Media Release

The Hon Philip Dalidakis MLC
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Acting Minister for Tourism and Major Events
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VICTORIA
State Government

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MELBOURNE LAUNCHES WORLD-CLASS FREE WI-FI NETWORK

Victoria has cemented its reputation as Australia's tech leader with the launch of the country's largest and fastest free Wi-Fi network across Melbourne's CBD today.

Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade Philip Dalidakis joined City of Melbourne's Chief Digital Officer Michelle Fitzgerald at Southern Cross Station to announce the first of many Wi-Fi access points to be rolled-out across Melbourne as part of the Andrews Labor Government's $11 million Victorian Free Wi-Fi Pilot.

From today, visitors can use the *VicFreeWiFi* service within all Melbourne CBD train stations, the Bourke St Mall, Queen Victoria Market, and South Wharf Promenade at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

More access points will be switched on over the coming months, with the full network to be up and running by the end of the year.

A free Wi-Fi pilot has been running successfully in Bendigo and Ballarat since December 2015 and has recorded one million sessions in the two regional cities during the nine months it's been operational.

Once the Melbourne network is complete, the *VicFreeWiFi* service will be the largest free public Wi-Fi network of its kind in Australia, covering an area of 600,000 square metres across the three cities.

Running for five years, the project is managed by telecommunications company TPG, allows for up to 250 MB per device, per day – and does not require personal logins or feature pop-up advertising.

The quality of the network is unparalleled in Australia and on par with world-class free public Wi-Fi networks in New York, London and San Francisco.

The advanced infrastructure will also be available for piloting future connected city projects and for state and federal disaster response in the event of an emergency over the five-year pilot.

The service comes as Melbourne is expected to welcome thousands of excited footy fans ahead of the AFL Grand Final long weekend which starts tomorrow.

An interactive map of the active access points available for public use is at vic.gov.au/wifi.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade Philip Dalidakis

"This is just another reason why Victoria is the country's home of innovation and technology – we really do have the best of everything, not only in Melbourne but our regional cities as well."

"Whether visitors are coming into town to go shopping, eat in Melbourne's famous laneways or head to the AFL Grand Final this long weekend, they'll all be able to access and enjoy the fastest free Wi-Fi in the country."