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'BEST OF THE BEST' CELEBRATED IN HOTEL INDUSTRY'S OWN 'STATE OF ORIGIN'

South Australia has scored big at the hotel industry's own 'grand final', with SA hotels winning both Regional and Metropolitan Hotel of the Year awards at the Australian Hotels Association Awards for Excellence in Brisbane tonight.

More than 700 VIP and industry guests gathered at The Star Brisbane late this afternoon for what AHA national President David Canny said was the hotel industry's very own "state of origin."

Tim Campbell was host of the gala event, while hit makers The Rogue Traders provided top class entertainment.

SA walked away with Overall Hotel of the Year – Regional for **McLaren Vale Hotel** and Overall Hotel of the Year – Metropolitan for Adelaide's **Arkaba Hotel**.

Tasmania also claimed bragging rights with Overall Hotel of the Year - Accommodation won by **The Tasman, A Luxury Collection Hotel** and the Northern Territory's **Dundee Beach Tavern** won the Overall Hotel of the Year - Remote category.

The hotly contested Best Hotel Group Operator award went to Victoria's **Kickon Group**.

A highlight of the evening was the induction of hotel industry legend **Justin Hemmes** into the prestigious Diageo Johnnie Walker Hall of Fame - after a moving tribute by AHA NSW President Scott Leach.

Mr Canny said the awards really did showcase the best in an industry that was world-class.

"The national Awards for Excellence is the hotel sector's very own state of origin," Mr Canny said.

"It's the top venues of each state going head-to-head in a winner takes all contest - the chance to be named 'best of the best.'

"Each and every day all the finalists and their teams work hard to provide the best experience for millions of patrons nationwide.

"Whether its food and beverage or staff members who go above and beyond - Aussie hotels are the best in the world and that's on display here today.

"Congratulations to all finalists, especially the winners, for all you do for the hotel sector and for your communities. You are all winners in my book."

The finalists had all won at the state level at award ceremonies earlier this year.

The full list of 2024 winners:

Excellence in Service - General Division: **Matthew Connell, Wharf Shed, Geelong, VIC**

Excellence in Service - Accommodation Division: **Justine Dorrell, Elements of Byron, NSW**

Excellence in Service - Accommodation Division: **Joanna Curruthers, Rydges Sydney Airport, NSW**

Excellence in Service - Accommodation Division: **Tegan Skyllas, Rydges Sydney Central, NSW**

Front of House Employee of the Year - General Division: **Zoe Marstella, Howard Smith Wharves, Brisbane, QLD**

Front of House Employee of the Year- Accommodation Division: **Jonathan Fambart, Capella Sydney, NSW**

Front of House Employee of the Year- Accommodation Division: **Christopher Speck, Mount Lofty House, Crafers, SA**

Chef of the Year - General Division: **Scott Mills, Sinclair's, The Log Cabin, Penrith, NSW**

Chef of the Year - Accommodation Division: **Ebony Baker, Elements of Byron, NSW**

Chef of the Year - Accommodation Division: **Punit Fernandes, PARKROYAL Monash Melbourne, VIC**

Hotel Industry Rising Star - General Division: **Harry K Ripon, American Hotel Echuca, VIC**

Hotel Industry Rising Star - Accommodation Division: **Freya Downie, Crown Hotels Melbourne, VIC**

Outstanding Achievement in Training: **Four Seasons Hotel Sydney, NSW**

Outstanding Community Service & Achievement: **The Grand Hotel Warrandyte, VIC**

Excellence in Innovation, Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Practice: **Green Island Resort, QLD**

Excellence in Innovation, Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Practice: **Little National Hotel, Barton, ACT**

Best Tourism Initiative: **Tasmanian Wild Seafood Adventures, TAS**

Best Tourism Initiative: **Sandstone Point Holiday Resort, QLD**

Best Bar Presentation & Service – Regional: **McLaren Vale Hotel, SA**

Best Bar Presentation & Service – Metropolitan: **The Prince Consort Hotel, Fortitude Valley, QLD**

Draught Beer Quality Award: **Beach Hotel, Burnie, TAS**

Best Retail Liquor Outlet: **Hurley Cellars Panorama, SA**

Best Gaming Venue – Metropolitan: **Brahma Lodge Hotel, SA**

Best Gaming Venue – Regional: **Claremont Hotel, TAS**

Best Restaurant – Metropolitan: **Audreys, The Continental Sorrento, VIC**

Best Restaurant – Regional: **Furneaux Restaurant**

Best Restaurant - Accommodation Mid-Range to Superior: **Aloft Perth, WA**

Best Restaurant - Accommodation Deluxe: **TUNKI, Lakes Resort Hotel, West SA**

Best Redeveloped Hotel - General Division: **Arkaba Hotel, Fullarton, SA**

Best Redeveloped Hotel - Accommodation Division: **Hotel Alba Adelaide, SA**

Best Traditional Pub Accommodation: **Oscars Hotel & Café Bar, Ballarat, VIC**
Best Deluxe Pub Accommodation: **Stirling Hotel, Mount Barker, SA**
Best Meeting and Events Venue: **The Star, Sydney, NSW**
Best Outdoor/Non-Enclosed Facility: **Kirra Beach Hotel, QLD**
Best Sporting Entertainment Venue: **Arkaba Hotel, Fullarton, SA**
Best Entertainment Venue: **Osbourne Hotel, Fortitude Valley, QLD**
All Abilities Hotel - General Division: **Toormina Hotel, NSW**
All Abilities Hotel - Accommodation Division: **Dorsett Melbourne, VIC**
Best Family Dining: **Lakeside Village Tavern, Raymond Terrace, NSW**
Best Wagering Venue: **The Lakes Hotel, The Entrance, NSW**
Best Marketed Hotel - General Division: **Cabana Bar, Sydney, NSW**
Best Marketed Hotel - Accommodation Division: **Hilton Melbourne Little Queen Street, VIC**
Best Bistro – Regional: **Royal Hotel Drouin, VIC**
Best Bistro – Metropolitan: **The Duke of Dural, NSW**
Best Mid-Range Accommodation: **Sandstone Point Holiday Resort, QLD**
Best Superior Accommodation: **Mövenpick Hotel Melbourne on Spencer, VIC**
Best Suite/Apartment Hotel: **The Langham Gold Coast, QLD**
Best Lifestyle/Resort Style Accommodation: **Jackalope Hotels, Merricks North, VIC**
Best Hotel Bar - Accommodation Division: **Mary Mary, The Tasman, A Luxury Collection Hotel, Hobart, TAS**
Best Deluxe Accommodation: **Capella Sydney, NSW**
Best Luxury Accommodation: **Jamala Wildlife Lodge, Canberra, ACT**
Best Luxury Accommodation: **Saffire Freycinet, Coles Bay, TAS**
Best Hotel Group Operator: **Kickon Group**
Overall Hotel of the Year – Remote: **Dundee Beach Tavern, NT**
Overall Hotel of the Year – Regional: **McLaren Vale Hotel, SA**
Overall Hotel of the Year – Metropolitan: **Arkaba Hotel, Fullarton, SA**
Overall Hotel of the Year - Accommodation Division: **The Tasman, A Luxury Collection Hotel, Hobart, TAS**

Images from the night are available [here](#).

Media Contact: 0447 956 170