

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW community worried about drought

7 October 2015: The Australian Water Association and Arup today released the 2015 Water Consumer Outlook, the results of a nation-wide survey to understand what consumers know and think about water in Australia.

The Chief Executive of the Australian Water Association, Jonathan McKeown, said the report was based on a survey of consumers, urban, regional and rural, and shows there is strong consumer interest and concern about key water issues which the water industry and governments must embrace.

Consumers right across Australia are concerned about water shortages, but concern was higher in New South Wales, with 80% of respondents stating they were concerned about shortages across the country and 63% in the State.

Australian Water Association Chief Executive, Jonathan McKeown, said that of any jurisdiction, New South Wales respondents were those most concerned about the impact of drought.

“77% of New South Wales respondents are concerned about the impact of drought on our supplies, and 65% are concerned about unconventional gas. Both of these are above the national averages.

Australian Water Association Chief Executive, Jonathan McKeown, said that although the majority of consumers felt the price for water was about right or too low, they did think that the costs could be better explained.

“At today’s National Water Policy Summit we are discussing opportunities for the industry and consumers to come together to campaign for water, as a key national asset and major economic driver, to be managed sustainably.

“The Survey gave us the opportunity to hear what Australians understand about our water security and supply, so as an industry we can better engage with consumers so that their priorities and views are heard,” Mr McKeown said.

Daniel Lambert, Arup’s Australasia Water and Urban Renewal Leader supports an increased customer focus, “The water industry in Australia has recognised the importance of shifting from a compliance focus to a customer focus. This commitment has been reflected in the utilities statements of obligation which acknowledge the importance of the customer.”

“In order to have a customer focus, it is critical for the water industry to understand their customers. The 2015 Water Consumer Outlook provides the results of a nation-wide survey. This report provides a valuable insight into customer’s views on important issues facing the water sector.” said Mr Lambert.

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About the Australian Water Association

The Australian Water Association is Australia's leading membership association for water professionals and organisations. The Association 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. The Australian Water Association provides a comprehensive program of conferences, workshops, publications, industry programs, training courses, networking and B2B opportunities. The Australian Water Association's Annual Conference and Exhibition, Ozwater, is Australia's largest water industry event.

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. From 90 offices in 38 countries our 11,000 planners, designers, engineers and consultants deliver innovative projects across the world with creativity and passion.

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