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MEDIA RELEASE

SA WATER WINS NATIONAL HR AWARD

SA Water has won an Australian Human Resources Institute award for the corporation's Workforce Replenishment Strategy.

The John Boudreau Award for Human Capital Management recognises outstanding people management initiatives/strategies demonstrating improved decision systems for the effective management of human capital for sustainable competitive advantage.

SA Water Head of People and Culture Danielle Jiranek said the award reflected the exceptional work undertaken as part of the corporation's replenishment program through graduate/trainee and apprentice recruitment.

"One of the main human resourcing challenges SA Water faced was an ageing workforce in a number of our key business areas," Ms Jiranek said.

"Given that a number of workers in these key areas were nearing retirement, we needed to find a way to minimise the impact of the pending departures on the corporation.

"To respond to this, we introduced a Workforce Replenishment Strategy which mapped out a 5-year plan to attract and retain skilled professionals through SA Water's graduate program, traineeships and cadetships.

"The strategy outlined some key initiatives to ensure that we could successfully attract new staff and develop them into experts in their field."

Some of the main aspects to the strategy included:

- The development of a dedicated resource team to manage all aspects of the Workforce Replenishment Strategy
- The development and introduction of targeted attraction, selection and development programs for SA Water's replenishment workforce including a four-year apprenticeship program, a two-year graduate program, traineeships and cadetships
- The ability for business units to recruit a 'replacement worker' for up to two years to shadow and learn from the departing technical expert (who was over aged 55)

Ms Jiranek said as a result of the strategy SA Water had been highly successful in attracting new and young technical talent, and retaining the skilled workers to complement ongoing workforce needs.

"The retention of these employees is demonstrated with 80% of candidates recruited under the replenishment program obtaining ongoing work at SA Water in critical technical roles," Ms Jiranek said.

"Our Workforce Replenishment Strategy is not only achieving its desired results, it's exceeding them and we are now focusing on how we can further build on this program into the future. The AHRI award recognises that we are national leaders in this field."