



**RICHARD MARLES
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE
MEMBER FOR CORIO**

PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDS OF SCIENCE BREAKFAST

WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2018

**PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA**

*****CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*****

Well, thank you, Karen, and can I start by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and thank Kylie for all the work that you do in making the parliamentary friends possible.

This is actually the first gathering of parliamentary friends since Karen has become the Minister for Science. When we first started this seven years ago, it was, as Karen said, out of a shared passion for science, and it wasn't really about politics. It was about trying to make sure that we could do what we could to raise the science literacy of this building, and in that time I've watched Karen from being a humble backbencher at that moment rising through the ranks to a point now where she is Australia's Minister for Science. Karen is a really fantastic human being and that is a wonderful achievement for you and I'm absolutely marking it up as an achievement for the parliamentary friends, so congratulations to Karen.

We're about to hear from Andrew White, Dr Andrew White, who in his bio professes an interest in shrimp eyes, nuclear physics and the weirdness of all things quantum, so anyone who is interested in that is completely compelling and I can't wait to hear from you, and we're then going to hear from Professor Michelle Simmons.

How lucky are we as a nation to have you as our Australian of the Year? We are so lucky, and you have been doing such a wonderful job. We're lucky because it is just great to hear somebody who holds that position in our country say that she has a love of physics. It is great to hear it said with that passion.

It is great to hear somebody who has a love of physics making a decision that she is going to pursue her physics here, in this nation, in Australia. It's fantastic as the father of a Year 8 girl who says to me that she loves maths to have a woman scientist there as a role model so I can say to Bella that if you continue with your love of maths, who knows? You might one day be the Australian of the Year.

And most of all, and it's the topic of this morning's breakfast, it's fantastic, as Kylie said, you put it perfectly, Kylie: this is the most exciting work which is being done anywhere – anywhere – in the world, and it's being done here in Australia at UNSW.

Michelle, a few months ago tried to explain to me quantum computing. I have a vague idea in my mind based on that explanation. You're all going to get the explanation in a moment, but what it does in terms of putting Australia on the forefront of a breakthrough technology which will lead into breakthroughs in artificial intelligence and the like has the potential to place us really on the cutting edge of science where we can actually stand up genuinely and say we do punch above our weight in the global world of science.

We are really, really lucky to have you here. We are really lucky to have you as our Australian of the Year, and thank you all for joining us this morning.

[ENDS]

Authorised by Noah Carroll, ALP, Canberra.