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## NIBA AWARDS HONOUR BROKING EXCELLENCE

Winners of the NIBA awards have been revealed today during the 2020 NIBA Virtual Convention.

Shelley Hymas of Phoenix Insurance Brokers in Western Australia has been named the winner of this year's QBE-sponsored Stephen Ball Memorial Award for Insurance Broker of the Year.

QBE Chief Customer Officer, Commercial Lines, Jason Clarke, said: "Shelley's extraordinary commitment to client advocacy, professional excellence, customer service and her community, saw her stand out amongst this year's truly impressive group of finalists.

"At QBE, it's never been more important for us to continue to strive to be the insurer that builds the strongest relationships with our partners, which is why we're proud to partner with NIBA to recognise the best in the business through this important award each year. Significantly, it not only allows finalists to showcase their achievements, but also help raise the bar across the industry by showing what's possible."

Kate Martin of Marsh in Queensland was awarded the Vero-sponsored Warren Tickle Memorial Award for Young Professional Broker of the Year.

In congratulating Kate on her win, Anthony Pagano, Head of Commercial Intermediaries at Vero said: "Kate represents the best of the insurance broking profession. She is a true advocate for her clients and has built a reputation for high standards and excellence. In these uncertain times, it is great to see Kate's genuine and personalised approach shine through when offering risk advice to clients and other broking professionals, in what has been a challenging year.

"Congratulations Kate, on a impressive achievement as the 2020 Warren Tickle Memorial Award winner."

NIBA CEO Dallas Booth said all Insurance Broker of the Year and Young Professional Broker of the Year finalists were exceptional brokers, and the awards recognise and celebrate their hard work: "They set a benchmark for the rest of the profession.

"Shelley is a great example of excellence in insurance broking. She uses innovative approaches to get great outcomes for her clients, and supports her fellow brokers, mentoring those in and outside her firm," said Mr Booth.

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“And Kate has achieved a tremendous amount in her career to date and is certainly a well deserving recipient of the Warren Tickle Memorial Award for Young Professional Broker of the Year,” he added.

“NIBA would also like to sincerely thank QBE and Vero for their sponsorship of the two awards.”





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## NIBA ACKNOWLEDGES INDUSTRY STALWART WITH LEX McKEOWN TROPHY

Meanwhile, this year's Lex McKeown Trophy for lifetime achievement was awarded to Graham Stevens from Edgewise Insurance Brokers in Victoria.

NIBA President Eric Harris congratulated Graham adding: "He is a fantastic contributor to our profession and advocate of his clients over a lifetime.

"Our winner has served on local NIBA committees, been a member of the National Board for over 13 years, including serving a term as President," said Mr Harris.

"He has also been the Australian representative on the World Federation of Insurance Intermediaries, also serving a term as Chairman of that body."

NIBA CEO Dallas Booth said Graham has been fantastically influential: "I take my hat off to everything you've contributed to NIBA and to broking more broadly."

In his acceptance speech, Graham said: "I never expected to win this award, given the people that have gone before me.

"I'd really like to thank the NIBA Board for giving me this prestigious award."

Graham started his career at Guardian Royal Exchange (GRE) in 1970, where he quickly moved through the ranks to the role of 'inspector'. In the early 1980s GRE offered him his own portfolio of clients to set up his own Professional Agency.

Not long after this, Graham joined forces with a close friend, and over 25 years, they grew the business to be one of the largest privately owned broking businesses, and became a part of Steadfast before the firm was sold to Willis.

After leaving Willis, Graham started another broking firm with a close friend and his lifelong partner and wife. He is still a part of the business today.



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## NIBA RECOGNISES INSURERS

More than 500 NIBA insurance brokers rated insurers' products and services in a range of categories as part of the annual NIBA Broker Market Survey.

It is the combined results of the questions in this survey, that ultimately determines the General Insurance Company of the Year.

Having looked long and hard at the results of the Nielsen survey, NIBA decided to acknowledge the fact that brokers deal with a number of underwriting agencies, or managing general agents, as well as dealing with APRA authorised insurance companies operating in the Australian market.

NIBA President Eric Harris said: "The underwriting agencies are often specialist operations, offering cover in a specific area of risk, with specialist expertise to offer in that area of insurance.

"Insurance companies mostly offer a broader range of cover, and in some cases offer cover in most areas of general insurance," he explained.

NIBA therefore decided to award an Underwriting Agency of the Year and General Insurance Company of the Year, which must be an APRA authorised insurance company operating in the Australian market.

At the NIBA National Awards Ceremony, Mr Harris announced GT Insurance as the 2020 Underwriting Agency of the Year, and Berkeley Insurance Australia as the 2020 General Insurance Company of the Year.

Mr Harris also noted that the winners were in fact the two strongest performers in this year's Broker Market Survey.

In congratulating the winners, Mr Harris said: "Congratulations to GT Insurance and to Berkeley Insurance Australia for providing quality products, service and support to insurance brokers and their clients over the past 12 months."

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### **About NIBA**

NIBA is an independent industry association representing approximately 320 firms and more than 3500 individual intermediaries, who handle almost 90 per cent 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.