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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **TPN CHAIRMAN WINS AUSTRALIA'S TOP ENGINEERING AWARD**

8/12/2003

At a special ceremony at Tasmania's Parliament House in Hobart, the Chairman of the Tasmanian Polar Network, Bill Lawson has been awarded Engineers Australia highest personal honour- Professional Engineer of the Year 2003.

Mr Lawson was presented with his special award on Wednesday 3 December by the Tasmania Premier, Jim Bacon with the National President of Engineers Australia, Peter Greenwood.

In his capacity as TPN Chairman Mr Lawson is quite active in promoting Tasmania and Tasmanians in the global Antarctic community with a view to optimising Tasmania's commercial opportunities in this sector leveraging off Tasmania's geographic strategic advantage for both Antarctica and the Southern Oceans."

Engineers Australia says Bill is not just an excellent engineer, but he has used his skills to bridge gaps with unemployed youth and indigenous communities, leading the nation in 'social engineering'.

A principal with consulting firm Sinclair Knight Merz ( SKM ) Bill has 30 years involvement in municipal engineering and structures, putting his considerable background and experience together to lead the SKM project management team on the unique Abt Railway Reconstruction project.

The Abt Railway was Tasmania's major Bicentenary project requiring careful management of technical, environmental, heritage and social considerations to build a tourist railway on Tasmania's rugged West Coast. The railway received national recognition in 2001 when it won an Australian Engineering Excellence Award.

Bill's considerable social engineering skills are leading the way in Australia and the results have been uplifting. Recently he was fully involved with the design and construction of Interpretive Centre and Gallery for the Warumungu people at Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory that has won a number of major national awards.

Responsible for setting up the Beacon Foundation in 1987 to create practical programs to assist young people make informed and achievable decisions about their futures, Beacon is now in all States as well as the Northern Territory.

In recognition of his untiring efforts in helping Australian youth Bill was awarded the Centenary Medal in 2002.



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The Professional Engineer Award for 2003 represents outstanding contributions to both engineering and the community. The award recognises competence and significant achievement in community affairs, demonstrated understanding of the role and purpose of the engineering profession with in society, plus proficiency in the use of communication skills.