

Media Release

EMBARGOED UNTIL WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2014

Victorian water professionals say water prices too low: State of the Water Sector Report 2014

15 October 2014: Despite significant water price rises in 2013-14 in Melbourne, the percentage of Victorian water professionals who considered water prices to be too high fell from 27% in 2013 to 20% in 2014, and 29% consider water prices to be a little or much too low.

These results come with the release of the 2014 State of the Water Sector Report launched today by the Australian Water Association and Deloitte at the National Water Policy Summit.

Chief Executive of the Australian Water Association, Jonathan McKeown, said the report was based on a survey of over 1000 professionals working across Australia's water industry, both urban and rural.

“The industry understands the true cost of water supply, so it is not a surprise that such a high percentage consider water prices too low in Victoria. It is now about communicating the real cost of water to the community, rather than governments augmenting regulatory processes to alleviate customer concern. The Victorian Government's 'Fairer Water Bills' initiative is an example of this, resulting in \$100 reductions in residential water bills in Melbourne in 2014-15,” said Mr McKeown. “

Deloitte Risk Services Partner and National Water Leader, Matt Williams, went on to say that although the Government had provided this reduction for Victorian consumers against the regulatory framework, Victorian water professionals held the effectiveness of economic regulation in the state in high regard.

“Victorian respondents' view of the effectiveness of economic regulation in the State increased from 55% in 2013 to 59% in 2014. Although high, this was the first time Victoria was not the highest of any jurisdiction. Respondents in both the ACT (63%) and NSW (61%) considered regulation to be more effective in 2014.

“It is very clear from these results that in jurisdictions where formal and well-established economic regulatory arrangements are in place - NSW, Victoria and the ACT - satisfaction was significantly higher”, said Mr Williams

The full Report is available at www.awa.asn.au/State_of_the_water_sector_report

Follow Deloitte on Twitter – @DeloitteNewsAU and @DeloitteER

Follow AWA on Twitter – @Australianwater

For further information:

Amanda White
National Manager – Communications and Policy
Australian Water Association
M: 0403 884 485
E: awhite@awa.asn.au

Simon Rushton
National Manager Corporate Affairs & Communication
Deloitte
M: 0450 530 748
E: srushton@deloitte.com.au

About the Australian Water Association

The Australian Water Association is Australia's leading membership association for water professionals and organisations. AWA is independent and not for profit. It plays an essential role in supporting the Australian water sector in the delivery of effective and sustainable water management practices. Our mission is to foster knowledge, understanding and advancement in sustainable water management – its science, practice and policy – through advocacy, collaboration and professional development. We operate across all Australian States and Territories through an active branch network as well as maintaining extensive international links, including with the International Water Association. AWA's provides a comprehensive program of conferences, workshops, publications, industry programs, training courses, networking and B2B opportunities. AWA's Annual Conference and Exhibition is Australia's largest water industry event.

About Deloitte

Deloitte refers to one or more of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, a UK private company limited by guarantee, and its network of member firms, each of which is a legally separate and independent entity. Please see www.deloitte.com/au/about for a detailed description of the legal structure of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited and its member firms.

Deloitte provides audit, tax, consulting, and financial advisory services to public and private clients spanning multiple industries. With a globally connected network of member firms in more than 150 countries, Deloitte brings world-class capabilities and high-quality service to clients, delivering the insights they need to address their most complex business challenges. Deloitte has in the region of 200,000 professionals, all committed to becoming the standard of excellence.

About Deloitte Australia

In Australia, the member firm is the Australian partnership of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu. As one of Australia's leading professional services firms, and winner of both the Australian Financial Review/CFO Audit Firm of the Year and Accounting Firm of the Year awards 2013, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu and its affiliates provide audit, tax, consulting, and financial advisory services through approximately 6,000 people across the country. Focused on the creation of value and growth, and known as an employer of choice for innovative human resources programs, we are dedicated to helping our clients and our people excel. For more information, please visit Deloitte's web site at www.deloitte.com.au