Acting Head of School - Prof. Martijn de Sterke will be Acting Head of School during my absence overseas from 23 August - 10 September 2010.

Laureate Success - I’m sure you will all join me in congratulating ARC Federation Fellow Prof. Bryan Gaensler who has been awarded an ARC Laureate Fellowship from 2011. Bryan’s research proposes to dramatically improve our understanding of the nature and origin of magnetic fields using the unique capabilities of the Australian Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder (ASKAP). With the resulting data, he aims to transform our understanding of magnetic fields in galaxies, clusters and in diffuse intergalactic gas, and thus be able to address key unanswered questions on Milky Way ecology, galaxy evolution and cosmology.

Promotion Success - Congratulations to CUDOS researchers - Drs. Christelle Monat, Christian Grillet, Mark Pelusi who have all been promoted to academic Level C in the recent promotion round. It is well deserved and recognition of their excellent research work in CUDOS and IPOS and their contribution to the School.

Eureka Finalists - Four School of Physics physicists were nominated for Eurekas prizes at this week’s awards ceremony. A/Prof. David Moss was a finalist in the 'Innovation in Computer Science' category and the Integrated Sustainability Analysis Research Group (ISA) - Professor Manfred Lenzen, Dr Chris Dey and Dr Joy Murray were finalists in the category of ‘Innovative Solutions to Climate Change’. For further details: eureka.australianmuseum.net.au/enter.

Grant Success - Dr. Mike Biercuk has been awarded $1.8M over 3 years from the United States National Security Agency and Army Research Office to fund research on precision quantum control and error-suppressing quantum firmware for robust quantum computing. It will be a collaboration between Sydney, Harvard, and Dartmouth. Congratulations Mike.

Mike will also be taking part in an ABC Science discussion panel on nanotechnology and its impact on the items we use in our daily lives such as clothes, electronics, packaging, sunscreens and cosmetics. It will be hosted by Dr Paul Willis from ABC TV's Catalyst at 6pm on Saturday 21 August at Tilley’s Devine Café in Canberra. To book tel: 6247 7753.

Recognition - ARC Federation Fellow Prof. Ben Eggleton has been asked to attend the 'The Lights and Shadows of Science and Technology' organised by the Science and Technology in Society forum and The New York Academy of Sciences in Kyoto, Japan from October 3-5, 2010. Ben was the only scientist chosen to represent Asia and Australia at this year’s forum.


Nobel Prize Winner Talk - Prof. William Philips, 1997 Nobel Laureate for Physics and quantum physicist gave a lecture organised very successfully by the School of Physics as part of Sydney Ideas on Wednesday 4 August in the Seymour Centre. Mike Biercuk, Alison Muir and Nathan Apps are acknowledged for making it such a successful event. All the feedback from amongst the 500 people in the audience indicates that it was thought to be a fantastic success with both the Dean of Science and the DVC-Research also enjoying a wonderful evening. We hope to be able to put on future events with other Nobel Laureates.

Powerhouse Talk - Dr Phil Dooley will be giving an Australian Institute of Physics NSW Branch Public Talk at 6pm on Monday 23 August 2010. The title of Phil's talk is "The 2010 Einstein Lecture – Quantum Physics: Einstein’s Unruly Child". For further details: http://www.nsw.aip.org.au/.
Open Day - The University of Sydney Open Day is on Saturday 28 August 2010. Staff are encouraged to support this activity by helping out in the booth to talk to year 12 students and their families about studying Physics. To assist with this important outreach activity see Phil Dooley or Lara Davis.

New Physics Building / AIN - There has been progress regarding the new Physics building and the Australian Institute of Nanoscience. At a recent meeting, attended by the Head of School, Dean of Science, DVC (Research) and DVC (Office of Vice Chancellor) and the Director of Campus Infrastructure Services (CIS) amongst others, it was agreed that the Dean of Science will be the ‘client’ for the AIN project and chair of the project Executive Steering Committee (ESC) which will meet monthly. The membership of the ESC will comprise the Dean (Chair), the Head of School, the Director of CIS, a representative from Finance (DoF nominee), a representative from Education (DVC-E nominee) and another Head of School. The Project User Group (PUG), chaired by the Head of School, will be responsible for specifying the building and will report to the ESC, as will the Project Control Group and the Finance Control Group. The PUG will have a number of specialist working groups reporting to it including the Research Group chaired by Dr. Chris Walsh and the Teaching Group chaired by A/Prof John O'Byrne. The terms of reference of these groups have been approved and membership is currently being established. Individuals from within the School who wish to serve on these groups should indicate their interest to the chairs of the relevant group. An updated business case for the AIN project is being developed for consideration by Senate to approve funding of co-investment of the project. The plan is to table it at the next Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) meeting and the Building and Estates Committee (BEC); both committees of the Senate. Chris Walsh is being employed specifically 2 days per week to work on aspects of the AIN project and is currently updating the business case. As has been highlighted on a number of occasions, space in the School is under enormous pressure and it is essential that we ensure the best utilisation of our space, particularly as we plan for our new building. We are nearing the completion of the School's internal space audit. Some members of staff and students have yet to complete the individual on-line survey regarding space utilising as previously requested. It is essential individuals do this asap if not yet completed and it should only take a few minutes. This information will contribute to ongoing discussions with the Dean and CIS to identify suitable space to accommodate future growth of the School and for decanting from A29.

Council Room - The Science Foundation for Physics Council room is nearing the completion of a comprehensive refurbishment. Final touches are being added including a new audio visual and video conferencing system and new display cabinets which will facilitate a more comprehensive display of some of the School's collection of period scientific instruments.

Occupational Health and Safety - The attention of all staff is drawn to the latest update of the University’s Occupational Health and Safety Policy. This very important Policy outlines the guidelines and procedures to be followed by staff in order to provide a safe and healthy environment and experience to anybody who works, studies or visits our workplaces. Please familiarise yourself with the updated Policy: http://www.usyd.edu.au/hr/policydev/ohs_policy.pdf.

University Policy on Harassment and Discrimination - ALL School staff are required to attend one of the organised sessions on the University Policy on Harassment and Discrimination as mandated by the University. As part of the implementation of the new University Policy on Harassment and Discrimination, the University is arranging for training on promoting a positive workplace and preventing and dealing with harassment and discrimination. This training is to be undertaken by ALL University staff. The training for staff in the Faculty of Science will be facilitated by the Staff and Student Equal Opportunity Unit and provided by an external, high quality trainer. It is expected that all contract, long term casuals and permanent staff at all levels, both academic and general, will participate in the training at some time during this semester. The training sessions are usually three hours in duration. Each School is required to ensure that their staff attend a session as mandated by the University. If you have any questions please contact Sutira Teh ext 12685.

Go8 European Fellowships – The Group of Eight (Go8) Universities has opened applications for its 2011 European Fellowships. The Fellowships are open to early career researchers from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Croatia. Each fellow will receive benefits worth $20,000 to travel to Australia in 2011 and work at a Go8 university for up to six months. For further details:
STEM - The inaugural international conference of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in Education is being held at QUT on 26th and 27th November 2010. For further details: http://stemconference.com.au/

School Party - The School of Physics party planned for Friday 20 August 2010 to celebrate our many recent successes has been postponed until further notice.