

MEDIA RELEASE

SA residents have low confidence in their water providers but high confidence in governments

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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 overall make it clear South Australians have low confidence in their water providers and have major concerns about water shortages and water security.

Australian Water Association CEO Jonathan McKeown said: “South Australian community respondents had the lowest confidence in their water providers of any State or Territory, with only 51% very or somewhat confident compared to 65% nationally.

“Similarly, compared to the national average, South Australian industry respondents were also less confident that the water sector provided value for money and adequate maintenance of water supplies,” Mr McKeown said.

More South Australian community respondents thought the price of water was too high compared to all other States and Territories. This was in line with industry respondents, who considered urban water prices much too high (17%) or a little too high (30%) compared to the national averages of 7% and 19%.

However, overall South Australians had more confidence in government across four key indicators (including water security, city planning, working together and infrastructure).

The South Australian community also had the highest level of awareness of alternative water sources of any state or territory, with 78% aware of all types listed. But, they were the least willing to pay more for these alternative water sources.

Australasia Water Leader at Arup, Daniel Lambert, said that water issues experienced by residents were well documented in the media.

“The high confidence in government on tackling issues around water security provides the platform to turn the tide on the lack of confidence in the water industry. With additional investment in infrastructure and renewed community engagement we can expect to see improved community support for South Australia’s water providers.” Mr Lambert said.

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 South Australia.

Mr McKeown said: “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

encouraged around water security, and we hope the Australian Water Outlook will help focus this conversation.”

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](#).

To arrange an interview with Jonathan McKeown or Daniel Lambert, contact Ashleigh James 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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