



24 October 2016

ANZPAA NIFS announces recipient of prestigious forensics award

Mr Alastair Ross AM (retired Director, ANZPAA NIFS) was announced today as the recipient of the Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency National Institute of Forensic Science (ANZPAA NIFS) John Harber Phillips Award. The Award recognises excellence in forensic sciences in Australia and New Zealand.

Dr Linzi Wilson-Wilde, Director of ANZPAA NIFS congratulated Mr Ross on the Award and said: “The Award recognises Mr Ross’ long service to the profession, in particular, his role at NIFS. NIFS was a vehicle to galvanise the New Zealand and Australian forensic science community, particularly at the practitioner level. This had an impact on the establishment of national training programs and a common approach to practices, such as testing methods used in forensic science laboratories.”

While at NIFS, Mr Ross worked alongside the Senior Managers of Australian and New Zealand Forensic Laboratories (SMANZFL) and the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) to introduce a national laboratory accreditation program in 1994. It was the first program in the world to include crime scene examination, fundamental to forensic science.

“We established programs in NIFS to fund Specialist Advisory Groups (SAGs) and an annual program of subject specific workshops which were effectively knowledge and technology transfer forums. This enabled the learning and the change to be passed on to practitioners on an Australia New Zealand-wide basis,” said Mr Ross.

As the inaugural Director of NIFS, Mr Ross established the Institute as an organisation respected by the forensic science, law and law enforcement communities both nationally and internationally.

“It was important for NIFS to be able to ‘make a difference’ in Australia and New Zealand and the tremendous support from those communities enabled that to happen. Australia and New Zealand has been able to play and become a leader in the international forensic science community,” said Mr Ross.

Mr Ross commitment to the forensic sciences has continued long after his retirement and he has since worked on a number of special projects in Australia and New Zealand.



“It is a huge honour to win the Award. John Harber Phillips was the Chairman of the NIFS Board. He was an instigator in the establishment of NIFS and a tireless supporter of it and forensic science. John Harber Phillips was also the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria but always found time for NIFS and for me as the Director. He had a great impact on the Institute and on me, personally,” said Mr Ross.

The Award and Medal was formally presented to Mr Ross at The Australia New Zealand Police Commissioners Forum in Melbourne on 20 October 2016.