



PRESS RELEASE

APPOINTMENT OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has approved my recommendation to appoint General Peter Cosgrove AC MC as Australia's next Governor-General.

He will be Australia's 26th Governor-General.

General Cosgrove is a remarkable Australian who served with distinction until his retirement as the Chief of the Defence Force in 2005.

A former Australian of the Year, General Cosgrove has dedicated his life to serving and supporting the Australian community.

His army service included postings in Malaysia, Vietnam, the UK, India and the USA. In 1999, he commanded the international force that secured peace and oversaw East Timor's transition to independence.

His compassion and commitment to service was displayed during his time as chairman of the recovery taskforce that helped rebuild shattered communities following Cyclone Larry in Far North Queensland.

I can't think of a finer Australian or a more suitable one to serve as Governor-General and, in this great office, make a contribution to the leadership of our country.

As representative of the Crown, the Governor-General's task is to provide leadership beyond politics.

The Governor-General has important constitutional responsibilities, is looked to by community groups and their members throughout the length and breadth of our country for support and encouragement, and – in Sir Zelman Cowen's words – can help to interpret our nation to itself.

The usually-behind-the-scenes role of the Crown, in Bagehot's phrase, is "to be consulted, to encourage and to warn".

General Cosgrove will carry out his duties as the Queen's Representative in Australia with vigour and integrity.

He will take up his appointment in March when Her Excellency the Honourable Quentin Bryce's term ends.

I thank the Governor-General for the contribution she has made since her appointment in 2008 and wish her and Mr Bryce well for the future.

Ms Bryce has discharged her duties as Governor-General with distinction and grace.

Along with previous incumbents, she will remain a highly regarded national figure.

I congratulate General Cosgrove on his appointment. Along with wife Lynne who partners with him in this role, he has the best wishes of all Australians as he shoulders these new responsibilities.

General Peter Cosgrove, AC MC

General Peter Cosgrove retired as Chief of the Defence Force in 2005 after a distinguished military career.

Throughout his career in the army he served in Malaysia, Vietnam, the UK, India and the USA. He became a national figure following his appointment in 1999 as Commander of the International Forces East Timor (Interfet) which oversaw East Timor's transition to independence.

In 2000 he was appointed Chief of the Army. In 2002 he was appointed Chief of the Defence Force, an appointment he held until his retirement in 2005. General Cosgrove was appointed Chairman of Operation Recovery Task Force after Cyclone Larry devastated Far North Queensland and he led the successful recovery until completion in early 2007.

In recognition of his service, General Cosgrove was named Australian of the Year in 2001.

General Cosgrove held positions on several boards including the boards of Qantas and Cardno which he has relinquished upon accepting the offer to become Governor-General.

He is married to Lynne and has three sons.

28 January 2014