

Citation for the Award of Doctor of the University (DUniv)

Mr Ken Matthews AO, FTSE, FIPAA, FAIM, BEc Syd

Mr Ken Matthews grew up on a farm in the Murrumbidgee irrigation area near Griffith in New South Wales. He graduated from the University of Sydney in 1974 with a Bachelor of Economics from where he joined the public service, undertaking various positions in the Department of Defence. This was the start of a long and illustrious career in public administration which included various roles in the Department of Industry, Technology and Commerce and Department of Primary Industries and Energy, Chairman of the Wik Taskforce and Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Department of Transport and Regional Services and the National Water Commission. In each of these areas he made a significant contribution.

As Secretary of the Department of Transport and Regional Services he was responsible for land transport investment reform leading to the creation of *Auslink* and a new way for the government to invest in transport infrastructure. In leading the Wik taskforce he dealt with uncertainty in relation to the standing of mining and pastoral leases and the impact on native title. In the Department of Primary Industries and Energy he initiated water reform where the completed projects led to the drafting of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the National Water Initiative.

In his role at the National Water Commission he was instrumental in the conception of the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training and particularly ensured that the Commission was one of the foundation partners, committing jointly with the Australian Research Council \$29.5 million over the initial five years.

Mr Matthews, having retired as a chief executive from the Australian public service, is now serving on a number of public and private sector boards and as a consultant in the areas of government, water management, natural resource management and government policy.

He is currently Chair of the Board of the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training (NCGRT), a key national research institute based at Flinders University. Mr Matthews has played a pivotal role in the success of the Centre. The reputation of Flinders in groundwater research has been enhanced enormously through the location of the Centre at the University.

In addition to his work with the NCGRT, Ken has recently been involved in a number of other projects. These include Chair of the Australian Public Service Commission capability review of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Chair of the Independent International Scientific Peer Review Panel reviewing climate change data for the Australian Bureau of Meteorology and Independent Chair, National Working Group on improving urban water science.

His service to Australian society, through his contribution to the Australian public service has been recognised by the award in 2001 of a Centenary Medal. His contribution to the community, through the development of more competitive and sustainable regional industries and services, to the national transport system and to promoting the highest standards of public administration, was recognised in 2005 by his appointment as an Officer of the Order of Australia. In addition, Mr Matthews has been recognised by his peers through the award of Fellowships of the Australian Institute of Management, the Institute of Public Administration, Australia and the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering.

Mr Matthews has made a significant contribution to intergovernmental relations, organisational leadership and board stewardship across a range of sectors and is still active, using his extensive experience in governance and organisation leadership and his interests in science policy and regional Australia to continue to serve the Australian public.

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