



## PIRELLI AND VETTEL SET FASTEST EVER LAP OF MELBOURNE

Melbourne, March, 26<sup>th</sup> 2011 - With a lap time of 1m23.529s after his debut qualifying session on Pirelli PZero tyres, Red Bull's reigning World Champion Sebastian Vettel set the fastest lap that has ever been seen in the 15-year history of the Australian Grand Prix at Melbourne. The German driver also eclipsed his own pole time of 1m23.919s from last year by more than four-tenths of a second.

Like the rest of the top 10, Vettel set his fastest time on the soft-compound PZero tyres at Albert Park, denoted by yellow Pirelli markings. Lewis Hamilton will start from second on the grid in the McLaren, ahead of Mark Webber (Red Bull) and Jenson Button (McLaren).

Vettel was quickest during every qualifying session. The Red Bull driver clinched pole position by eight-tenths of a second, underlining the performance of the soft-compound PZero covers.

Most drivers opted to use the PZero hard-compound rubber at the start of the session, which has been nominated as the prime tyre in Australia, but all moved onto soft tyres in order to set their fastest laps. These tyres are designed to provide peak performance for a comparatively short period of time, proving so far to be around 0.9 seconds quicker than the hard compound.

Pirelli's Motorsport Director Paul Hembery commented: "We've had a thrilling qualifying session and set the quickest lap ever seen here, which has demonstrated the speed and reliability of our PZero tyres on a wide variety of front-running cars. Albert Park is well-known as a tricky circuit that does not retain a lot of rubber, but despite the comparatively cool conditions this afternoon all the drivers demonstrated that they were able to make the most of the unique characteristics and excellent performance of our tyres. Now we can look forward to an exciting race tomorrow, in which the weather is bound to play a vital role."

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