



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Defence**

## **DEFENCE SPEECH**

Thursday, 11 March 2010

### **2009 Minister's Achievement Award for Defence Science**

**Senate Alcove, Parliament House, 11 March 2010**

#### **Check against delivery**

**THE HON. GREG COMBET AM MP, MINISTER FOR DEFENCE  
PERSONNEL, MATERIEL AND SCIENCE:**

Ambassador Bleich, Professor Clark, Dr Sare, Dr Harch, ladies and gentlemen:

I join the Chief Defence Scientist in welcoming you here today for the presentation of the 2009 Minister's Award for Achievement in Defence Science.

This is the first time I am presenting this award and I am delighted to do so.

The Minister's award is presented annually in recognition of the outstanding contribution to Australia's defence capability by a DSTO scientist.

It is an award that recognises the innovative application of science that supports the defence of Australia and its national interests.

This year's recipient represents excellence in the application of research to support Defence – both here in Australia and internationally.

He represents dedication and strong leadership in developing a world-recognised capability.

He also represents vision in nurturing industry capability.

Please join me in congratulating the recipient of the 2009 Achievement Award – Dr Gordon Frazer.

Dr Frazer's award is an acknowledgement by the Government of his internationally recognised expertise and inspirational leadership in advancing both Australian and Allied capabilities in Over the Horizon Radar, or O-T-H-R.

Australia's work on OTHR is internationally recognised, and our home-grown



Jindalee system is a significant scientific triumph. But more than that, it is a critical “enabler”.

It gives the ADF the ability to maintain wide area surveillance across Australia’s northern and north western approaches and to respond purposively to air and surface targets inside an arc of around 3,000 km extending from Geraldton to Cairns.

As all of you here this morning know – and understand – far better than I, JORN has had its ups and downs as a project.

In other circumstances, it might have been easy to admit defeat, succumbing to the combined influence of cost pressures and technological limitations. But, as I have come to appreciate more and more as the responsible Minister, “defeat” does not appear in DSTO’s operational lexicon.

The vision of your early scientists over half a century ago has been matched by the perseverance and endurance of their successors. And this is more than backed up by the dour tradition of the Scots – to which, one might reasonably assume, a Frazer belongs.

This is a heritage that transplanted itself to New Zealand, and its export to Australia in the person of Dr Gordon Frazer has been to the Defence benefit of both countries.

The combined efforts of your physicists, engineers and mathematicians in developing the analytical algorithms that are at the heart of JORN’s success reflect both world class scientific capacities within DSTO and a world class scientific achievement.

But perhaps JORN’s most enduring contribution to Australia’s defence is yet to come. As DSTO, in collaboration with its traditional partners in the US, the UK, Canada and New Zealand, makes further strides in the development of long-range radar systems, its scientific depth could provide Australia and its allies with long-term defence in depth. This, perhaps, is where Dr Frazer’s legacy will be most valued into the future.

But Dr Frazer’s personal accomplishments have already made a direct and substantial contribution to the defence of Australia.

He has directly and significantly influenced both the technical excellence and the strategic capability improvement programs of both Australia and the United States.

He has led an Australian industry development and transition program, which has placed Australian industry at the global forefront of OTHR sub-system and system design.

His personal leadership in designing transition strategies in collaboration with both the operational and acquisition communities has resulted in an ability to transition



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scientific advances from research into operational systems at a rate that is unprecedented in almost any project, let alone one involving billion-dollar, highly complex, strategic radar systems.

Dr Frazer's personal and sustained contribution has been instrumental in assuring that Australia remains the world leader in operational OTHR capability.

This is particularly important as the Government identified last year "High Frequency and Phased Array Radars" as a Priority Industry Capability.

A PIC is a capability that confers an essential strategic advantage by being available from within Australia. Furthermore, if the capability is not available, it would significantly undermine defence self reliance and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) operational capability.

This is relevant for today because the heart of the PIC is the ongoing development and support of the indigenously developed world leading capabilities embodied in the Jindalee Operational Radar Network (JORN).

These capabilities are important as they are indigenously developed with world leading algorithms and intellectual property, providing very effective capabilities. And Dr Frazer's work is important in supporting this.

Dr Frazer, for your scientific excellence, long-term contributions to Australia's world-leading OTHR capabilities, leadership and vision, I ask you to come forward and receive the 2009 Minister's Award for Achievement in Defence Science.

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