



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Tuesday 2 AUGUST 2016**

### **WA Mining Services Company Becomes Australia's Champion Employer**

**An organisation dedicated to helping support Indigenous Australians living in remote communities find employment was named Australia's 2016 Champion Employer of the Year last night in Melbourne.**

Sodexo received this honour, sponsored by the Department of Employment, at the prestigious NESA National Employment Awards for Excellence. NESA (National Employment Services Association) is the peak body for the Australian employment and related services industry.

Sodexo entered the mining, oil and gas sector in 2001 and now have food services operations at 320 diverse sites across WA. So while Sodexo focuses on offering services to support people who work in remote mining camps, they won the award for extending this value set to employing the locals who live in these communities.

With Aboriginal people facing great challenges in finding jobs in remote regions, Sodexo became one of the first companies of its kind in Australia to implement a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to bridge the gap with indigenous communities by offering meaningful, sustainable employment opportunities.

Sodexo work with, and were nominated for this award by, atWork Australia. Of Sodexo's total 1,962 WA workers, 45 percent have been employed through an Employment Services Provider such as atWork Australia.

Host of the awards, National Employment Services Association (NESA) CEO, Sally Sinclair, said "This award is a great tribute to Sodexo and shows how large employers can totally change the fortunes of Australian communities when they choose to employ and train locals. This award also proves the worth of employment services providers like atWork Australia and employers working together".

"The employment and related services industry in Australia is all about helping people into sustained employment, and these Awards truly acknowledge the direct and lasting impact that champion employers like Sodexo have on people's lives," she said.

Four other awards were also announced:

- Australian Achiever of the Year, which recognises a job seeker who has overcome extraordinary disadvantage to embrace employment, was won by 22-year-old Tom McGann from Mornington (VIC).
- National Employment Consultant of the Year recognises professionals who work to find jobs for disadvantaged Australians. It was won by Penelope Weatherall from Open Minds in Ipswich (QLD).
- The inaugural Excellence in Indigenous Employment Award honours employment services professionals and organisations who find work for indigenous Australians. It was won by Nicole Findlay from WISE Employment in Melbourne.
- The new Innovation in Disability – Team Award, which recognises employment service providers and employment organisations who have worked together to assist people with a disability, was won by FUSO Geelong and MatchWorks.

The NESAs National Employment Services Awards for Excellence are now in their 12<sup>th</sup> year.

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**Media:**

**Interviews with Sodexo – through atWork Australia’s Lauren Meredith (0408 928 440)**

**NESA comments – Carole Gregson, Business Manager, NESA (0411 205 717)**

**General award enquiries - Liz Rivers, Awards Absolute [convenors] (07 5446 4299)**