

Media Release

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WA water professionals concerned about climate change: State of the Water Sector Report 2014

15 October 2014: Western Australia's water professionals have highlighted their concern about the continuing impact of climate change in this year's *State of the Water Sector Report* released today by the Australian Water Association (AWA) and Deloitte.

Chief Executive of the Australian Water Association, Jonathan McKeown, said the report was based on a survey of professionals working across Australia's water industry, both urban and rural, and highlights that Australians cannot become complacent about the ongoing effects of climate change.

"The impact of climate change on the sustainable management of water has remained a serious issue for Western Australia, with 95% of respondents agreeing it will have either a significant (68%) or moderate (27%) impact on water. How the industry can respond to climate change is one of the key areas being looked at today at the AWA National Water Policy Summit.

"WA has been leading the way in researching and implementing new supply options for the state and thus it is no surprise that most respondents (77%) indicated there should be further diversification of water supply sources, a large increase of 20% from 2013, to alleviate climate change concerns.

"There is a strong confidence coming from WA professionals in the State's ability to respond to these challenges, as 73% of respondents indicated the industry is currently responding either very well (19%) or quite well (54%) to climate change", said Mr McKeown.

Deloitte Risk Services Partner and National Water Leader, Matt Williams, went on to say it is no surprise given WA's challenging conditions, that water professionals aren't overly concerned with local water prices, even though they are the highest in the country.

"Only 11% of respondents consider urban water prices are a little or much too high, a drop from 20% in 2013, and lower than the national average of 24%," he said.

"There is also still support for infrastructure investment and water buybacks in Western Australia – 53% (down 5%) of respondents indicated that a combination of these measures would be the most cost effective way of providing additional water to the environment."

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

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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.

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