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MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Water Association announces 2016 Victorian Water Award Winners

Embargoed: 1 December 2016, 1.00pm

Innovative excellence, creative solutions and exceptional leadership were the consistent themes across the distinguished recipients of the Australian Water Association's 2016 Victorian Water Awards.

Announced at the Victorian Water Awards lunch, the awards celebrate Association members' achievements and promote the outstanding work contributed by individuals and organisations in the water sector.

Along with the prestige of being recognised as 'the best in Victoria', the winners of a number of the Victorian Water Awards will automatically be entered into the equivalent Australian Water Awards category, which will be presented at Ozwater'17 in Sydney.

The 2016 Victorian Water Award winners are:

Water Professional of the Year

Melita Stevens, Melbourne Water

Dr Melita Stevens is a true water innovator. She develops new ideas, turns them into practical realities in an operational context, advocates their adoption by others and provides supporting research, evidence and guidance to help with that process. She is a globally respected professional, role model and mentor.

Melita is Principal Scientist at Melbourne Water and this award recognises her outstanding contribution both recently and over many years.

Program Innovation Award

City West Water *Greening The West*

This project demonstrates so many outstanding features of innovation and program excellence. It has the potential to significantly enhance the lives of over a million people living in the west of Melbourne, improving health and recreation outcomes, reducing the heat island effect, improved biodiversity and ultimately improving property values and contributing to improved self-esteem and psychological well-being of citizens. The program is outstanding for the way it has brought together a large number of players from across the west and in effect 'leveraged' the initial commitment and investment of CWW staff to produce a far greater results than would otherwise be possible.

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Infrastructure Project Innovation Award

Yarra Valley Water & John Holland Amaroo Main Sewer Project

This project involves an 8km sewer to service part of the northern growth corridor, one of Yarra Valley Water's largest and deepest mains, at 1.6m diameter, and up to 20m deep. It involves pipe jacking tunnels at up to 8m below the water table and deep shaft excavation up to 22m deep. The project has led to innovations in manufacturing and demonstrated that Australian glass reinforced plastic pipes can withstand the rigours of pipe jacking. Yarra Valley Water has shared the learnings from this project across Australia but also into Auckland and Buenos Aires.

Young Water Professional of the Year

Rhys Anderson

Rhys is recognised for his technical ability and dedication to the water sector including in relation to innovative projects. He has contributed in significant ways to the Main Outfall Sewer and Yarra Pool projects for Melbourne Water and in taking a lead role in the Yarra Park recycling facility. He has taken on a number of voluntary roles, including as a guide for the Yarra Park plant and working with disadvantaged students. He has recently been appointed Water Business Leader at Arup - recognition at a young age of his technical expertise, experience and enthusiasm.

Student Water Prize

Damien Modie, RMIT University Honours Student

Investigating Bioaccumulation of Chemical Pollutants Adsorbed to Microplastics in the Terrestrial Environment

Microbeads derived from personal care products contaminated by persistent organic pollutants, are a ubiquitous feature of the wastestream. They are present in both terrestrial and aquatic environments. This research focussed on the fate of microbeads post the wastewater treatment process, exploring implications for re-use of biosolids and contaminant loads in the environment.

Highly commended recipients include:

Program Innovation Award

Central Highlands Water – Lal Lal Mini Hydro – which the judges considered an excellent innovative project

DELWP – Victorian Water register upgrade, setting the benchmark for water trading across Australia.

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The awards are being presented at the Victorian Water Awards Luncheon Ceremony happening on Thursday, 1 December 2016 at Crown, River Rooms, Southbank at 12.00pm.

To arrange an interview with any of the award winners contact Ashleigh James 0488 160 277.

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.