



Media Release – for immediate use

## ***WIOA Conference - There is something in the water***

Over 650 individuals attended the 7th Annual NSW Water Industry Operations Conference and Exhibition held by the Water Industry Operators Association's (WIOA) last week. This important water industry event was held on 10 & 11 April 2013 at the Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC).

Delegates were officially welcome by Managing Director, ACTEW Water Mr Mark Sullivan, and the conference keynote address was delivered by Mr Simon Corbell MLA, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The event concluded with the official awards ceremony, which saw **Neville Woodward** from Coffs Harbour City Council win the prestigious industry award that is sponsored by the NSW Water Directorate, the **2012 NSW Operator of the Year**.

"During his career, Neville has always stepped up to the plate when circumstances have called for someone to go the extra mile," said his manager Adam Wilson. "For example, he operated Sawtell WRP manually following the complete destruction of the switch room by arsonists in 2000, he managed emergency repairs to the balance tank following a collapse on Christmas Eve 2005 and has operated Sawtell WRP successfully during a number of severe floods. He also managed the first effluent reuse system in the Coffs Harbour local government area using reclaimed water from Sawtell WRP."

Mr Wilson said the Coffs Harbour Water team were delighted with his win. "Neville has a high level of care and concern for his colleagues. He always steps forward to do the difficult jobs and he takes a personal interest in the lives of his closest colleagues, treating them as friends rather than co-workers."

Over twenty presentations were delivered over the two days by engineers, water and wastewater treatment plant operators, scientists and staff from suppliers, discussing a wide range of issues designed to benefit personnel involved in the operation and maintenance of urban, rural and industrial water related infrastructure.

A comprehensive exhibition with over 110 trade sites saw companies exhibit the latest in equipment, services and process technologies available to the water, wastewater and liquid conveyancing industries. The winner of the Ron Bergmeier Award for best exhibition site was **Grundfos**.

A highlight of the event was the inaugural award for the **Best Tasting Water in NSW** which saw **MidCoast Water** announced as the winner of the **2013 Orica NSW Water Taste Test** (*see following page*).

The conference was hosted by **Actew Water** with major sponsorship provided by the Automation Group, Acromet Australia, Peerless Epigen and Xylem.

## ***MidCoast Water Wins Inaugural Orica NSW Water Taste Test Award***

A highlight of the event was the inaugural award for the **Best Tasting Water in NSW** which saw **MidCoast Water** announced as the winner of the **2013 Orica NSW Water Taste Test**.

Three finalists were chosen using a “Masterchef” style tasting on Tuesday evening by delegates at the welcome reception. The three finalists were MidCoast Water, Shoalhaven City Council and ACTEW Water .

The grand final was conducted over Thursday’s lunch and judged by a panel comprising technical water experts and industry connoisseurs, including Brumbies star Scott Fardy. The judges votes were locked away until the Thursday evening Awards dinner where **MidCoast Water** was announced as the inaugural winner of this award.

MidCoast Water’s general manager, Robert Loadsman, said the utility was pleased and proud to receive the award.

“This award is a great accolade for the hard work of our staff, and the investment we as an organisation have made in improving water quality for our customers,” Mr Loadsman said.

“MidCoast Water staff project managed the construction of the water treatment plant and we are particularly proud of the way in which we, as a smaller water utility, were able to use our in-house skills to manage such a large and important project for our community.”

Mr Loadsman said the award was also an accolade for those staff who work at the plant on a daily basis ensuring all is running smoothly.

“We only have a small team operating the facility so it is very pleasing their hard work and conscientious approach to ensuring we deliver high quality water to our customers has been recognised.”

WIOA Chief Operations Manager Craig Mathisen said the NSW Water Taste Test Award was about raising awareness of the quality of the state’s drinking water.

“We saw the award as a fun and exciting way to raise awareness of the quality of our state’s drinking water and recognise the efforts of local water service providers and their operators in delivering valuable water services to their communities. This year the water supplied from **Bootawa Water Treatment Plant** came out on top. It’s a great achievement for MidCoast Water,” Mr Mathisen said.

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## Full list of 2013 NSW Conference award winners

### NSW Operator of the Year

WINNER **Neville Woodward** from Coffs Harbour City Council

FINALISTS  
**Glenn Clifford** from Dubbo City Council  
**Wayne Watson** from Tweed Shire Council  
**Noel Welldon** from Clarence Valley Council  
**Neville Woodward** from Coffs Harbour City Council

### Ecolab Prize for Best Paper by an Operator

1st PLACE **Leigh Trevaskis** from Riverina Water County Council  
2nd PLACE **Chris Carlon** from Wingecarribbee Council  
3rd PLACE **Wes Trotter** from ACTEW Water

### IWAKI PUMPS AUSTRALIA Prize for Best Paper Overall

WINNER **David Barry** from Aqualift Portable Diving

### WIOA Prize for Best Poster by an Operator

1st PLACE **Brendan Bates** from Riverina Water County Council  
2nd PLACE **Mick Piggott** from Coffs Harbour Water  
3rd PLACE **Troy Bostock** from Kempsey Shire Council

### WIOA Conference Charity donation of \$1,500

PRESENTED TO **Abundant Water**

### Ron Bergmeier Award for Best Exhibition Site

WINNER **Grundfos**

### PASS Award 2013

WINNER **Terry Randall** Port Macquarie Hastings Council

## 2013 Orica NSW Water Taste Test

WINNER **MidCoast Water**

FINALISTS  
**MidCoast Water**  
**Shoalhaven City Council**  
**ACTEW Water**

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### Conference and NSW Water Taste test photos available from:

[http://www.smugmug.com/gallery/28901965\\_zHZz3C#li=2455766088&k=vnRfG66](http://www.smugmug.com/gallery/28901965_zHZz3C#li=2455766088&k=vnRfG66)

### Water Taste Test information

[http://www.wioa.org.au/2013conferences/nsw\\_tastetest.htm](http://www.wioa.org.au/2013conferences/nsw_tastetest.htm)