

**Monday 12 September**

## **NIBA awards recognise outstanding achievers**

The National Insurance Brokers Association (NIBA) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2016 NIBA broker and industry awards, with awards presented at the Melbourne Convention today.

The winner of the inaugural QBE-sponsored Stephen Ball Memorial Award for Insurance Broker of the Year is Dale Hansen of Austbrokers Coast to Coast.

QBE Executive General Manager Intermediary Distribution, Jason Clarke, said: "This is a special year for QBE and the NIBA Awards. We're building on our commitment to fostering the emerging talent in the industry through our long-time sponsorship of the student and trainee of the year awards. We're also incredibly proud to be sponsoring the peak industry accolade for the first time – the newly renamed Stephen Ball Memorial Awards for Broker of the Year. This award reflects so much of Steve - his integrity, commitment to mentoring, education and professional development, which are captured in the components of the prize."

The Vero-sponsored Warren Tickle Award for Young Broker of the Year was awarded to Noel Kelly of Austbrokers AEI Transport.

Vero has sponsored the Warren Tickle Memorial Award for the over 25 years.

"Vero recognises the vital importance of nurturing, developing and supporting the young talent that enters our industry. We have long been avid supporters of Australia's young brokers and we look to their opinions on where our industry is heading in the future," said Sam Sanfilippo, Head of Suncorp's International Intermediaries business.

NIBA CEO Dallas Booth says: "It's a great pleasure to be awarding the first Stephen Ball Memorial Award for Insurance Broker of the Year to Dale, who has set very high standards for his broking business, for his commitment to his clients, his community, and his staff. It was a challenge for the judges this year, with all finalists examples of excellence in insurance broking."

"Noel has established himself as a very fine young insurance broking professional, who strives for the best and seeks to achieve high levels of support for his clients. Noel is a deserving recipient of the Young Broker of the Year award.

"All Broker of the Year and Young Broker of the Year finalists are exceptional brokers, and it is an honour to be able to recognise and celebrate their hard work. They set a benchmark for the rest of the profession.

"We would also like to thank QBE and Vero for their sponsorship of the two awards."

At the same time, CGU was crowned General Insurer of the Year.

Booth says: "Congratulations to CGU for winning General Insurer of the Year for the second year running. This award is determined as part of the NIBA Broker Market Survey, where over 1,000 brokers gave their feedback on the performance of insurers in the past 12 months. The award recognises the strong efforts CGU have put in to servicing and supporting brokers and their clients in the past year."

The Lex McKeown award for 2016 went to Robert Kelly, managing director and CEO of Steadfast.

NIBA President Graham Stevens congratulated Robert on receiving the award. "Robert is very widely acknowledged across the industry as one of the true leaders of this profession. He epitomises the commitment to quality advice and service to customers, and has been a major inspiration for the development and success of the cluster group model in Australia."

Meanwhile, Maria Perry, of Austcover Queensland, was named Student of the Year. And Veronica Harrison, Oxley Insurance Brokers, NSW, was Trainee of the Year.

**ENDS**

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NIBA is an independent industry association representing approximately 320 firms and more than 3500 individual intermediaries, who handle almost 90% of the commercial insurance transacted in Australia. Brokers play a major role in insurance distribution, handling \$18 billion in premiums annually and placing around half of Australia's total insurance business.

QBE Australia is part of the QBE Insurance Group, one of the world's top 20 general insurance and reinsurance companies with operations in 38 countries. Headquartered in Sydney, QBE has more than 30 offices across all states and territories and deliver one of the broadest product ranges of any insurer in Australia. In 2014 QBE's gross written premium was US\$4.392 billion. For more information visit [www.qbe.com.au](http://www.qbe.com.au).