand Sanny (McLaren Vale)

Packaged in a 1L plastic vessel that leaves no mistake this is not a consumable product, the team at Never Never had a bit of fun with the name of their hand sanitiser for the consumer market. Containing by-products from their gin distillation, that give it a great botanical aroma of juniper and pepper berry, this sanny leaves your hands feeling fresh!

### Patient Wolf & Wolf of the Willows Malted Juniper Scented Hand Sanitiser (Melbourne)

This collaborative project between Patient Wolf and Wolf of the Willows resulted in a juniper and malt scented hand sanitiser bottled in the familiar Patient Wolf glass and artisan label. A subtle aroma and silky texture leaves your hands feeling fresh!

### Prohibition Liquor Co. Hand Sanitiser (Adelaide)

During the extended isolation period I purchased a couple of bottles of gin from PLC and the free hand sanitiser in a small bottle and spray top lid was a lovely touch. One or two sprays and the subtle fragrance from juniper and botanicals leaves a smile on your face and your hands feeling fresh!

### Dusty Barrel’s Eye on Community

When the Australian Taxation Office rang in early April asking if fledgling craft distillery, Dusty Barrel had the capacity to produce hand sanitiser, Nick and Michelle Hope didn’t take too long to think it over before saying yes. This small business located in Macclesfield, Victoria – home to the Puff and Billy steam train and gateway to the beautiful Yarra Valley

is founded on a sense of community and here was an opportunity to contribute when it was needed most.

“We got into it pretty quickly for two reasons, healthcare and other essential services needed the product, but we also saw an opportunity to cultivate community relationships and get our brand noticed,” said Nick.

It wasn’t an easy operation but with help from the ATO, Yarra Ranges Council and other local businesses, Nick was able to produce Dusty Barrel Distillery Hand Sanitiser and secure contracts with local schools and businesses, it is also available to purchase online.

Dusty Barrel aims to produce unique handcrafted spirits from locally sourced fruit and grains. Nick is confident that the connections made through this unexpected side venture into hand sanitiser can only benefit them in the long run.

“By buying and employing locally, we will reduce our carbon footprint and support the local community for the long term,” said Nick.

COVID-19 has had a profound impact on Dusty Barrel’s strategic plan however with the help of their Founder’s Members and goodwill generated from their hand sanitiser, Nick and Michelle are confident of getting back on track and producing locally sourced schnapps, gin, vodka and whisky very soon.

Dusty Barrel Founder’s Memberships are available [here](#).



# Thriving in the age of Coronavirus

Urban Alley Brewery quickly pivoted to producing hand sanitiser, a business decision that has proved a big winner with this locally made product able to compete with imported competitors



When the Urban Alley Brewery and Brewpub were forced to close, owner Dean Grant had a decision to make, would he go quietly into the night or fight to keep his staff employed?

For Dean, the choice was easy, they must fight.

After initially making his craft beer available online for delivery, Dean recognised that alone wouldn’t be enough, so he and the team reached into the ideas bank and came up with hand sanitiser.

The concept was sound but there were challenges in making it a reality, particularly as sourcing ingredients and packaging was at a premium.

“I talked to my head brewer and we came up with a formula, but you could not buy ingredients. We decided to use our own hop oil, but we still had to source ethanol. And then I found you couldn’t

buy bottles, caps or pumps. With everything shut down, it was nearly impossible.” Dean told Commbank for their COVID-19 case study series.

“I called in every favour I’d racked up in 32 years in the industry.”

“We built a website, created a brand and worked 15-hour days for 21 days straight. The whole thing nearly fell over three times a day, every day, but we kept solving each problem as it came up.”

Dean had a relationship with Alepat Taylor where he had been producing vodka for the last 17 years. They helped with sourcing ethanol and were able to slot Urban Alley into their production run to get the product packaged.

“We had no logistics. Semitrailers full of sanitiser showed up at the pub so we had to clear all the furniture to fit it in. All the balls were in the air. But

failure was not an option, so we kept going.”

Urban Alley liquid hand sanitiser was first in what quickly became a crowded market followed by a gel product and later pump packs, commercial sized bottles and Urban Armour touchless sanitation stations manufactured locally in Melbourne..

The gamble paid off with Dean and his team pumping out 135,000 units a week from two factories, creating 100 new jobs across the supply chain, at a time when jobs were being lost by the day.

“I’ve never had a business turn over \$2 million in its first four weeks before!”

Where other companies answered the call for a minimum amount of time during the crisis, Urban Alley’s foray into the hand sanitiser market is likely to continue with supermarket deals and government orders ensuring its longevity.

**135,000 units a week from two factories, creating 100 new jobs across the supply chain**

“We’ve managed to reduce our COGS (cost of goods sold) to the point that it’s a really good business. We’re getting it to the point where our locally made product can compete with imported products.”

# Notus Emergency Invasive Ventilator Program



## Grey Innovation announced as consortium leaders of the Victorian based initiative

In early April, Grey Innovation were announced as the consortium leaders of the Victorian-based notus Emergency Invasive Ventilator Program. The Victorian Government declared a grant of \$500,000 to be dedicated to the feasibility phase of the project, as well as validation of the intent to order 2,000 ventilators to be built in Victoria. At the time of the media release, Grey Innovation executive chairman Jefferson Harcourt commented:

*“Victoria’s high concentration of engineering and manufacturing companies means we’re well placed to develop the ventilators quickly, and Grey Innovation is proud to be leading the effort.”*

Grey Innovation has been established for over 20 years and operates as a leading technology commercialisation and engineering company, specialising in Intellectual Property. As such, they secured the applicable licence to build the ventilator in Victoria from a global manufacturer. Following the announcement on April 9th, several additional members of the consortium have been announced, including renowned Bosch



Australia & New Zealand. Bosch managed to secure \$1million to manufacture the test equipment to be applied to the new ventilators.

Regarding the consortium announcement, Federal Minister for Industry, Science and Technology Karen Andrews declared “This deal demonstrates the power of bringing Aussie manufacturers and clinicians together and is also a reflection of the highly advanced manufacturing capability that exists in our country.”



## ANCA joins the program with their primary involvement is based on developing complex parts assemblies and components for the ventilators

In late April, ANCA CNC Machines were announced as joining the industry consortium for the notus Emergency Invasive Ventilator Program (led by Grey Innovation). Their involvement is largely based on developing complex parts assemblies and components for the ventilators. A Melbourne-based manufacturer for over 45 years, their advanced capabilities provided them the ability to pivot to produce parts for these ventilators.

“This is a global emergency and in my view it is incumbent on every individual in every organisation to do everything they can to help deal with it. And in the case of ANCA, we have capabilities that are a good match and it’s the right thing to do.” – ANCA Group CEO, Chris Hegarty.

To provide the most effective contribution to the consortium, a cross-functional team approach had been taken, involving departments such as project management, stores logistics

and supply chain. Furthermore, machinist staff had earnestly begun work on the project by the time of announcement, including shifts over weekends and the Easter long weekend.

As a general observer would appreciate, this case again highlights the importance that manufacturers have placed on responding to the COVID-19 crisis, as well as the ability of such businesses to develop high-quality parts & products locally in Australia.



# From motorsport to medical PPE

Erebus Motorsport developed two medical devices to assist healthcare workers to protect themselves, full face masks and a protective perspex box



The protective box can be placed over the patient's neck & chest, with two holes on the opposing end for medical staff to place their hands through. By the time of announcement, the 'e-Aerosol Box' was in-trial at multiple Melbourne hospitals, with production at 20 units per day.



“One of the riskiest times for a health care worker is when a patient is particularly unwell and needs to be intubated. Because these workers must be in very close proximity to the patient, this box can provide an additional physical barrier. Every emergency department or ICU has wall suction, so we modified the box, which can vacuum potential droplets away from the area.” – Supercars Medical Delegate, Dr Carl Le.

In an early case of pivoting to the COVID-19 crisis (March 29th), Erebus Motorsport had developed two medical devices to be used in the protection of healthcare workers: full face masks and a protective Perspex box intended to shield medical staff during intubation. The masks were designed using a 3D printer and were based on underwater snorkelling masks. A sports good supplier – Decathlon – had partnered with Erebus to manufacture the masks.

“Rather than developing something complicated, these cost-effective masks with a 3D printed adaptor and easily replaceable P2 filtration, can be mass produced and go straight away to health care workers on the front line – who are at high risk.” – Erebus Motorsport CEO, Barry Ryan.



# Lab & clinicians working together

BioFab3D designed and printed a face shield in less than a week for clinics and workers at St Vincent Hospital before making the design available as an open-source file



Click for SBS newstory on 3D masks

Eric Levi – a Specialist ENT, Head and Neck Surgeon based in Melbourne – identified an issue with standard face shields not allowing compatible use of ENT-preferred headlights.

Through a colleague, Eric was directed to BioFab3D, Australia's first robotics and biomedical engineering centre located within St. Vincent's Hospital Melbourne. Within less than a week, a reliable solution was developed with the BioFab3D

team that was not only simple, but reasonably priced. One of the major advantages of this custom face shield was the additional protection from airborne droplets in a medical setting, although a N95/surgical mask, gown and gloves would still be necessary for overall protection.

These shields have been primarily supplied to clinics at the St. Vincent Hospital. However, the BioFab3D frame design was provided as an open-source file and as a result, can be duplicated at a 3D printing facility around Australia or internationally. The Lab Manager at BioFab3D, Cathal O'Connell, had this to say on the collaborative initiative:



“Our main role being a fabrication lab based within a hospital is that we can try multiple designs with the clinicians themselves, get their approval, and then send out the approved design to the big 3D printing sites who can manufacture them in numbers of hundreds.”



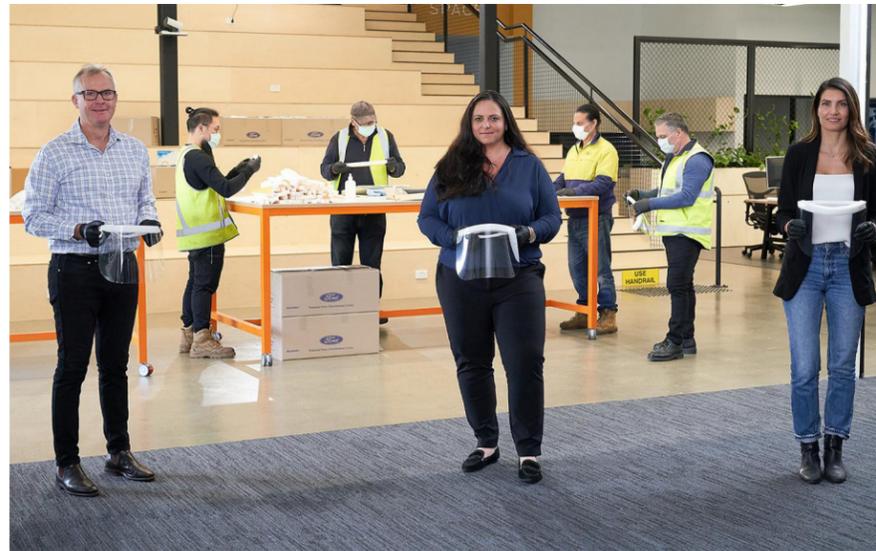
## Ford Australia Generosity

### Committed to donating 100,000 shields to frontline healthcare workers across Victoria

Towards the end of April, Ford Australia announced that they had been working with the state government and Melbourne medical professionals to develop a prototype face shield. They stated that they would donate up to 100,000 face shields for frontline healthcare workers across Victoria. The face shields are being manufactured from parts provided by local automotive suppliers.

“We said from the beginning of COVID-19 that any way we could help, we would help. Producing face shields is certainly something new for us, but our innovation team and engineers were able to test a number of different designs in hospitals.” – Kay Hart, Ford Australia.

One of the long-standing staff members at Ford Australia, Mark Mineo, commented that around 80 percent of those assembling the face shields had been former Ford car factory employees, in reference to the Ford vehicles that were manufactured at Broadmeadows until 2016. These assembly staff totalled around 50 in number whilst operating weekdays on eight-hour shifts. By the time of announcement, 54,000 face shields had been produced with a peak of 6,000 manufactured in a single day.



# Victorian Government reprioritises VPS missions



## A Crisis Council Cabinet and Victorian Public Service (VPS) reprioritisation around specific VPS missions are among the Victorian Government response to COVID-19. What does this mean for industry suppliers?



**By Deirdre Diamante, Director Mia Consulting Services**

Since declaring a State of Emergency on 16 March, the Victorian Government has mobilised and significantly ‘re-oriented’ as part of the government response to COVID-19. A Crisis Council of Cabinet has been formed and departments have reprioritised existing activities based on what essential services and programs need to continue, and what can be suspended until further notice.

The Federal Budget has been pushed back to October, which means the State Budget will also be deferred until then. Operating outside a published budget and reprioritising activities will create flux and uncertainty within the

Victorian public sector and to some of the businesses that support it.

### Crisis Council of Cabinet

The Crisis Council of Cabinet (CCC) is chaired by Premier Daniel Andrews to oversee the government response to COVID-19, with seven ministers sworn in to new COVID-19 portfolios on 3 April. The CCC is also the core decision-making body for the government for the period of emergency and will operate until 30 September 2020.

While the full Cabinet will continue to meet each week to manage the general business of government, these parallel CCC arrangements likely mean

that other Cabinet committees will be on hold or funnelled through to the CCC. This likely means that funding and/or other submissions will have to be developed with the consultation of the portfolio minister and a CCC minister.

### VPS missions

In April, the Victorian public service (VPS) pivoted to focus on eight missions that have successfully driven the government’s response to COVID-19. As the state now shifts from public health emergency response to active monitoring and recovery, the Premier has recently consolidated these VPS missions from eight to six (refer to table on page 19).





This next phase of the government's COVID-19 response has greater focus on public health resilience, economic recovery, the restoration of public services and new reform opportunities.

Associate Secretaries have been appointed to run government departments ('business as usual') to enable Departmental Secretaries to focus on the missions they are leading.

The missions broadly align with existing department portfolios and are led by one or more Departmental Secretaries reporting to the Premier and the CCC.

Importantly, the missions cross existing departmental boundaries and involve virtual teams and cross-portfolio collaboration. There are also two enabling

programs of work focused more broadly on the impact of the current social and economic restrictions, and the long-term risks and opportunities post-pandemic:

1. Behavioural change, social cohesion and communications, and
2. Critical risks and opportunities.

### What does this mean for suppliers?

The reorganisation of the public sector into eight – and now six – VPS missions means public servants are taking on new or additional roles, and departments are being mobilised to deliver cross-departmental outcomes. Many programs have been put on hold or deferred, while other planned procurements will be delayed to make way for expenditure on mission-related priorities.

However, government still needs and wants to engage

with businesses to help deliver its VPS missions and its BAU program. **Economic development and support of the business sector, including government's supply chain, continues to be a government priority.**

To effectively engage with government at this time, make sure you understand the VPS missions and how your product/service aligns with them. Find the right department and then the right person to engage. If you are unsure about BAU, for example works that have been advertised as an advanced tender notice, contact the relevant procurement unit within a department or departmental contact. Be mindful that the big departments, and those in the midst of responding to this emergency (for example DHHS, DET and DTF), may be reluctant to engage new businesses. To mitigate risk, and to ensure work will be delivered as quickly as possible, they may want to only engage with businesses they have worked with before.

If you are a new business that can support one of these missions, think about how you can meet with smaller government agencies or entities (for example a hospital, local government council, court), rather than the larger parent departments. However, even if your business has never been engaged with a department, and you have a solution that directly addresses a critical need, they may still want to hear from you.

Eight Missions	Evolved Six Missions	Government Department
1. Health Emergency	1. Public Health Resilience	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
2. Economic Emergency	2. Economic Management	Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF)
3. Continuity of Essential Services – People	3. Restoration and Reform of Essential Services	Department of Education (DE) Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS)
4. Continuity of Essential Services – Economic		Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Department of Transport (DT)
5. Economic Program Delivery, Supply, Logistics and Procurement	4. Economic Program Delivery, Supply, Logistics & Procurement	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)
6. Economic Recovery (Private Sector)	5. Economic Recovery and Growth	Treasury and Finance (DTF) Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)
7. Restoration of Public Services – People	6. Restoration and Reform of Public Services	Department of Education (DE) Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS)
8. Restoration of Public Services – Economic (Public Sector)		Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Department of Transport (DT)

# Victorian Government Response to COVID-19



## Support for Victorian businesses, economic stimulus and jobs

### 18 May 2020 The Victorian Government Announced Building Works: More Jobs for Victorians

The Victorian Government will get shovels in the ground and thousands of people back to work, building the projects that matter to Victoria – and creating the jobs that matter to Victorians.

As we face the biggest economic challenge in generations, and as industry and business find new and innovative ways to adapt, the Victorian Government is rolling up our sleeves and playing its part to drive new economic activity – and with it, creating thousands of new jobs across the state.

Last month, the \$1.7 billion Economic Survival Package was announced to help businesses through the worst of the coronavirus crisis – with tax refunds, grants for businesses and opportunities for workers to get back into jobs.

Today, the Government launched the first part of our Building Works package, which will provide \$2.7 billion towards shovel-ready projects – big and small – to get thousands of people back to work.

The package will create 3,700 direct jobs for construction

workers, painters, plasterers, gardeners, engineers, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, maintenance workers, administration staff and many others. Thousands more jobs will be created across our supply chains, including manufacturing, logistics, transportation, warehousing and retail – while also pumping extra dollars back into our economy.

At the centre of the Building Works package is \$1.18 billion in education infrastructure projects that will create space for more than 21,000 extra students in Victoria's education system and create more than 1,600 local

construction jobs. We are building ten new schools, delivering a further four stages of new school projects, upgrading or modernising 57 schools, purchasing and refurbishing relocatable school buildings, making modifications for students with disability, as well as carrying out fast and job-creating maintenance on schools and TAFEs across the state.

Beyond school infrastructure, Building Works includes hundreds of projects that have been selected because they can get underway as soon as possible, meaning shovels in the ground – and boots in the mud – within a matter of weeks and months.



The key requirement for these projects is workers who are ready to get on the job and the ability to get going right away, with companies required to find new employees through Working for Victoria in the first instance.

While creating solid jobs, these sometimes small projects will also mean the world to those who will benefit from them. Now, more than ever, 'home' means security, stability – and staying safe. It's why this package also includes a big boost for public and community housing, with half-a-billion dollars to upgrade 23,000 dwellings and build 168 new homes across the state, all while creating new jobs for Victorians.

Travel and other restrictions have hit Victoria's visitor economy hard. To help our tourism sector bounce back bigger and better than ever, the package includes \$382 million in upgrades, maintenance and new experiences at tourism destinations across the state. From delivering 50 kilometres of mountain bike trails in the Ararat Hills to upgrades at the Gippsland Lakes, this investment will be particularly vital in creating and sustaining jobs in regional Victoria. Funding is also included for local sports facility upgrades, work to improve our waterways and coastal areas, and revitalisation and maintenance projects from tree-planting to graffiti removal in communities across the state.

The transport network also gets a big boost, with \$328 million for resurfacing and patching roads, around 300 kilometres of regional track improvements, repairs at more than 15 train stations, more

maintenance on our trains and trams, and local pier upgrades along the coast, adding to Victoria's \$107 billion job-creating Big Build.

The Government will also invest more than \$100 million for the critical upgrades of CFA and SES stations, disability accommodation, mental health and aged care facilities across Victoria – ensuring that just as we're building our state, we're making it safer and fairer too. But we know this is just the start – as Victoria continues to recover from the coronavirus pandemic over the coming months, there will be hundreds more big and small jobs to do that require the planning now so they can get under way as fast as possible.

That's why the Government will also establish a \$180 million planning and acceleration fund, to keep the momentum going as we continue to build our recovery.

More information and updates can be found [here](#).



**The Victorian Government has provided \$500 million to the Working for Victoria initiative to help our community and contribute to Victoria's ability to respond to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.**

As part of this, a \$50-million Agriculture Workforce Plan will provide dedicated support for our agriculture, food processing and critical food supply chain businesses.

Working for Victoria is part of the Victorian Government's \$1.7 billion Economic Survival Package.

The Victorian Government has partnered with Sidekicker to support:

- Jobseekers to find work
- Jobseekers to access online training
- Employers to find workers fast, with the skills and experience they need.

Jobseekers must have Australian working rights to be eligible.

More information and updates can be found [here](#).



