

## **HOM Speech**

### **G'Day by the Bay 2026**

#### **“The Road Ahead”**

**5 February 2026**

#### **Minister Grace Fu**

*Minister for Sustainability and the Environment, Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations*

#### **Ms Lee Hui Ying**

*Member of Parliament for Nee Soon GRC*

#### **Mr Gabriel Lam**

*Member of Parliament for Sembawang GRC*

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's my great pleasure to welcome you all tonight to G'Day By the Bay 2026, celebrating Australia's National Day, the upcoming Year of the Horse and, of course the launch of our upgraded Australia-Singapore Comprehensive Strategic Partnership – CSP 2.0.

Our theme this year, “The Road Ahead” speaks to the next 10 years framed by CSP 2.0 – and the journey both countries, both systems and peoples will take *together* in the context of our changing and increasingly uncertain world.

CSP 2.0 – launched by our Prime Ministers on 8 October last year - renews and enhances our shared commitment to joint action and collaboration across multiple fronts, building on our landmark first CSP, forged in 2015.

Today, in the face of international political and economic flux, it is ever more important.

From further enhanced defence and strategic engagement; to a new “Border of the Future”, making people and goods movement more seamless;

More deeply connecting our economies and collaborating on critical supply chains; Intensifying our energy partnership as we navigate the transition to net zero by 2050; And boosting our shared interests in science, tech and AI; While also stepping up further our people-to-people engagement across government, the arts, education and the community sector.

All these five action pillars are highlighted in the detailed agenda that creates the map for the Road Ahead to 2035.

The path forward is well marked; our directions are clear.

But at the same time, the global environment we confront is continuously marked by shifting endowments of power, influence and advantage.

We live in an era of global order transition and uncertainty is a constant.

So, trust and collaboration are essential to get things done;

And that's what marks out the Singapore-Australia partnership.

After the experience of the first CSP, we have seen a step change in the understanding of our common purpose, our engagement, and institutional and inter-personal trust.

That shared understanding is particularly evident across the portfolio of our Guest-of-Honour, Minister Grace Fu. Australia and Singapore have strong linkages in sustainability, the environment and are key partners in the green energy transition.

And when Minister Fu meets Minister Bowen during this year as we work further to progress the transition to net zero ahead of COP31, the partnership will grow stronger.

In the words of Prime Minister Wong recently, Singapore and Australia's relationship is "anchored in trust and allows us to chart new frontiers together".

That trust is our key shared asset and we are going to need to use it to the utmost as we navigate the road ahead.

Ladies and gentlemen, The Road Ahead is also a road of discovery and adventure.

It's a journey; – and in keeping with the spirit of the Year of the Horse in 2026, there is the joy in travel .

This coming year, we and our friends at Tourism Australia - who are one of supporting partners tonight - want particularly to encourage you all to “Come and Say G’day” by visiting us again in the great southern land.

Singapore has long been our largest source of visitors from Southeast Asia, and indeed the sixth largest globally – which is incredible when you consider the size of Singapore’s population.

Over 444,000 visitors came to Australia from Singapore last year, and there are over 260 flights per week between our two countries.

Of course, this has been achieved by exceptionally high rates of repeat visits – for which we are truly grateful -and encouraged by the sheer diversity of the experiences available across our continent.

Tonight, I invite you to experience *The Road Ahead* through a nostalgic journey around Australia. We’ve gone BIG literally this year – from the iconic Big Pineapple in Nambour, Queensland to the Big Prawn in Ballina, New South Wales.

Each state and territory is represented in the food and beverages you’ll enjoy this evening, giving you the chance to taste your way across Australia. We hope many of you can get on the road in 2026 and discover some of our country’s wild and beautiful places. And maybe even experience the atmosphere in the lands of wild – dare I say firey - horses.

Ladies and Gentlemen, tonight – as ever - would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors

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Thank you to all of you for your support this year and every year.

I also want to recognise again this year, the collaboration of Gino Tan and his team here at the Fullerton Hotel Group as we are again in this historic venue at Clifford Pier where so many Australians first set foot in Singapore in years gone by.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In closing, as we look ahead at the possibilities of the coming Horse Year, it is however, my sad duty to advise that I will be handing over the reins soon.

I will complete my assignment to Singapore in the coming months, and my wife Susila and I will return to Australia.

It has been a great honour for me to serve in Singapore at this post – the culmination of over a decade off and on in a forty year career working on Australia’s relations with Southeast Asia – to advance Australia’s relations with this most capable and effective country; a nation and people with whom there is so much we can do positively and pro-actively to advance our shared interests and shape our futures.

I am very pleased that much of this is embodied in CSP 2.0 and that I have played a part in setting this agenda. There is now much to do and it is for my successors to take that forward.

I shall dearly miss the regular access I now enjoy to my favourite people, places and foods in this unique country, but I know that before long I will back here in a personal or other capacities – such is the essentiality of Singapore.

But luckily here in Singapore, I have had the opportunity to do some pre-departure familiarization to reduce the culture shock – and in the region of the Sembawang GRC [visuals of High Commissioner at Canberra Plaza shown] too!

To all our partners in government, the business community, the diplomatic community, the community sector and beyond - my warmest thanks for your keen collaboration and positive engagement with us over the years. And to the team at the High Commission, members both past and present sincere thanks. It’s been invaluable.

Good evening to you all, Gong Xi Fa Cai,

Let’s hope we can all keep the reins well held in the Year of the Fire Horse.

I’d now like to invite Minister Grace Fu to the stage so we can raise a toast to the President and the People of Singapore.

Thank you.