



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## **MID-AUTUMN LANTERN FESTIVAL**

**Monday 17 September, 2018**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

**Boys and girls.**

We want to welcome you all here to Government House this afternoon.

It is important for me to start by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of this land where we gather – the Aboriginal people, who have lived here and cared for the land for many thousands of years.

I'd like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to any Elders who are with us this afternoon.

In Victoria, we are so lucky to live in a multicultural community, and to share that aboriginal history and culture, along with the special ceremonies and occasions of so many different nations and cultures.

Today is one such special occasion.

The Mid-Autumn Festival is celebrated in China and other East Asian countries, such as Singapore and Vietnam. The celebration dates back more than 3,000 years.

Families gather to pay homage to the full moon, a symbol of peace and prosperity, abundance, harmony, and luck. And to mark the end of the harvest for farmers.

In honour of the full moon, the traditional food for the celebration are moon cakes. Shortly, you'll be able to sample this treat.

Traditionally, the moon cakes are made with salty egg yolks, stuffed in paste made from lotus seeds or beans, but today, moon cakes come in all shapes and sizes with different ingredients.

Also by tradition, children carry lanterns as part of the festivities.

A long time ago now, my husband and I lived in Hong Kong for three years. One of my favourite times of year was the Mid-Autumn Festival, when the children paraded around in the evening with their enchanting lanterns.

It was a magical sight. Thousands of colourful paper lanterns. Some simple in shape. Some more elaborate, in the shape of dragons, rabbits or flowers. All lit up by candles.

You may have celebrated the Mid-Autumn Lantern Festival many times with your family, or this may be your first experience of the beauty of a flock of colourful lanterns at dusk.

As young Victorians, you are very lucky to be able to enjoy and learn so many different things because of the diversity around you.

Victoria is greater and stronger because of all of the different cultures and traditions that are celebrated in our State today.

We hope you enjoy learning about the Mid-Autumn Festival, and making lanterns in the company of other students from across Victoria. We look forward to seeing you enjoy the process, and then to watching you parade in this beautiful setting.