Academic Board
Report of the Vice-Chancellor

1. Senior Staffing Appointments

I am pleased to report formally the following senior appointments.

1.1 Dean, Faculty of Law and Management

Professor Leigh Drake, currently Dean of Nottingham University Business School, will take up the position of Dean of the Faculty of Law and Management on 1 November 2010.

Professor Drake's research interests include: monetary economics and monetary policy; the efficiency, performance and governance of financial institutions, including banks, insurance companies and the housing and mortgage market; risk analysis and management, and capital adequacy.

He also has wide practical experience in business policy sectors, having served in advisory and consultancy roles for the UK Government, including the Treasury and the Home Office, the World Bank, and Britain's Building Societies Association.

Professor Carol Adams has agreed to continue as Acting Dean of the Faculty until Professor Drake's arrival, and I wish to record my appreciation of the leadership which she has demonstrated in this role.

1.2 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Sustainability)

Professor Carol Adams has been appointed as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Sustainability), the first such appointment in Australia. She will oversee the University's commitment to embed sustainable practices into all aspects of University life: operations, curriculum, teaching, learning, research and policy, and will also hold the position of Director, Institute of Social and Environmental Sustainability.

In 2009, Professor Adams chaired the La Trobe University Sustainability Taskforce which established principles and structures for managing sustainability which were incorporated into the University's 2010 Operational Plan. She is on the Boards of the Asia Pacific Academy of Business in Society and the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative founded by the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) and the UN Global Compact. She was an Advisory Group member of the IFC (a member of the World Bank Group) and GRI (the Global Reporting Initiative) joint global project to promote Gender and Sustainability Reporting. She is a former Board Director and Council Member of AccountAbility, a key global sustainability assurance standard setting body. She is a leading international researcher in the field of sustainability reporting and performance management.

1.3 New Professoriate

- Professor Teresa Iacono, Professor of Rural and Regional Allied Health (from Monash University) ;
- Professor Isabelle Ellis, Professor of Rural and Regional Nursing (University of Western Australia);
- Professor Jane Farmer, Associate Dean Regional and Head, La Trobe Rural Health School (University of Aberdeen, UK);
- Professor Phoebe Chen, Professor of Computer Science and Computer Engineering (Deakin University);
- Professor Chris Mackie, foundation Professorial Director of the Research Centre for Greek Studies (The University of Melbourne);
- Professor Norie Neumark, Professor of Media Studies (University of Technology, Sydney);
- Professor Danielle Conway, Professor of Law (University of Hawaii, USA);
- Professor Paula Baron, Professor of Common Law (Griffith University);
- Professor Richard Tay, Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Law and Management (University of Calgary, Canada);
- Professor Ken McPhail, Professor of Accounting (Glasgow University, UK);
- Professor Joanna Poyago-Theotoky, Professor of Applied Economics (Loughborough University, UK);
- Professor Roger Douglas, Chair in Law (Reader in Law, La Trobe University);
- Professor Tim Marjoribanks, Professor of Management (The University of Melbourne).

2. Sector Issues

2.1 Federal Election: Higher Education

Whilst neither the Government nor the Coalition have yet released formal Higher Education policy statements in the lead-up to the election on 21 August 2010, the Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, the Hon Simon Crean MP, has indicated that universities would be a key second-term priority for the Government and that the ALP would again move to changing the law to allow universities to charge students compulsory fees for sporting facilities, childcare and other amenities. In a public speech delivered on 2 August 2010, Mr Crean said: "By 2012, we are going to take the cap off the number of students that universities can enrol. We will fund all of the places that are sought."

Meanwhile the Opposition has not ruled out an increase in HECS fees or the re-introduction of domestic full-fee-paying places.

I have continued to hold meetings with Members of Parliament (State and Federal), local councillors and key Government departmental officials to seek support for the University's strategic priorities.

In doing so, I have highlighted key projects which we need to implement in order to help achieve fundamental objectives of Federal and State Government policy and of the University's new Strategic Plan 2010-2015, emphasising that La Trobe University is committed to providing a quality higher education opportunity in northern

metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. The University has the largest number of low SES and regional students of any Victorian university and, with a key focus on increased low SES participation, we are committed to growing undergraduate domestic enrolments by 30% by 2015.

2.2 State Government Blueprint for Regional and Rural Victoria

On 15 June 2010, the Premier of Victoria, the Hon John Brumby MP, launched the Victorian Government's $631 million blueprint for regional and rural Victoria. The University very much welcomed the $103.6 million Tertiary Education Opportunities package within this blueprint which included the following measures:

- Tertiary Education Infrastructure Fund: $75 million, dedicated through the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund, to improve and build new TAFE and university infrastructure, including student residential accommodation;
- Regional Tertiary Education Partnerships: $9 million to encourage universities and TAFEs to work together to deliver more tertiary courses in more regional locations through new models of collaboration between education providers;
- $7.1 million to improve transport from smaller rural communities to universities and TAFEs;
- Young Professionals Provincial Cadetships: $12.5 million to help support 1,500 regional students undertake a work-based cadetship in regional Victoria, in a field related to their study, during the semester break.

2.3 State Government Discussion Paper: Youth Transitions System

In May 2010 the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development together with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development released a discussion paper - *Stronger futures for all young Victorians: discussion paper on the youth transitions system* - which articulated:

- the strengths of the Victorian education system;
- the challenges faced by the system;
- proposed ways forward;
- a number of key questions.

The Victorian Government's objective is to ensure that all young people acquire the knowledge and skills to make a successful transition from compulsory schooling to independent adult working life. It is looking for ways to ensure that the education sectors work effectively together and in partnership with employers and the community to support all young people through their chosen pathway to a rewarding career.

In its response to this discussion paper, the University has strongly supported the focus on increasing the number of students making a successful transition from secondary school to higher education, particularly those from low SES, regional and rural backgrounds: this is very much in accordance with the University's commitment to providing a quality higher education opportunity in northern metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

The University has also supported the development of regional education plans in collaboration with industry and community members, funded by the Government, which would assist schools to connect with the world of work. Such plans would also contribute to ensuring that course provision and skill development in secondary and tertiary education was relevant to local needs, particularly in regional Victoria.

3. Mildura Social Justice Forum

On 20-21 July 2010 I participated, along with a number of other members of the University, in a forum held at the Mildura Campus, the objective of which was to identify ways of improving educational outcomes in the Mallee region in view of the current incomplete schooling and low take-up rates for further education within that region arising from youth disengagement.

The forum was a joint initiative of the Victorian Department of Justice, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Mallee Family Care, Mildura Rural City Council and the University.

I outlined a number of measures which the University is implementing in order to attract and retain increased numbers of undergraduate students at the Mildura Campus, such as the introduction of new courses (including programs in Speech Pathology, Podiatry and Physiotherapy), enhanced TAFE pathway and articulation arrangements, and school partnerships.

The establishment of projects with schools is particularly important and the University has thus recently appointed two new School Partnership Co-ordinators and completed a series of school partnerships at all campuses, including Mildura. Enrichment and engagement programs in schools to raise students' aspirations to continue their education beyond Year 12 are being progressively introduced, and will include mentoring, tutoring, transition programs, leadership, and work experience placements.

There was general acceptance at the conclusion of the forum that local government, as well as relevant agencies (including the University), had a role to play in meeting educational needs, and it was agreed to work towards a twelve month model aimed at employing a project worker to help co-ordinate resources and program delivery.

4. Research

4.1 Australian Research Council Linkage Projects

La Trobe was very successful in the Round 2 ARC Linkage Projects 2010 announced on 22 June 2010. Of the eleven proposals submitted, La Trobe had six projects funded, totalling more than $1.4 million. This represents more than double the corresponding total funding last year. The success rate of 55% puts La Trobe among the top ten institutions nationally and second in Victoria in this Round.

La Trobe's research strengths are also well represented in the results, including Human Communication, Studies of the Past, Health and Society and Agribioscience and the Environment.

4.2 Rail Crossing Safety Technology

The La Trobe Centre for Technology Infusion is developing technology designed to have cars and trains 'talking' to each other, potentially saving an average of 37 lives every year and an estimated 100 million dollars by eliminating rail crossing collisions, especially in rural and regional Australia.

The La Trobe Centre for Technology Infusion, which has an international reputation for leading-edge R&D in micro-technology, nano-electronics, wireless systems and sensors, is engaged in a $4 million project in partnership with the Australian Automotive Co-operative Research Centre, the Victorian Department of Transport and Queensland University of Technology.

The project was formally launched at the University's Melbourne Campus by the Victorian Minister for Roads and Ports, the Hon Tim Pallas MP, on 23 July 2010.

5. Citations for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning 2010

The Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) has recently awarded 2010 Citations for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning to the following members of La Trobe University:

- Professor Richard Broome, School of Historical and European Studies: *For an understanding and sustained contribution to developing students' capacities for critical inquiry, cultural diversity and environmental sustainability through the research and teaching nexus;*

- Associate Professor Ishaq Bhatti, School of Economics and Finance: *For the development of curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field of Islamic Banking and Finance and Business Statistics and Quantitative Methods Subjects*;

- First Year Biology Learning and Teaching Group (Group Leader: Ms Tania Blanksby) School of Molecular Sciences: *For leadership of curriculum reform in biology through a broad-base, grass roots community of practice.*

The ALTC, established by the Federal Government in August 2004 to provide a national focus for the enhancement of learning and teaching in higher education, presents awards to both academic and professional staff who have demonstrated sustained dedication to improving the quality of the student learning experience.

6. Order of Australia Awards

I am very pleased to advise that the following members of the University community were recognised for their achievements and contributions to society in the Queen's Birthday Order of Australia Awards:

- Professor Joseph Camilleri OAM (Director, Centre for Dialogue): for service to international relations as a scholar, educator and commentator, and to the community.
- Dr Zissis Dardalis OAM (honorary Doctorate of Letters): for service to the Australian-Greek community, particularly through charitable contributions to a range of education, health care and sporting organisations.

- Professor Robert Anderssen OAM (honorary Doctorate of Science): for service to the mathematical and information sciences.
- Mr Robert Fuhrmann PSM (alumnus): for outstanding public service to public sector financial management reform in Victoria.
- Ms Judith Mitchell AM (alumna): for service to humanitarian aid through leadership roles with Oxfam, particularly the development of improved governance and accountability standards.
- Ms Elizabeth Proust AO (alumna): for distinguished service to public administration and to business, through leadership roles in government and private enterprise, as a mentor to women, and to the community through contributions to arts, charitable and educational bodies.
- Mr Mark Robertson OAM (alumnus): for service to the community through executive roles with charitable organisations.
- Ms Pauline Rockman OAM (alumna): for service to the community, particularly through the Jewish Holocaust Centre.
- Ms Joanne Wainer AM (alumna): for service to the community as an academic and researcher in the area of women's reproductive health rights, and through leadership roles promoting women in medicine, particularly in rural and remote areas.
- Ms Regina Perton OAM (alumna): for service to administrative law and to the community, particularly in the areas of equal opportunity and multiculturalism.

7. Accolades

7.1 Dr Caroline Walta (Faculty of Education)

Dr Caroline Walta of the Centre for Regional Education, based at the Shepparton Campus, has been awarded the Australian Teacher Education Association's "Teacher Educator of the Year Award".

7.2 Professor Marilyn Lake (History Program)

Professor Marilyn Lake has recently been elected as President of the Australian Historical Association, the premier national organisation of historians, academic, professional and others working in all fields of history.

7.3 Dr Stefan Auer (Modern European History and Politics)

The University has become the third Australian university to be awarded the European Union's prestigious Jean Monnet Chair for high-level education and research about Europe with a Chair to be held for three years by Dr Stefan Auer.

Professor Paul Johnson
Vice-Chancellor

6 August 2010