



Fisher to step down as SRA CEO

“It has been an honour and a privilege to have been the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of Sugar Research Australia for the last seven years,” said outgoing CEO Mr Neil Fisher yesterday.

Chairman of SRA Dr Ron Swindells paid tribute to the passion and integrity Mr Fisher brought to this pivotal position in the Australian sugar industry. “Neil’s focus has been on putting more money into the pockets of growers and millers, as well as protecting the interests of SRA. Our researchers at SRA, our external research providers, Productivity Service Boards, regional and national CANEGROWERS organisations and milling companies all understood the outcomes he was seeking as our CEO on their behalf,” Dr Swindells said.

Dr Swindells said that Mr Fisher was recruited by the industry due to his extensive experience in change management, corporate governance, financial management, research administration and communication.

When SRA was founded as a newly incorporated public company limited by guarantee, Mr Fisher’s previous experience was pivotal in developing an extensive engagement process with SRA Members and Industry Representative Bodies which culminated in the initial Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18 and the inaugural Annual Operating Plan. A suite of Board Policies and Procedures, a sustainable Financial Management plan, the SRA Performance Report and lately the Impact Pathway Report were also developed with his guidance.

Dr Swindells said that Mr Fisher’s leadership ensured that the Independent Performance Review concluded “that SRA was a very well-run company” and had “the foundations in place to be a high performing RDC” and “that SRA recognises the challenge and importance of demonstrating value to levy payers” and that “SRA has delivered value to investors”.

When asked to list his achievements, Mr Fisher said he was particularly pleased that he led the team that negotiated and developed the Strategy for Industry Led Adoption Activities in

the Sugar Industry, as the model SRA inherited was intrinsically flawed but more importantly also disenfranchised SRA directly from its Members.

Mr Fisher also listed reinvigorating the Plant Breeding Program, the system of formal Performance Reporting to Members, the development of a sustainable SRA forward cash position and the significant momentum developed in identifying and capturing harvest losses as major achievements.

Mr Fisher said it was gratifying that the SRA Values of Innovation, Investor Satisfaction, Accountability and Teamwork were now fully embedded into the daily activities of SRA employees.

Mr Fisher thanked previous SRA Chair Mr Paul Wright and Dr Ron Swindells for their dedication to SRA, as well as Mr John Pratt ASMC and Mr Paul Schembri CANEGROWERS for their interest and support for SRA during his tenure.

Mr Fisher also thanked all SRA Staff for their devotion to putting more money in growers' and millers' pockets and embracing the significance of working for an industry owned company.

Dr Swindells thanked Mr Fisher for his contribution to SRA and the sugar industry and said the company would now commence a comprehensive and transparent recruitment process internationally and nationally to find the right candidate to further progress the strategies and goals of the company.

Mr Fisher will leave SRA on 12 December 2019 to ensure an orderly transfer.