



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## **WORLD FEDERATION OF ENGINEERS CONVENTION AND ENGINEERS AUSTRALIA CENTENARY**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019**

**The Honourable Trish White**, President and **Ms Bronwyn Evans**, CEO, Engineers Australia

**Dr Marlene Kanga AM**, President, World Federation Engineering Organisation

**Dr Collette Burke**, Victoria's Chief Engineer

**International visitors**

**Distinguished guests**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this evening.

Tony and I welcome you to Government House for the dual celebration of the World Federation of Engineers Convention and the Centenary of Engineers Australia.

Let me start with the centenary, by offering a warm congratulations to Engineers Australia. In the modern history of Australia, 100 years is a substantial period, worthy of acknowledgement.

Engineering has a proud history in this country.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, gold mining techniques in Ballarat created a leading centre for engineering manufacturing.

Since then, our grandest successes have been overseen by or benefitted from the input of engineers, whether in the design in the 1890s of Melbourne's sewerage system, much of which is still in use today, or in more recent decades, the development of the black box flight recorder or the cochlear hearing implant.

Of course, innovative practices on this country started long before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Millennia before. Australia's most recently declared UNESCO site, Budj Bim, is testament to that.

Located in the traditional Country of the Gunditjmara people in south-west Victoria, Budj Bim features one of the world's oldest and most extensive aquaculture systems, with a complex network of channels, weirs and dams to trap, store and harvest short-finned eel. The highly productive system provided an economic and social base for Gunditjmara society for six millennia.

Today, amongst its many other services to members and to the broader community, we can be grateful to Engineers Australia for raising the profile of, and inspiring our next generation to study engineering.

The need for engineers is brought home to us in Victoria right now.

First, a combination of our huge population growth and the fastest growing economy in the country, has led to an unprecedented infrastructure program.

Secondly, our State has been named as one of world's most rapidly growing start-up and innovation centres. Here, as elsewhere, technology, innovation and Industry 4.0 will be central to sustained economic growth.

Quite simply, we recognise that engineers are key to our future prosperity.

May I say how delighted we are to host this World Federation Convention of Engineers in Melbourne.

Welcome to all our guests from overseas, as well as those from other parts of Australia.

As the Convention is now nearing its end, we hope that you have been able to enjoy a little leisure time in this beautiful city, or at least been able to hold some of your discussions in the parks that ring our city, or the cafes, bars or restaurants.

And, perhaps some of you will now be free to travel a little further afield to see some of our countryside – and wineries!

I sincerely hope that your discussions here have been productive. We all stand to profit from this 'Olympics of Engineering', which has gathered some of the world's brightest engineers, to discuss what engineering will look like – or should best look like – in a Sustainable World.

I do like the breadth of vision you have brought to the concept of sustainability, which you have explored from a variety of angles, including ethics and social responsibility.

Thank you to the World Federation of Engineering Organisations for co-hosting this year's Convention, in particular to your President, Dr Marlene Kanga AM, who worked tirelessly to secure the Convention here in Melbourne. I understand that Dr Kanga will conclude her time as President this Sunday. I am sure that the Convention has been a fitting end to her term.

And a special welcome to incoming President Gong Ke, from China. Congratulations and best of luck in this important role.

Thank you also to Engineers Australia, particularly your President the Honourable Trish White and other Board members to the CEO Dr Bronwyn Evans, for all of the work you do to promote Engineering in Australia, and for your contribution to this year's Convention.

And we must not forget the hardworking staff and volunteers. Thank you for your time and dedication.

May I just add, as an aside, something that stood out to me when I first became aware of this event. It was that as well as the Australian group celebrating 100 years, it has 100,000 members. At the same time, the World Federation has members from 100 countries, and indeed the World Federation itself has just recently celebrated its own half century.

It struck me as just so 'decimal'. So symmetrical. So engineering!!

Finally, thank you to the world's more than 30 million engineers.

And please, enjoy yourselves this evening.