**2018 VPS GRADS SCHEME WELCOME EVENT**

**Elizabeth Langdon  
VPSC A/Commissioner   
Master of Ceremonies**

Wednesday 22 November 2017

Treasury Theatre

Hello, welcome everyone. I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where we are gathered this evening - the Warundjeri people of the Kulin Nation – and pay my respects to their elders, past and present, and extend that respect to any Aboriginal persons here today.

I’m Elizabeth Langdon, the acting Victorian Public Sector Commissioner. Welcome to our special guests and thanks for being here.

To start our celebration, I would personally like to congratulate and welcome the 35th cohort of the Victorian Public Service Graduate Recruitment and Development Scheme, or, GRADS as we know it.

The recruitment and selection process for GRADS is rigorous, and you are a group who has already demonstrated talent and potential.

This will stand you in good stead for the year ahead.

I think it was Arnold Schwarzenegger who said ‘you can’t climb the ladder of success with your hands in your pocket.’

Your year ahead will be an exciting one, and I encourage you to get involved, keeping this reference in mind along with a couple of guiding concepts.

One is public value.

Public value is essentially the value an organisation contributes to society.

You will work for three different public sector organisations in the next year, and tuning in to the public value those organisations strive for, should provide you with focus for the projects you work on. It’s good to get into the habit to ask yourself:

How can this work best contribute to something substantively valuable?

Does this work align with government priorities? *Is this operationally and administratively feasible?*

Any slight doubt, or pause in your mind should be a trigger for you to rethink your approach and consult with your colleagues.

The Commission’s, who has brought all here tonight, role is strengthening the efficiency, effectiveness and capability of the public sector, and an advocate for public sector professionalism and integrity.

We do this in a lot of ways, and one of those is to issue and monitor the Public Sector Code of Conduct which demonstrates the core behaviours of the ever changing public sector and brings me to my second concept for you.

The code is built on the values of the sector

* Responsiveness
* Integrity
* Impartiality
* Accountability
* Respect
* Human rights
* Leadership

Our values form a part of everything we do. Public service is a never-ending collaboration with colleagues across a number of departments and agencies, as well as with the wider Victorian community.

We treat each other with respect and we seek guidance and support from our colleagues when we need it.

We celebrate our achievements together.

As professional public servants we are dedicated and open to continuous learning and development throughout our careers.

It’s important for you to gain a breadth of experience. Seek opportunities to work in other departments and agencies, the broader public sector, other jurisdictions and the private sector when you see them.

Always look for chances to stretch yourself in different roles. These opportunities, challenges and experiences will be of benefit to you and also make you a better public servant.

In your first year, you will undertake a number of developmental modules to give you the best start to your career.

They range from Ethics, (a passion of mine) Public Policy and Project Management. Together, they allow us to make certain you have the fundamental skills needed to succeed in your career within the public service.

In addition to this, having the opportunity to work across various departments will also provide you with significant insights into how government works from a range of different portfolios and perspectives.

These initiatives are unique to GRADS, to give you a significant head start in a rewarding career as a Victorian public servant.

Before I welcome Chris Eccles the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, I would like to share another piece with you as you undertake your GRADS placements.

Firstly, Be as open as you can be. Its challenging to rotate into three different workplaces in one year, but you will learn as much from any complex rotation as you will the fun ones. Try new things, extend your knowledge and use your mentors.

This year, is as much about finding out what you don’t want to do as it is about finding out what you do.

Secondly, seek out and take feedback. It’s not always easy, but you will find the GRADS support network are there for you to get the most out of this year.

Feedback gives you insight into how other people view your strengths and your development needs, and that really is valuable. Your biggest risk isn’t failing; it’s getting too comfortable.

Now,

I’d like to introduce you to Chris Eccles, who is the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

As Secretary of DPC, Chris leads the Victorian public service in advising the Premier and the Government of Victoria.

Previously, he was Director-General of the New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Chief Executive of the South Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Chris…

***\*\*\*KEYNOTE SPEECH: CHRIS ECCLES\*\*\****

Thanks, Chris.

Now, I’d like to introduce one of our 2017 graduates, PrachiSamir who is now working at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

***\*\*\*GRADUATE SPEECH\*\*\****

Thanks, Prachi

Our next speaker is a Victoria Police home graduate who entered GRADS through the Aboriginal Pathway. Please welcome Jordyn Flagg.

Thanks, Jordyn.

***\*\*\*ABORIGINAL PATHWAY SPEECH\*\*\****

Thanks, Jordyn.

We now have our final speaker for the evening, Miles Hutchison.

Miles previously completed GRADS in 2014 and is now the

President of the Graduate Recruit Alumni Society – or GRAS as you may see around. Miles.

***\*\*\*GRAS Alumni SPEECH\*\*\****

***CONCLUDING REMARKS***

Thanks, Miles.

Before we conclude the formal part of the evening, your GRADS Coordinator, who is the person working with the Commission to deliver this program in your department, is here to celebrate and get to know you better tonight.

On your name tags there is a colour to correspond with your new department or agency, so it’s now time to get to know your colleagues using these colours.

In a few months from now, you will have a rich of network across the public service who will be a part of your career for years to come.

We look forward to catching up with you when the program begins in 2018.

Until then, have a great summer and festive season, stay safe, and see you next year.

Thanks for being here, everyone.