

**Save Albert Park Inc. No. A0040971  
Media Release 22 March 2017**

**POLLIES' GRAND PRIX PERKS: \$1.5 million?**

**Another 'pollies' perk' is a potential scandal involving the F1 grand prix, taxpayer- funded corporate largesse, political donors as invitees and possible tax avoidance.**

Last year Premier Andrews hosted 362 guests at his lavish corporate suite in the Paddock Club at the grand prix - a 250% increase on his more *modest* guest list of 107 in 2015. Choosing a \$1.5 million, pole position suite in the Paddock Club apparently 'robbed' the Australian Grand Prix Corporation (AGPC) of that ticket revenue because they can't sell the suite on the open market. The AGPC may also have avoided a hefty GST tax on those tickets - because the Victorian Government chose to pay the \$1.5m through a back door "agreement".

The AGPC accounts for 2016 show a \$61m operating loss but the government paid them \$66m to cover this loss. The \$5m difference is not explained in the accounts, but in its FOI response to the cost of the corporate box, the AGPC said, "*To assist you, I note **the Victoria Suite is funded out of the overall Government Investment** (our emphasis) made by the Victorian Government in the Formula One Grand Prix each year in accordance with the Business Plan prepared by the Corporation.*" So it appears the government added another \$5m to the payment for the loss incurred by the AGPC last year, avoiding GST as it received the tickets for 'free'.

Ticket prices for all corporate boxes are published on the AGPC website. The most likely tickets the premier would hand out are the Saturday/Sunday tickets, so we used that \$3,995 ticket price rather than the more expensive four-day tickets because virtually nobody goes on the Thursday/Friday sessions, or as the celebs would say, "the nobodies go on those days."

The FOI response removed the names of the 362 attendees except for parliamentarians, but does reveal company names and department names. Politicians who enjoyed the high octane, taxpayer-funded entertainment are listed below\*. Forty-six public servants also enjoyed the largesse, as well as unnamed people from the Victorian Major Events Company, another government body disbanded later that year. Crown Casino and the Australian Hotels Association attended. They are also political party donors who benefit from the grand prix subsidies while getting access to the premier at our expense.

**Given these apparent conflicts and the overall secrecy and propaganda associated with the grand prix, Premier Andrews needs to fully disclose the *actual* cost to taxpayers, and who he is inviting and why. His government is devious and deceptive if it tries to tell us this is all 'free', when a billion dollars have been given to the GP in cash and hidden subsidies under poor or non- existent disclosure practices.**

Contact Save Albert Park: Media, Peter Logan 0412697074 or President Peter Goad 96997932

\* Politicians attending the premier's box in 2016: Premier Andrews, ALP ministers Dalidakis, D'Ambrosio (sic), Eren, Herbert, Pakula, Pallas and Pulford, as well as ALP parliamentarians Steve Dimopoulos, Josh Bull, Paul Edbrooke, Danielle Green and Ros Spence.