

MEDIA RELEASE

Northern Territorians have low confidence in government's action on water

12 October 2016

The Australian Water Association and Arup have just released the Australian Water Outlook – the results of the Australian Water Survey which investigates attitudes to water issues among the Australian water industry and the wider community.

The survey attracted more than 2500 responses from the Australian community and the water sector, and the results make it clear Australians have major concerns about water shortages and water security.

Australian Water Association CEO Jonathan McKeown said: "Of all the States and Territories, Northern Territory was the least confident in governments across four key areas."

"Eighty-one percent of community respondents had little or no confidence that governments are working together to make the right decisions for Australia's water resources, while 71% were not very or not at all confident that governments are focused on water security as an important issue."

Additionally, industry respondents showed low confidence in the community's efforts to save water, while only 66% industry were confident in industry's ability to supply high quality water (89% nationally).

Northern Territory industry respondents had the least confidence that Australia has sufficient water security, with 5% completely confident, 24% mostly confident and 57% somewhat confident, compared to 4%, 42% and 38% nationally.

Arup's Australasian Water Leader Daniel Lambert said "Northern Territorians showed confidence in alternative sources of water in line with national levels; however more Northern Territory respondents had confidence in ground/bore water and dams and river for drinking and non-potable uses.

"While the Territory's wet season provides ample water for both ground/bore water and dams and rivers, it's important that local authorities look at alternative sources of water to ensure the long term water security of the Territory. The wet season is an important source of water now, but we cannot guarantee its reliability as environmental factors and population growth continue to have an impact," Mr Lambert said.

On average 35% of Territorian community respondents were extremely or very willing to pay more for alternative water sources, ranging from 27% for recycled water to 41% for dams and rivers.

Mr Lambert said the survey results provide insight into focus areas that the water industry and regulators could use to enhance the customer service, delivery and protection of water resources in each State and Territory.

“Water is a major driver of our nation’s life and prosperity, and the Australian community and its leaders can’t afford to be complacent about water security for urban, regional, rural or remote communities. A national conversation needs to be had around water security, and we hope the Australian Water Outlook will help call attention to this discussion,” Mr McKeown continued.

The Australian Water Outlook will be used to inform the Association’s Water Security Scorecard due for release in May at Ozwater’17 which will shine a light on water issues in each jurisdiction.

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The Australian Water Outlook can be found [here](#).

If you would like to arrange an interview with either Jonathan McKeown or Daniel Lambert please contact Ashleigh James on 0488 160 277.

About the Australian Water Association

The Australian Water Association is an independent, not-for-profit association for water professionals and organisations, providing leadership in the water sector through collaboration, advocacy and professional development. As Australia’s peak water industry body, the Australian Water Association has the largest broadly based membership, with approximately 700 corporate members and 5,000 individual members representing the diversity and breadth of the Australian water industry.

www.awa.asn.au

About Arup

Arup is the creative force at the heart of many of the world’s most prominent projects in the built environment and across industry. We offer a broad range of professional services that combine to make a real difference to our clients and the communities in which we work. We are truly global. From 90 offices in 35 countries our 13,000 planners, designers, engineers and consultants deliver innovative projects across the world with creativity and passion. Founded in 1946 with an enduring set of values, our unique trust ownership fosters a distinctive culture and an intellectual independence that encourages collaborative working. This is reflected in everything we do, allowing us to develop meaningful ideas, help shape agendas and deliver results that frequently surpass the expectations of our clients.

The people at Arup are driven to find a better way and to deliver better solutions for our clients.

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