

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Will more rain in NSW change consumer opinions about water?

**28 July 2016:** How much do we know about our water supply? The Australian Water Association and Arup have partnered for a second year to conduct the [Australian Water Survey](#) to better understand community concerns and trends in regarding water.

In mid-2015 there were calls from the NSW Farmers Federation to declare the drought in Bourke, Brewarrina and Walgett as natural disasters. This concern was reflected in the 2015 Australian Water Consumer Survey where a high proportion of NSW respondents (77%) said they were concerned about water shortages and sceptical that authorities were taking firm action to ensure long-term water supply.

Australian Water Association CEO Jonathan McKeown said: "So far in 2016 we have seen above-average June rainfalls in all States and Territories, improved weather conditions in north-western NSW and water projects such as the a 270km pipeline from the Murray River to the Broken Hill water treatment plant. How might the respite from last year's water shortages influence water use behaviour and opinions in 2016?"

Mr McKeown said community participation in the survey was crucial to reflect community issues in the survey report.

Key NSW takeaways from 2015:

- 37% of residents said they strongly disagreed or disagreed that authorities were taking firm action to ensure that we have enough water in the long term
- 77% were concerned or very concerned about drought (compared to national average of 74%)
- 41% agreed or strongly agreed that they were active in saving water (lower than the national average of 46%)

In 2015, there was strong support for alternative water sources across the country, with 90% agreeing water recycling was a sustainable non-drinking source and 82% supporting stormwater re-use. Alternative water sources were widely accepted for drinking, led by desalinated water (82% agreeing or strongly agreeing), recycled water (69%) and stormwater (56%).

The [Australian Water Survey](#) opened on 18 June 2016 and closes 12 August 2016.

The results will be revealed in October at the IWA World Water Congress in Brisbane.

-END-

**Media enquiries:**

Ashleigh James

0488 160 277

ajames@awa.asn.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 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.

[www.arup.com](http://www.arup.com)