



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

**QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 2021 AUSTRALIAN HONOURS INVESTITURES
November/December 2021**

Distinguished guests

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are gathering, and I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Elders of other communities who may be with us today.

Tony and I are delighted to welcome each one of you to Government House Victoria.

We have yearned to be able to gather in person again, and it has been our priority to acknowledge the work of some of our finest Victorians, with the Investiture of Australian Honours.

As a group, you – our Honours recipients – represent different parts of our State, different sectors and different disciplines and backgrounds.

Many of you were born into this lucky country, and have contributed your ingenuity and hard work to ensure that its many bounties are extended to more of your fellow Australians, and often further afield.

Some of you came to Australia, either in hardship, or having given up much, in the hope of new opportunities for yourselves and your families. Or like me, your parent or parents made that long voyage. By your special efforts, you have enriched your family's adopted country.

The past 18 months or so have been trying. There have been moments that have tested us – both as a State and as individuals.

However, as I look at you, and I reflect on the citations that we have heard here today, I feel optimistic.

I know that the success of our nation, and of our State, lies in our people.

Indeed, this recognition is as old as democracy itself, Plato having imagined individual citizens as akin to the brains, limbs and organs of the State, contributing to its life overall.

Each one of you, in your different ways, has shown the power of the individual to contribute to the life of our State. To make our community better and stronger.

Today gives us the chance to recognise you. To show our gratitude. To say *Thank You*.

It is important that we do that.

You inspire us and you will inspire others.

For these important reasons, I ask several things of you today.

First, please do wear your award pins. Wear them often. Wear them proudly. It is not an act of boastfulness in any way.

To the contrary. It will help to start conversations. Importantly, it will inspire others to emulate you. It will also encourage them to nominate other worthy people.

Our awards system is at its best when it is able to recognise the full diversity of our State and nation. We depend on a breadth of nominations to achieve that.

My second request of you is this.

Although I have no doubt that you will have had much support around you and around the work for which you are being recognised – and many of your best supporters are likely to be here with you – I ask you to accept that today is all about you.

I urge you not to feel shy or embarrassed about that.

Please take the time, while you are here at Government House, to reflect proudly on this recognition of all that you have done for Australia, and how – in the words of Victoria’s State motto – you have contributed to our *Peace and Prosperity*.

Finally, we hope that everyone enjoys this occasion.