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PRIME MINISTER

CHIEF SCIENTIST

I am very pleased to announce that Dr John Stocker, former Chief Executive of CSIRO, has been appointed the new Chief Scientist and Chairman of the Australian Science, Technology and Engineering Council (ATSEC).

Science and technology underpin much of Australia's economic and social development and it is essential that our considerable national investment in new knowledge is based on sound and well-considered advice.

The position of Chief Scientist, or its equivalent, is one which the governments of many advanced nations have found useful in dealing with the complexities of modern science and technology.

Dr Stocker will provide advice on issues to which science and technology are relevant. He will assist the Government in ensuring that public investment in science and technology is directed in accordance with national priorities.

By combining the positions of Chief Scientist and ASTEC Chairman, the Government will strengthen its sources of policy advice and ensure that the work of ASTEC continues to be directed to issues of the highest national importance.

Dr Stocker will play an important role in bringing issues to the Prime Minister's Science and Engineering Council (PMSEC). The Council provides a forum for the Prime Minister and other senior Ministers to discuss issues of national importance with key figures in science and technology, business and the general community.

The Government thanks the former Chief Scientist, Professor Michael Pitman, for his services over the past four years. Since the election, Professor Pitman's advice has been particularly helpful to the Minister for Science and Technology. Professor Pitman also served the previous government with distinction.

22 November 1996

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