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MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Water Association announces 2015 National Water Awards winners

14 May 2015

Innovative excellence, creative solutions and exceptional leadership are the consistent themes across the distinguished recipients of the 2015 National Water Awards presented last night.

Held in Adelaide, the Australian Water Association's prestigious 2015 National Water Awards ceremony paid tribute to the remarkable contributions made by water professionals and organisations from across Australia.

Australian Water Association Chief Executive, Jonathan McKeown, said the awards were the highest accolade the Association can bestow, and that the 2015 recipients were some of the leading individual and organisations in Australia who are ensuring a safe and sustainable water supply to build a prosperous Australia.

"The awards are an acknowledgement of the significant achievements and contributions that these water leaders have made. The recipients are widely respected by their peers nationally and internationally, and these awards give us the opportunity to reflect on their considerable body of work and the impact they have had on securing the water future for both Australia and overseas", Mr McKeown said.

ANZ are the National Water Awards sponsor and Managing Director Global Loans, Christina Tonkin, congratulated the recipients on this recognition.

"ANZ believes innovation is key to efficient and effective business and we are very pleased to sponsor the National Water Awards.

"The Awards showcase the great array of expertise and innovative technologies and solutions that not only secure Australia's water supply, but can also be used in neighbouring markets to build a safe and sustainable supply for all" Ms Tonkin said.

The 2015 National Water Awards recipients included:

Research Innovation Award

Research in Environmental Water, Climate Change, Urban Water and Water for Industry to Support State Government Decision Making, Goyder Institute for Water Research, South Australia

Established only four years ago the Goyder Institute has proven to be an effective collaboration. It has delivered substantial benefits in the areas of water research and policy. The Institute's research work underpinned the SA Government's successful negotiation of the Murray Darling Basin plan. This plan resulted in an additional \$1.7 billion in funding and an extra 450 gigalitres of water.

Program Innovation Award

Farm Water Program, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Victoria

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The Program provides co-investment opportunities for irrigators within Victoria's Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District to achieve farm water savings. This is achieved by modernising their on-farm irrigation infrastructure. To date the program has secured over \$200 million of investment to deliver over 100,000 megalitres of farm water savings. It provides benefits to irrigators, the regional economy and communities, water quality and salinity management, and most importantly, the environment.

Infrastructure Project Innovation Award

Burrendong Temperature Control Curtain, Water NSW, New South Wales

This innovative \$4 million project involved installation of a flexible, cylindrical curtain around the dam's intake tower and below the surface of the water. The curtain can be raised and lowered depending on the water level of the dam and downstream requirements. The resultant change in downstream river temperature is set to greatly enhance survival rates for native fish; improve river ecology; and boost recreation and tourism in towns along the river.

Water Safety Excellence Award (sponsored by WSAA)

Priority Sewerage Program Alliance, Sydney Water, MWH, John Holland Group, United Group Limited and RPS Manidis Roberts, New South Wales

The PSP Alliance set out to provide a safer and more efficient way of undertaking excavation. Manual handling injuries within construction are a major source of trauma, distress and lost productivity. This initiative aimed to remove the human element and exposure to manual handling risks. The resulting innovation achieved this by developing an engineer designed folding Roll Over Protection and remote control tracking excavator. This PSP initiative has the potential to benefit not only the water industry, but the construction industry as a whole.

Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize (sponsored by Xylem)

William Tsai, Queensland Academy for Health Sciences

William's investigation examined the effect of nitrate levels in effluent, discharged from various wastewater treatment plants into Queensland waterways. His study measured the effect on growth rate and heterocyst development of *Anabaena circinalis* in fresh water. William is now in his first year of a pre-medical degree at Griffith University and also hopes to contribute to the science community through environmental sustainability.

Undergraduate Water Prize

Matthew Makestas, Mark Bailey, Diana Bethune and Joshua Ware, University of Adelaide, South Australia

The group's fourth year honours project explores the significance of alternative water sources, specifically stormwater and treated wastewater which are currently underutilised resources. The water supply industry in South Australia is at a point where there is a need for formal design procedures and methodologies. This project successfully created a fast and flexible modelling platform which evaluated the performance of alternative regional water supply schemes.

Young Water Professional of the Year

Gabrielle McGill, Process Engineer – Water, GHD, New South Wales

Throughout her five years in the industry Gabrielle has displayed, not only that she is a high-performing and capable engineer, but she is also committed to the improvement of hygiene and sanitation for people less fortunate than her throughout the world. Gabrielle has also committed to being a fantastic role model for young aspiring engineers in the Water Industry.

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Water Professional of the Year

Peter Fagan, Business Development Executive - Asia Pacific Region, MWH, New South Wales

Peter has had a long career of dedicated service in both the public and private sectors of the water industry. Aside from his current role, he was General Manager, Environment Science and Technology for Australian Water Technologies for seven years and held overall responsibility for Research and Development for Sydney Water. Peter has been at the forefront of new ideas and approaches for water management. Peter's work has borne fruit within Australia and internationally and has led to long lasting increases in water use efficiencies and benefits to communities and environment.