



**THE
ROYAL SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

ENRICHING LIVES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SINCE 1821

1293rd ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 5 MAY 2021 AT 6.30PM

By ZOOM Webinar

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85851863840>

AGENDA

1. **WELCOME** – President, Dr Susan Pond AM FRSN
 - 1.1 **Acknowledgement of country**
 - 1.2 **Diversity and Inclusion statement**
 - 1.3 **Minutes of the 1292nd Ordinary General Meeting held on 7 April 2021**

2. **CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

As no valid objection was lodged within two weeks following the 1292nd Ordinary General Meeting, the election of the following new Fellows and Members took effect from the date of that meeting held on 7 April.

2.1 **Members and Associate Members**

Members

Mr Andrew Buttfield
Mrs Josephine Buttfield

3. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 **Fellows**

If no valid objection is lodged within two weeks of this Ordinary General Meeting, that is, by 6.30pm on 19 May 2021, the election of new Fellows will take effect from the date of this meeting.

Professor John Willian Oman Ballard
Ms Frances Bodkin
Dr Jennifer Buckingham
Professor Catharine Siobhan Coleborne
Professor Judith Margaret Dawes
Professor Ofer Gal
Professor Jennifer Mary Gore
Professor Gordon Clifford Grigg
Professor Janet Elizabeth Nelson
Ms Anne Maria Nicholson
Dr Samantha Richelle Oakes
Professor Laura Poole-Warren
Professor Simon Peter Ringer
Dr Jackie Leach Scully
Professor Mark Gerard Stewart
Dr Laurence Patrick George Wakelin
Associate Professor Qilin Wang
Emeritus Professor Ian William Webster

3.2 Members

Mr Philip Bailey
Mr Jordan Gacutan
Mr Brian Spilsbury

4 REPORT FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

The President will provide a verbal report on the meeting of the Executive Committee which is scheduled to be held on 28 April 2021.

4.1 Warren Prize

Council has resolved that the Warren Prize for 2020 be awarded to Dr Simon John Devitt, Lecturer at the Centre for Quantum Software and Information (QSI) at the University of Technology Sydney.

5 QUESTIONS

There were questions asked by some members during the Council election process. These will be addressed at the meeting.

Other questions can be sent to the President in advance, to president@royalsoc.com.au

6 THIS EVENING'S PRESENTATION

BIG, BAD FIRES IN NSW

Emerita Professor Mary O'Kane AC FRSN FTSE Hon FIEAust Chair, NSW Independent Planning Commission

Mary O'Kane is Chair of the NSW Independent Planning Commission. She was NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer from 2008-2018; Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide from 1996-2001 and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at Adelaide from 1994-1996.

Professor O'Kane has served on several boards and committees in the public and private sectors, especially related to energy, engineering, ICT and research. She is currently Chair of the boards of Aurora Energy Pty Ltd and Sydney Health Partners. She also carries out reviews in a wide range of fields in many countries. She recently was one of the two leaders of NSW Bushfire Inquiry.

She is the recipient of the 2021 Royal Society of New South Wales Medal.

As noted in the NSW Bushfire Inquiry, "The 2019-20 bush fire season was extreme, and extremely unusual. It showed us bush fires through forested regions on a scale that we have not seen in Australia in recorded history, and fire behaviour that took even experienced firefighters by surprise. The total tally of fire-generated thunderstorms in south-eastern Australia since the early 1980s increased from 60 at the end of 2018-19 to almost 90 at the end of the 2019-20 bush fire season – an increase of almost 50% in one bush fire season. Fire-generated thunderstorms are extremely dangerous phenomena that produce extreme winds, lightning, tornadoes and black hail.

The season showed us what damage megafires can do, and how dangerous they can be for communities and firefighters. And it is clear that we should expect fire seasons like 2019-20, or potentially worse, to happen again."

Professor O'Kane will examine the nature of the 2019-20 bushfires, why they were so extreme, and why they are likely to happen again.

6 VOTE OF THANKS AND CLOSE