

MEDIA RELEASE

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**Boutique Australian energy consultancy tops up leadership skills to meet new expansion into water sector:
Marchment Hill Consulting recruit Paul Harris**

Paul Harris, previously global leader in Asset Management and Performance Benchmarking with US-based utilities firm UMS Group, has joined Marchment Hill Consulting. Paul will head up their Performance practice as well as take the lead in developing Marchment Hill's water sector capability.

Marchment Hill were recently engaged along with two other leading consultancy firms to undertake the most comprehensive global review of asset management practices ever undertaken. It involves 44 water utilities throughout Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, Hong Kong, UAE and Oman.

The *Asset Management Process Benchmarking program* will provide the first truly global benchmarking of water sector asset management. Commissioned by the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) and the International Water Association (IWA), the program is a ground-breaking initiative which will result in the development of a unique global perspective on the status, trends and challenges in water asset management, processes and practices. It builds on the excellent work already carried out by the WSAA over the past eight years.

The expansion of Marchment Hill's practice beyond energy is part of the firm's strategy to further their reputation as world leading experts in infrastructure industries. Founder and Managing Principal of Marchment Hill Consulting, Neil Gibbs said that Paul Harris's appointment was important to the firm's growth as well as their ability to continue to provide the highly specialised industry advice for which they are already well-known.

"At a time when the recruitment of specialists in the water industry is as difficult as it has ever been, I'm very pleased to have Paul on the team. It proves yet again that attracting good people is not only about having great projects, but is about having a truly client-focused business. There are a lot of generalist consulting firms out there, which is fine if you want general advice, but too many of them are unable to deliver the strategic industry specific insights that can make or break businesses who operate in rapidly changing or highly competitive fields", said Neil.

Paul Harris commented: "There may never have been a more challenging environment for the Australian water sector including guaranteeing the security of supply, investment in new infrastructure, creation of water grids, institutional reform and restructuring in a number of jurisdictions, increased regulatory scrutiny and potentially the development of more dynamic water markets. Adding to the complexity of these challenges is a heightened community awareness of the critical state of the country's water resources, and a desire to be engaged in decision making. Marchment Hill Consulting is perfectly positioned to provide in-depth insights into the challenges faced by the water industry, and to help shape its responses."

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