



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Vodafone again partners the Kennedy Foundation as sponsor of the Paul Lockyer Award for Outstanding Regional Broadcast Reporting**

*Tuesday, 5 June 2018*

The prestigious Paul Lockyer Award for Outstanding Regional Broadcast Reporting again has the support of major sponsor Vodafone in 2018, the 7th year of the Kennedy Awards for Excellence in Journalism.

Australia's media charity, The Kennedy Foundation which stages the annual awards, today announced Vodafone's support for the Paul Lockyer Award which will be presented to the winner at the Kennedy Awards at Royal Randwick on Friday, August 10.

Vodafone became the major sponsor of the award last year when the Spirax trophy was presented to Prime 7 North Coast local news reporter, Lucy Langtry, and camera operator, Rod Smith, in a glittering gala ceremony at Royal Randwick.

Langtry and Smith took out the Paul Lockyer Award for their superb live coverage of the devastating Northern Rivers floods in March 2017.

**The Vodafone Paul Lockyer Award** recognises the legacy of the late legendary ABC and Nine Network journalist who became nationally known for his passionate and expert coverage of rural issues throughout Australia.

The award in 2018 will again honour high quality regional broadcast reporting by dedicated media professionals who tirelessly keep the bush and regional cities and towns tuned in to the latest events dramatically impacting on their lives and shaping their futures.

Mr Simon Dulhunty, chairman of the Kennedy Foundation, today welcomed Vodafone's generous support of the Paul Lockyer Award in 2018.

“Since the inaugural Kennedy Awards’ event in 2012 the Paul Lockyer award has held a very special place in the heart of the foundation,” Mr Dulhunty said.

“For some time we had been looking out for a partner with strong links to regional communities and we were delighted to have the Vodafone brand on the Paul Lockyer Award for the first time last year.

“Regional journalism is at the heart of Australian media with its proud and long history of coverage of issues affecting ‘bush’ communities - from the early gold rush days, through famine, drought, flood and war.

“Just as Vodafone continues to do, regional reporting maintains a vital link to its communities and its people and the Kennedy Foundation is grateful to have Vodafone’s support in the seventh year of the Kennedy Awards.

“Vodafone’s support of the Paul Lockyer Award is support for regional journalism and strengthens its voice to smaller towns.”

Anthony Flannery, General Manager of External Affairs at Vodafone Australia, said the company was honoured to sponsor the Paul Lockyer Award for Outstanding Regional Broadcast Reporting.

“Regional Australia is the heart of this great country of ours and it is rich with vital stories and issues that need to be told and explored,” Mr Flannery said.

“The journalists and camera operators working outside the metro markets do an amazing job, often in tough, uncompromising conditions. All too often they miss out on the honours and accolades they deserve for their outstanding work. This prestigious award is for them.”

Mr Flannery said Paul Lockyer “had a passion for the bush and a commitment to reporting issues confronting those living in regional and remote Australia. We are proud this legacy lives on in this award.”

### **Background to the Paul Lockyer Award**

The Paul Lockyer Award recognises the skills of a veteran journalist who carved a name for himself as an outstanding commentator and reporter on many issues but it was his coverage of rural stories that he was most passionate about.

Lockyer was tragically killed in a helicopter crash on Lake Eyre in South Australia on August 18, 2011, along with fellow ABC employees, pilot Gary Ticehurst and cameraman John Bean.

In 2013 he was awarded the Centenary Medal for his coverage of rural issues, particularly the extensive and punishing drought, and was twice awarded the NSW Farmers’ Association Mackellar Media Prize for coverage of rural stories.

The Outstanding Regional Broadcast Reporting Award was first introduced at the inaugural awards in 2012 with the Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga, taking out the category for its coverage of devastating floods that swept through the region while the next year Seven News's Hugh Whitfield won for his coverage of the January bushfires which swept through much of the state in 11 days of carnage.

The award is hotly contested every year and only crack entries have won since the 2012 gala event.

The Kennedy Foundation, with Vodafone as its loyal partner, will continue to recognise the very best of Australia's regional broadcast reporters at the annual awards - now the most prestigious event on the national media calendar.

Entry information follows next page...

### **Entries officially open**

**NB:** Entries are open for the 2018 NRMA Kennedy Awards, including the \$25,000 prize for the *Kennedy Australian Journalist of the Year*. Entries for work in the current financial year must be submitted to [kennedyawardsjudging@gmail.com](mailto:kennedyawardsjudging@gmail.com) by close of business (6pm) July 1.

Entry is **\$40** for every *unrelated* item of work and **\$40** for a series of *related* stories (maximum five). The finalists in all 33 competitive categories will be announced on Wednesday, July 25. The \$40 entry fee helps cover the Kennedy Foundation administration costs.

Gala ticket purchases for the August 10 awards can be completed via our home page at [www.kennedyawards.com](http://www.kennedyawards.com)

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