Media Release

Innovation and excellence recognised at AAA National Airport Industry Awards

The Australian Airports Association (AAA) hosted its 2017 National Airport Industry Awards last night, recognising innovation and excellence across a range of categories.

AAA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the awards showcased the many ways airports are transforming the customer experience for the 154 million passengers travelling through Australia's airports each year.

"Australia's airports are busier than ever as they invest to deliver a great customer experience for our growing number of passengers," Ms Wilkie said.

"This year's award winners include Australian airport firsts, significant investments in capacity and innovative new approaches to meeting changing customer needs.

"The awards highlight the airport industry's commitment to investing in our aviation sector to drive growth and build our tourism economy."

Ms Wilkie said the judging panel noted the high standard of submissions, reflecting the wide range of projects and initiatives underway at Australia's airports.

Airport of the Year awards were announced across five categories, with Sydney Airport, Launceston Airport, Coffs Harbour Regional Airport, Tennant Creek Airport and Bendigo Regional Airport taking home the honours.

A wide range of Innovation and Excellence Awards were also up for grabs, recognising key projects and initiatives across customer service, commercial, development, operations, environmental management and technology.

Sydney Airport Managing Director and CEO Kerrie Mather was also honoured at the event, receiving the Outstanding Contribution to the Airport Industry Award.

"All of our winners reflect the passion and dedication of airport staff to lead their industry and create great experiences for the travelling public," Ms Wilkie said.

"Congratulations to all our winners for the contribution they're making to our airports, communities and the economy."

The Australian Airports Association (AAA) is the national voice for Australian airports and represents the interests of over 260 airports including all capital city airports through to the small aerodromes of rural Australia.

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The winners of the awards were:

2017 Airport of the Year winners:

- Capital City Airport – Sydney Airport
- Major Airport – Launceston Airport
- Large Regional Airport – Coffs Harbour Regional Airport
- Small Regional Airport – Tennant Creek Airport
- Regional Aerodrome – Bendigo Regional Airport

2017 Innovation and Excellence winners:

- Customer Experience – Brisbane Airport Corporation
- Commercial – Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport
- Environmental Management (Major Airport) – Melbourne Airport
- Environmental Management (Regional Airport) – Mount Isa Airport
- Infrastructure Development – Brisbane Airport Corporation
- Operations (Major Airport) – Sydney Airport
- Operations (Regional Airport) – Dubbo City Regional Airport, Orange Airport, Parkes Airport, Scone Airport; Highly commended – Christmas Island International Airport
- Non-aeronautical Development – Darwin International Airport
- Technology (Major Airport) – Brisbane Airport Corporation
- Technology (Regional Airport) – Dubbo City Regional Airport and Whitsunday Coast Airport
- Corporate Project – Aviation Projects (Archerfield Airport)

Editor's note: Please see attached information on the winning projects.

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AAA National Industry Awards winners

Airport of the Year awards

Small Regional Aerodrome – Bendigo Regional Airport
Bendigo Regional Airport has undertaken a significant upgrade to provide passenger and freight services linking Bendigo and central Victoria to the rest of Australia and the world. Its $15 million, 15-month redevelopment saw the construction of a new, 1600 metre by 30 metre Code 3 runway, four new and redeveloped taxiways, a new medium intensity lighting system, improved safety and airport security.

Small Regional Airport – Tennant Creek Airport

Tennant Creek Airport has become the first registered airport in Australian aviation history to receive a Civil Aviation Safety Authority certification exemption, ensuring it can meet the needs of the Fly In Fly Out workforce at the $800 million Northern Gas Pipeline. The airport has now completed its first full year of RPT operations and has refurbished its terminal, providing essential services and important connections for local businesses and the community.

Large Regional Airport – Coffs Harbour Regional Airport
Coffs Harbour Regional Airport has undertaken a range of infrastructure upgrades to meet the needs of significant passenger growth in the region. It's extended and refurbished its terminal building, increased airside capacity and baggage handling facilities, improved care parking security and systems, and refurbished its administration area. The upgrades will ensure the airport meets the needs of expected passenger growth over the next 10 years.

Major Airport – Launceston Airport
In an Australian first, Launceston Airport has installed a new, large-scale external roadway flight information screen displaying the status of inbound flights. In the arrivals hall, another screen promotes Tasmanian tourism by showing real-time social media posts from tourists travelling around Tasmania. The airport has also launched a new Disability Access Facilitation Plan. Visually-impaired guests can now listen to website content through an audio-playback facility, while an "assisted screening meeting point" at the security area has also been introduced for the mobility-impaired. The airport has also worked in partnership with a Launceston family to develop an Airport Awareness Booklet for people with autism.

Capital City – Sydney Airport
Sydney Airport has demonstrated a continued commitment to providing the highest standards of customer service and a world-class airport experience. Sydney Airport's Customer Care Centre, located within its Integrated Operations Centre, provides the team with complete visibility of our operations. In 2016, Sydney Airport was again recognised by the Customer Service Institute of Australia (CSIA) for commitment to customer service excellence and retained certification to International Customer Service Standard.

Innovation and Excellence Awards

Customer Experience – Brisbane Airport Corporation (Customer Experience Program)
Brisbane Airport's Customer Experience Program aims to provide world class services and facilities at Brisbane Airport and promote accessibility for all members of the community, including passengers and visitors with disabilities or special needs. Initiatives this year for Brisbane Airport included the 'Access for All' program, and the 'Brisbane Airport Care Team'.

The 'Access for All' program resulted in Brisbane Airport being endorsed as a Dementia Traveler Friendly organisation, as approved by Alzheimer's Australia – a first for any Australian airport. Upgrades to the Brisbane Airport website and app, new guidelines for specific disabilities and key terminal design recommendations have also been implemented. Brisbane has introduced the Airport Accessibility Reference Group to represent the interests of people with disabilities and oversee key initiatives which will see the airport provide airport tours for people with disabilities and participate in the Cerebral Palsy League Metal for Mobility program, with funds raised donated to the Cerebral Palsy League.

Commercial – Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport (Cargo Business)
Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport commenced regular operations of international air cargo flights operated by Cathay Pacific in November 2016. Since then, Wellcamp Airport has successfully demonstrated the airport's operational suitability and competence in the handling of wide bodied freighter aircraft and international air cargo.

Environmental Management (Major Airport) – Melbourne Airport (Melbourne Airport Ecology + Heritage Web GIS Application)
Melbourne Airport has appointed Biosis environmental consultants to assist with development of a site specific ecological and cultural heritage Geographical Information Systems application. The system allows multiple layers of location-based data to be displayed on a single map across the Melbourne Airport estate, enabling airport staff to access a single source of information to view ecological and heritage data across the airport. Data is sourced from recent and historical site investigations and assessments and can be easily updated following changes in the landscape from development or more detailed information coming to hand. This enables Melbourne Airport to classify elements of the natural environment in terms of their likelihood to contain Aboriginal places, native vegetation or other landscape attributes. Additionally, other site attributes are also being added to the application, including water quality and groundwater monitoring locations and records.

Environmental Management (Regional Airport) – Mount Isa Airport (Mount Isa Solar Array and Ground Transport Enhancement Project)
Mount Isa Airport embarked on an eight-month project to upgrade its existing airport car park in July 2016 that has not only increased parking capacity but offsets 100 per cent of the airport's electricity usage during daylight hours. The $3.5 million project included the installation of solar shade structures that provide covered long-term parking spaces and pedestrian walkways to keep customers cool in the harsh Mt Isa climate. The 820 solar panels delivers significant sustainability benefits and cost savings for the airport community. Passengers are also benefiting from a safer and more efficient way to access the airport.

Infrastructure Development – Brisbane Airport Corporation (Brisbane Airport Main Runway Overlay and Aeronautical Ground Lighting Upgrade)
Brisbane airport has undertaken a runway overlay and rebuild of the ground lighting electrical infrastructure. About 250 workers and 80 pieces of plant equipment were used for the project, which was completed during 12-5am daily for six months to ensure the airport could continue to operate 24/7. The project involved the overlay of more than 275,000 square metres comprising around 42,000 tonnes of asphalt. Additionally, 43 kilometres of

electrical cable was laid as part of the installation of 835 electrical pits, 1350 transformers and 745 base cans and lights. Admirably, the project was delivered ahead of time and budget, with no safety or environmental incident and no operational impact to the 31 major airlines who call Brisbane Airport home.

Operations (Major Airport) – Sydney Airport (Integrated Operations Centre)
in November 2016, Sydney Airport opened a new, Integrated Operations Centre (IOC). The IOC brings together landside operations with airside and terminal operations – a world first. The latest technology is employed to provide visibility of every aspect of operations from one central location. Key government partners are co-located with airport teams to facilitate improved information sharing, collaboration and incident and emergency management on a day-to-day basis. The IOC leverages the best of technology to drive real-time, data-driven decision making to respond to changing global security requirements and ensure the smooth operation of the airport. Overall, the IOC is allowing better decisions faster to improve the customer's overall travel experience.

Operations (Regional Airport) – Dubbo City (Aerodrome Reporting Officer's Network Forum); Orange (Aerodrome Reporting Officer's Network Forum); Parkes (Aerodrome Reporting Officer's Network Forum);
Scone Airports (Aerodrome Reporting Officer's Network Forum)
In an effort to foster knowledge sharing and cooperation within regional airports, key airport personnel from Dubbo, Orange, Parkes and Scone aerodromes formed a regular regional networking forum for Aerodrome Report Officers meeting twice yearly. The forum provides a mechanism for airport staff to share knowledge including safety, security and general operational efficiency focusing on the unique challenges faced by regional airports.

Operations (Highly Commended) – Christmas Island International Airport (National Parks Endangered Lizard Feeding Program)
Toll Remote Logistics, the contracted operator of the Christmas Island Airport, have teamed up with the Christmas Island National parks to allow access to the airport to collect food for the Blue-tailed Skink and Lister's Gecko (also known as the Christmas Island Gecko) in an attempt to save them from extinction.
The airport operator and the Christmas Island National Parks recognised the benefits of harvesting the significant grasshopper population residing in the maintained grassed strip areas adjacent the runway at Christmas Island Airport.

Non-Aeronautical Development – Darwin International Airport: (Wirraway Business Centre)
Darwin International Airport has opened the Wirraway Business Centre providing essential meeting and conference spaces for airport related businesses and services, as well as for the wider business community. The centre can be accessed from the main airport terminal via a private lift or staircase and features a contemporary fit-out and state-of-the-art facilities.

Technology (Major Airport) – Brisbane Airport Corporation: (TrackerAIRSIDE)
Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC), in partnership with AeroAscent, has introduced an innovative world first TrackerAIRSIDE version 2.3 mobile app. The app uses real time intelligence to support the numerous duties required of busy Airfield Operations Officers. TrackerAIRSIDE is completely paperless, offering a standardised, efficient, intelligent and easy to use experience, that uses graphical illustration and mapping techniques to support instant collaborative decision-making. The TrackerAIRSIDE app is downloaded onto BAC's Airfield Operations Officers' mobile devices. Staff have access to indexed, digitised versions of all paperwork and airfield manuals, condensing thousands of pages of information into an easily searchable library database.

Technology (Regional Airport) – Dubbo City Regional Airport and Whitsunday Coast Airport (Development of a Performance-based Airport Asphalt Specification)
In mid-2016 Dubbo City Regional Airport and Whitsunday Coast Airport were both planning the upgrade of their runways. Both runway upgrade projects included the provision of a structural asphalt overlay to increase the strength of the runways and to provide an appropriate wearing course for future jet aircraft operations. To mitigate the risks associated with asphalt surface under-performance, the two airports agreed to collaborate for the development of a performance-based airport asphalt specification for asphalt design and construction.

Corporate Project – Aviation Projects (Archerfield Airport - Airspace Optimisation Project)
The Archerfield Airspace Optimisation Project will enable the safe and efficient operation of up to performance category C aircraft to and from Archerfield Airport under instrument meteorological conditions, 24 hours per day. The project also safeguards the airport's ability to support the safe facilitation of flying training in the area.