**Notes of the Innovation Luncheon**

**hosted by**

**Australian Centre for Innovation**

**Faculty of Engineering**

**University of Sydney**

**Friday 10 September 2010**

Innovation has largely faded from political and governmental consciousness, even though surveys of business leaders show that effective promotion and management of innovation in all dimensions of their activities remains one of their greatest challenges.

From a national and State perspective, there is a need for greater focus on areas where we can lead the world (“smart specialisation”) and clarity about appropriate respective roles for governments, business, universities and research organisations.

Large companies operating in Australia have to operate with an awareness of global outsourcing strategies, and the drive towards predictability and risk minimisation – “getting today’s agenda solved is the enemy of innovation”.

CEOs profess the importance of innovation but have no idea how to go about it - most large companies innovate by buying small innovative companies. If evolutionary innovation is a normal part of how companies work, there is limited risk which can be managed by a series of checks and balances – “innovation is not inherently risky if the organisation is innovative”.

New opportunities for innovation are arising from the fallout of the GFC, China’s industrialisation and investment in R&D, etc.

Once the target is clear, innovation is largely a matter of getting the ‘best thinkers’ involved. There may be an opportunity for a ‘***brains trust service’*** that can deliver selected strategic thinkers to companies to assist in conceptualisation of potential innovations.

Another approach is the establishment of a real or virtual ‘***innovation space’*** eg Innovation Labs, Policy Labs, large system (hospital) transformation Labs. Experiments could be conducted by governments (NSW, Federal), large research organisations (CSIRO, NICTA), and large companies, facilitated by innovation specialists.

There is a need to institutionalise strategic innovation ‘conversations’ such as the one that occurred at this Innovation Luncheon.

**ACIIC Innovation Luncheon Participants**

**10 September 2010**

**Board**

1. Dr John Glastonbury – Chairman
2. Mr Peter Laver
3. Mr Peter North
4. Professor Ron Johnston (Executive Director)

**Members**

1. Professor Mike Dureau, Warren Centre
2. Dr John Bell, Allen Consulting
3. Mr Sandy Longworth
4. Don Scott-Kemmis (Australian Centre for Innovation & UTS)

**Guests**

1. Dr Peter Leihn, NSW Chief Scientist’s Office
2. Mr Stephen Mills , Chairman, Australian Business Foundation
3. Dr James Moody, CSIRO
4. Dr Alex Birrell, ATP Innovations
5. Dr Julie Glover - Dept of Innovation
6. Chris Vonwiller, Appen P/L
7. Alexander Gosling, Invetech & Capstone Partners
8. Dr John Best, THALES
9. Dr Aruna Seneviratne, NICTA