



AUSTRALIAN PARTNERSHIP HONOURED IN GLOBAL DISASTER REDUCTION AWARDS

The Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities was awarded the certificate of distinction in the prestigious 2015 United Nations Sasakawa Awards for Risk Reduction overnight in Japan, the first private sector organisation to do so in the 29 year history of the awards.

With a competitive field of 88 nominations from 44 countries, the Sasakawa Award this year focused on innovative efforts to reduce the impact of disasters and build resilience.

Representatives of the Roundtable were presented the certificate last night at a special ceremony at the Third UN World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan.

The four day conference, with 186 governments and over 3500 delegates aims to create a new global framework for disaster risk reduction, replacing the Hyogo Framework for Action adopted at the previous meeting in Kobe in 2005.

Speaking on behalf of the Roundtable, Insurance Australia Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Mike Wilkins said: "We are delighted to be recognised by the Sasakawa Award judging panel which highlights the role that strategic partnerships can play in elevating prevention and resilience in tackling the impact of natural disasters.

"The importance of investing in pre disaster mitigation and the savings to the economy and local communities has been a key focus of the Australian Business Roundtable.

"Since its inception, the Roundtable has urged the Australian Government to commit to long-term annual funding for pre-disaster resilience and prioritising pre-disaster investment activities.

"We've demonstrated that targeted resilience investments of \$250 million per annum have the potential to generate budget savings of \$12.2 billion and reduce natural disaster costs by more than 50% by 2050," Mr Wilkins said.

The Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities was set up in 2012 to support a coordinated national approach to making communities more resilient.

It brings together six leading CEOs to influence public policy on the unsustainable cost of disasters on life, property and the economy.

The Roundtable members are the Chief Executive Officers of the Australian Red Cross, Insurance Australia Group, Investa Property Group, Munich Re, Optus and Westpac.

Australian Red Cross CEO Mr Robert Tickner said: "We're pleased the Roundtable's collaborative approach has been recognised by the UN, who acknowledged the important role that partnerships play to fully engage governments, businesses, the community and a wide range of other stakeholders.

"The Roundtable's published White Paper '*Building Our Nation's Resilience to Natural Disasters*' was one of the key drivers for a 2014 Productivity Commission review of natural disaster funding arrangements.

"Importantly, the draft Productivity Commission report found there should be more significant investment in mitigating disasters. We look forward to receiving the final report and the subsequent Australian Government response which is expected to be released by the end of May," Mr Tickner concluded.



About the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Sasakawa Award:

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan. Several thousand participants are expected, including at related events linked to the World Conference under the umbrella of building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

The United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Reduction is awarded to an individual or institution that has actively sought to reduce disaster risk in their communities and advocate for disaster risk reduction.

The Sasakawa Award was one of three prizes established in 1986 by founding Chairman of the Nippon Foundation, Mr. Ryoichi Sasakawa. The winning Sasakawa Laureate will be announced on 17 March at one of the signature events of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, in Sendai, Japan.

<http://www.wcdrr.org/conference/programme>

<http://www.unisdr.org/archive/42795> (Sasakawa Award)

About the Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience & Safer Communities:

The Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities was set up in 2012 to support a coordinated national approach to making communities more resilient. It brings together six leading CEOs to influence public policy via evidence-based reporting on the unsustainable cost of disasters on life, property and the economy.

The Roundtable members are the Chief Executive Officers of the Australian Red Cross, Insurance Australia Group, Investa Property Group, Munich Re, Optus and Westpac. Members of the Roundtable champion the need for a sustainable, coordinated national approach to make communities more resilient and people safer. They believe that national investment in disaster resilience and preventative activities is the most effective way to protect communities and reduce the impact of disasters.

For more information please go to our website: <http://australianbusinessroundtable.com.au/>

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