



## Australian Government

### Chief Scientist

#### STATEMENT

19 January 2016

In a few days' time my service as Australia's seventh Chief Scientist will come to an end. I am to be succeeded by Dr Alan Finkel. I wish him and the Office of the Chief Scientist every success.

Indeed, I wish the scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians of Australia, in fact of the world, every success as they strive to understand our planet and to make it better for all its inhabitants.

We know it isn't easy. We know there are those who want only to be told what they want to hear. When they aren't, they simply denigrate and disparage and dream up conspiracies.

I can only say to scientists: don't flinch. Do your work; do it according to the trusted methods of ethical science and talk regularly to the public. Encourage the public to walk with you and learn with you. Their support, and the weight and quality of evidence, must always trump make-believe.

There is no other path to the future that I believe Australians want than to put science at the core of everything we do – a future of rising living standards, good jobs for those who seek them, healthy communities to enjoy and wondrous places to explore.

Nor is there any prospect of growing the pie, or sharing it fairly, without an education system that prepares all children to be part of a world that relies substantially on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

It wasn't and isn't a question of just doing the same things differently. It means doing different things, too. The future demands more of us than fiddling at the edges with the policy prescriptions we've tried before.

It means a focus on STEM – learning, researching and applying. It means seeking national solutions, implemented across government, reaching across industries all pursued with the understanding and support of all Australians. It means working hard for what we want, rather than presuming that 'she'll be right' because it has been.

The Australian Government's National Innovation and Science Agenda is, as I have said, an important step in the right direction. If it is implemented in the spirit the Prime Minister has called for – as a living document to be evaluated, adapted and extended – it can make an important difference.

There's a different and better Australia to make; and we can do it if we have the passion, patience and persistence.

Ian Chubb

**Background:** Professor Chubb has been Australia's Chief Scientist for almost five years. He commenced in the role on 23 May 2011 and completes his appointment this week on 22 January 2016.

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