

# MEDIA Release

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## Climate change adaptation awards announced

A Torres Strait islander, a horse organisation, a metropolitan train operator and a cross-Tasman environmental association have been honoured for their achievements in climate change adaptation at an awards ceremony on 6 July 2016.

The **Climate Adaptation Champions for 2015-16** were announced as part of the NCCARF CSIRO Climate Adaptation Conference 2016, being held in Adelaide this week.

The Director of Griffith University's National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF), Professor Jean Palutikof, says the recipients reflect not only the increasing awareness throughout Australians of the threat posed by climate change, but also an unwavering commitment to pursuing initiatives and taking real action towards adaptation.

"NCCARF recognises that adaptation to climate change is all about the people, the businesses and the governments that do it. Often those who understand that climate change is real, and that something needs to be done about it, receive little or no recognition. Through making these awards, NCCARF seeks to go some way towards demonstrating that adaptation can take place now, can make a difference, and that there are already successful activities being undertaken to address climate change."

The Climate Adaptation Champions for 2015-16 are:

**Mr Vic McGrath:** A respected member of the Torres Strait Island communities, Mr McGrath has worked to raise awareness throughout Australia about the risks of climate change to these islands.

Often acting as a bridge between authorities and these at-risk communities, Vic is acclaimed for his unique ability to effortlessly transverse cultural, scientific and governance domains. He has provided a vital contribution to community engagement in the development of the Torres Strait Adaptation and Resilience Project.

**The Horse Federation of South Australia – Horse SA:** A community-based organisation working with horse owners and enthusiasts in South Australia has developed a 'Horse owner education program'. Through this program, Horse SA has supported horse owners to develop Action Plans to reinvent the way their property infrastructure is installed and managed to take into account future considerations, including climate change.

**Sydney Trains:** In developing a Climate Change Risk Assessment and an Adaptation Masterplan, this NSW Government-owned train operator has identified the key risks posed by climate change to its rail infrastructure, services and customers. Adaptation action already underway includes the installation of concrete sleepers and tension-regulated overhead wiring on its network, as well as new lightening protection measures.

**The Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand - EIANZ:** This association has been building capacity amongst environmental professionals for more than three decades. With more than 400 participants to date, its Learning to Adapt Program has become the most continuous and longest running course relating to climate change in Australia.

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This is the fifth round of climate adaptation champions awarded by NCCARF since 2011. The Climate Champions Awards are a highlight of the NCCARF CSIRO Climate Adaptation conference series. Now held biennially, this conference series attracts almost 500 delegates including climate adaptation researchers, practitioners and policymakers. It is being held from 5-7 July in Adelaide for the first time with the support of the Government of South Australia through the Department of Water and Natural Resources, the Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide Convention Bureau and the South Australian Tourism Commission.

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