



# MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Dorset and Meander Valley Councils Rewarded for Delivering Excellence for their Communities**

A project described as transformational for a small regional community has taken out one of the top awards at the 2015 Local Government Awards for Excellence, announced today at the 2015 LGAT Annual Conference in Launceston.

In the ***Delivering Excellence - Smaller Councils*** category (populations under 15,000), Dorset Council was recognised for its role in carefully researching, planning and achieving the Blue Derby Trails project, the development of the single largest mountain bike project in Australia.

A partnership between Dorset Council and Break O'Day Council, when fully completed Blue Derby Trails will be 80 kilometres of trails in a unique combination of wilderness and terrain, representing an investment of around \$2.9 million. Currently, 33 kilometres has been completed and the area has hosted the National Mountain Bike Championships with the promise of more to come. It has also increased local participation and intrastate visitation, tapping into a growing interest in mountain biking.

Judges said the project was a success at so many levels including tourism, construction and employment, delivering major economic benefits that will exceed the municipal boundaries bringing statewide benefits.

In the ***Delivering Excellence - Larger Councils*** category (populations more than 15,000), Meander Valley Council took out the award for its Energy Efficiency Upgrades project. Since 2012, the Council has dedicated resources to this project, upgrading three buildings under the Community Energy Efficiency Program, saving energy, money and improving comfort. More than 45,000 users have reaped the benefits.

Judges particularly liked that savings are reinvested into an efficiency fund to allow for energy audits and upgrades to community facilities in low socio economic areas. The project has allowed the Council to engage with the community on the benefits of energy efficiency and lead by example.

The 2015 Local Government Awards for Excellence, sponsored by MAV Insurance, were presented by MAV President, Clr Bill McArthur. The prize winners each received a trophy and \$1,000 for staff development activities.

The Awards for Excellence aim to promote outstanding achievement and inspire leading management practice and continuous improvement within the sector.

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**Photos for print will be available.**