



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Friday, 25 September 2015

# **SOUTH AUSTRALIA SWEEPS AWARDS POOL AT NATIONAL WOMEN IN RESOURCES AWARDS**

South Australia's trailblazing women of mining and energy raked in a staggering four of the five awards presented at the **2015 Women in Resources National Awards** held in Perth last night, Thursday 24 September.

Following on from the high of the inaugural South Australian Women in Resources Awards held in July this year, the South Australian resources sector was again acknowledged and celebrated, this time for its **nation leading achievements in the gender diversity sphere.**

Guests flew in from all over Australia to attend the awards event, held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre. Nominees for five categories from across Australia demonstrating passion and dedication to the resources industry were acknowledged, including companies committed to shaping a gender balanced work environment.

The South Australia Chamber of Mines and Energy (SACOME) nominated six finalists for the National Awards and were successful in bringing home half of these, with newly SA based Jacqui McGill (Asset President Olympic Dam) making it four for SA.

Premier Jay Weatherill congratulated the four South Australian-based winners, adding that their success highlighted the leading role this State plays in supporting diversity across all sectors of the economy.

"In South Australia, we want people and business to thrive and that includes the pioneering women of the resources sector," Mr Weatherill said.

"Their success provides inspiration to the next generation of South Australians and reinforces our belief that we can eliminate stereotypes wherever they exist even in previously male-dominated industries such as mining and energy."

**Santos was well represented in the awards, taking out the company award for Excellence in Diversity and Performance for its Gender Equality Program.**

**Santos employee Helena Wu (Senior Reservoir Engineer) was presented with the Exceptional young woman in Australian resources Award.**

**Outstanding Australian tradeswoman, operator or technician was awarded to Sabrina McKenzie, plant operator, Theiss, at OZ Minerals' Prominent Hill mine.**

**In addition, recently appointed Asset President BHP Billiton Olympic Dam, Jacqui McGill, was awarded Gender Diversity Champion in Australian resources for her leadership at BMC, Queensland.**

**The fifth award, for Exceptional woman in Australian resources, went to Bronwyn Barnes, Director and Non-Executive Chair, Winward Resources, Western Australia.**

Awarding four of the five categories to SA based nominees demonstrates the leading role the SA resources industry is playing in attracting, retaining and advancing women, not only in the Australian resources industry, but also the Australian business sector generally.

Jason Kuchel, Chief Executive of SACOME said “The SA resources sector should be proud of the calibre of women in our sector, not just the finalists and winners but the large number of women who make our workforces more productive, better balanced and great places to work.”

The South Australian women in resources awards held earlier this year are an initiative of SACOME’s Women in Resources SA committee (WinRSA), with all winners nominated by SACOME for the national awards.

“Increasing the participation of women in the resources sector is vital not only from an equal opportunities perspective, but for improved business performance which is now well researched and understood.” Mr Kuchel said. “This is why the activities of our WinRSA committee are so important.”

Aimee Chadwick, Chair WinRSA said “The Women in Resources National Awards are a great way to recognise the valuable contribution that individuals and organisations are making to the sector.

“These awards help to further women’s role in the sector by recognising a cohort of ambassadors, mentors and role models who are instrumental in encouraging and promoting, attracting and retaining women in the sector.

“Overall, it is a fantastic result for the South Australia resources sector and broader business community.” Ms Chadwick said.

The national awards are a partnership between the Minerals Council of Australia and its Northern Territory and Victorian branches, the South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy, the Queensland Resources Council, the New South Wales Minerals Council, the Tasmanian Minerals and Energy Council and the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia, with support from various state Women in Mining Network branches.

The awards create nation-wide awareness of women working in the resources sector, encourage other women to consider a career in the sector, and celebrate companies demonstrating excellence in diversity initiatives.

The awards were hosted by the national chair of the Women in Mining Network, Lynn Olszen, with Western Australian Minister for Police; Road Safety; Training and Workforce Development and Women’s Interests Liza Harvey MLA addressing guests and presenting an award.

## **2015 Women in Resources National Awards**

***Summary of categories and winners next page:***

SACOME: Mines & Energy House, 290 Glen Osmond Road Fullarton South Australia 5063  
T: +61 8 8202 9999 F: +61 8 8202 9900 E: [sacome@sacome.org.au](mailto:sacome@sacome.org.au) W: [www.sacome.org.au](http://www.sacome.org.au)

*Representing, promoting and protecting the resources industry of South Australia*

## Summary of categories and winners:

Award:	(Company) Excellence in Diversity and Performance
Winner:	Santos Limited – Gender Equality Program SA
Runner up:	Oothungs’ (Sisters) in Mining Program (Wesfarmers Resources, Thiess and The Salvation Army Employment Plus team QLD)
Award:	Exceptional young woman in Australian resources
Winner:	Helena Wu (Senior Reservoir Engineer at Santos Limited SA)
Award:	Outstanding Australian tradeswoman, operator or technician
Winner:	Sabrina McKenzie (Plant Operator - Thiess at OZ Minerals Prominent Hill mine site SA)
Award:	Gender Diversity Champion in Australian resources
Winner:	Jacqui McGill (Asset President, BHP Billiton Mitsui Coal QLD)
Award:	Exceptional woman in Australian resources
Winner:	Bronwyn Barnes (Director and Non-Executive Chair, Winward Resources WA)

## Winners in detail:

### Company Excellence in Diversity and Performance:

#### Winner – Santos Limited – Gender Equality Program SA

Santos has delivered significant benefits to its female workforce through its "Gender Equality Program" introduced in 2011. The program covers flexible working, parental leave with superannuation "top up" for unpaid parental leave, training and leadership development, gender-balanced graduate intakes, pay equality and gender attraction strategies.

“Importantly, the program is governed by the executive team with evidence of Board accountability” said Terry Burgess, SACOME President.

“It was pleasing to see the driving force behind this Program was the business benefits of greater gender diversity, including improved performance and culture. The program’s success is underpinned by a broad range of initiatives and strategies with a focus on continuous improvement.” Mr Burgess said.

### Runner Up – Company Excellence in Diversity and Performance

#### Thiess, Wesfarmers Resources and the Salvation Army Employment Plus Team: Oothungs’ (Sisters) in Mining Program (Qld)

Changing lives and empowering Indigenous women to determine their own future were just some of the reasons behind the creation of the ‘Oothungs’ (Sisters) in Mining Program – the result of a unique and collaborative effort between Thiess, Wesfarmers Resources and The Salvation Army Employment Plus team.

The program delivers a four-week, pre-employment program to kick start careers for women as trainee-haul truck operators. Upon successful completion of the program, most women take up permanent full-time positions as haul truck operators with Wesfarmers Resources at its Curragh mine or at the Thiess-operated Curragh North or Lake Vermont mines.

### **Exceptional young woman in Australian resources:**

#### **Winner - Helena Wu (Senior Reservoir Engineer at Santos Limited SA)**

Helena came to Australia at the age of four with non-English speaking parents. Inspired from an early age to work hard, she excelled at Queensland University of Technology, choosing Mechanical Engineering despite her father's concerns about this choice for a woman.

Helena was awarded the QUT University Medal upon graduating from an accelerated program with both Bachelor's and Masters Degrees. She joined Santos as a graduate and progressed into an Engineer role, followed by Planning Analyst and Senior Engineer. She received the Society of Petroleum Engineers Outstanding Service Award and Young Energy Professional Award for Southern Asia Pacific in 2014.

"Helena's passion for lifelong learning and ability to recognise and grab hold of opportunities are key factors in her success, and her participation in industry education initiatives and volunteerships with industry bodies are evidence of her commitment to promoting the resource sector's social license to operate." Ms Chadwick said.

The judges were impressed by Helena's involvement with young people, for example in Science Alive, as Chair of the Committee for Education and Teachers' Day and as a frequent speaker at university and industry events. She is part of the SPE International Gender Diversity task force and participates in a number of groups where women are given the opportunity to raise and discuss career paths and female representation. She is currently co-authoring a paper on the "Adoption of Social Media in the Australian Energy and Resources Sector".

### **Outstanding Australian tradeswoman, operator or technician:**

#### **Winner - Sabrina McKenzie (Plant Operator - Thiess at OZ Minerals Prominent Hill mine site SA)**

Sabrina worked in hospitality before her first role in the resources sector as a trainee operator.

Her grandparents, elders in the Aboriginal Kalparrin Community, were initially concerned when Sabrina commenced training for her plant operator role, which they saw as dangerous. However they were delighted when Sabrina completed her training and qualified as a CAT D10 operator. She is currently the only female Dozer Operator on site at Prominent Hill.

The crew Sabrina works with at Prominent Hill, "the Dingo crew", comprises five Indigenous women operating trucks and her accomplishments have raised the bar for others to see what can be achieved. Sabrina has also qualified as an Indigenous Mentor where she is able to assist her workmates in resolving issues and liaising with the Thiess Leadership team on behalf of staff.

Sabrina has elected to remain within her community rather than moving to Adelaide, where she assists with various programs including a children's care program, is a member of the Ngarrindi Women's Organisation and is also continuing her studies through TAFE.

“Sabrina is an excellent role model for the resources sector and has broken new ground as an Aboriginal woman in a male-dominated industry” said Mr Burgess. “She has excelled in her roles as a plant operator, Indigenous mentor and active community contributor.”

### **Gender Diversity Champion in Australian resources:**

#### **Winner – Jacqui McGill, Asset President, BHP Billiton Mitsui Coal QLD)**

Jacqui McGill has been in the mining and resources industry for over 20 years and broke new ground as the first female mine manager in South Australia and in mid-2013 being appointed the first female Asset President in Coal with BHP Billiton Mitsui Coal (BMC) in 2013.

Jacqui has a passion and drive for ensuring the resources sector is more reflective of the communities we live in through being more gender balanced, and providing opportunities and an environment where women can be successful.

In her time as General Manager and Asset President with BMC this drive has meant the pipeline of female talent has increased considerably now with 33% of BMC Managers in non-traditional roles being fulfilled by females and nearly 60% (four of the 7) BMC Executive Leadership Team (ELT) roles now fulfilled by women.

### **Exceptional woman in Australian resources:**

#### **Winner - Bronwyn Barnes (Director and Non-Executive Chair, Winward Resources WA)**

Beginning with an unconventional path into the sector, Bronwyn Barnes' 15 year mining career has included roles at companies from BHP Billiton to emerging juniors in director, leadership and operational roles. She has a passion for the industry and its relationships with the outside world, and an outstanding track record of ensuring effective corporate governance, winning government endorsement and approval, and driving equity for Indigenous people. She has steered major projects from exploration to operation, and connected the Western Australian resources sector with international mining investment.

Bronwyn holds a number of director positions stretching beyond the resources sector that reflect her interests in corporate governance, Indigenous affairs, education and political life. Bronwyn actively promotes women's involvement in mining and she mentors and supports other women to participate in the resources sector.

Ends

#### **Media contact:**

Jason Kuchel, Chief Executive, SACOME 08 8202 9999 or 0448 848 848

Aimee Chadwick, Chair, Women in Resources SA 0438 319 223

(High resolution images – Stephen Batten, Communications Officer SACOME 08 8202 9999

[sbatten@sacome.org.au](mailto:sbatten@sacome.org.au))

SACOME: Mines & Energy House, 290 Glen Osmond Road Fullarton South Australia 5063  
T: +61 8 8202 9999 F: +61 8 8202 9900 E: [sacome@sacome.org.au](mailto:sacome@sacome.org.au) W: [www.sacome.org.au](http://www.sacome.org.au)

*Representing, promoting and protecting the resources industry of South Australia*