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ABC HONOURED AT THE WALKLEYS

The ABC has won seven awards at tonight's Walkley Awards for Excellence in Journalism, spanning news-breaking, investigative journalism, indigenous affairs coverage, television and radio reporting, innovation and documentary.

ABC Managing Director Michelle Guthrie congratulated all the Walkley winners and said

"The recognition for the ABC's journalists at this year's Walkley Awards reflects the independence and integrity of the work they do. Their achievements also reflect the ABC's standing in the community as a highly trusted and valued source of news and information."

Altogether the ABC had 26 finalists across 16 of the journalism award categories.

ABC Director, News Gaven Morris said:

"The coverage and programs honoured tonight are not only high quality journalism, they also made a significant impact on Australian public life and had great value for our audiences."

"The journalism always comes first, no matter what platform, channel or device it is delivered on. This recognition from our media peers is a great acknowledgment of the efforts of our journalists and teams."

Two of the ABC's foreign correspondents won awards: Middle East Correspondent Matt Brown for his reporting from the frontlines of the battle against Islamic State and Africa Correspondent Sally Sara for her coverage of famine-struck Somaliland.

Senior business correspondent Peter Ryan won for his news-breaking reports on allegations that the Commonwealth Bank breached anti-money laundering and terror financing laws.

The trophy for Innovation went to the team behind gripping investigative podcast series *"Trace"*, which delved into a 37-year-old unsolved murder and has recorded almost 2 million downloads.

Darwin-based journalist Jane Bardon's award-winning Indigenous affairs coverage included the compelling story of an Indigenous man who was sentenced to 15 months in prison for driving offences despite having a prognosis of six months to live.

A combined ABC/Fairfax team was behind the award-winning “*Bleed Them Dry Until They Die*”, which exposed the retirement villages ripping off retirees and was the most-watched Four Corners episode of 2017.

Also on Four Corners, the moving “*A Sense of Self*” saw the highly respected journalist Liz Jackson turn the camera on herself to reveal her diagnosis of Parkinson's disease.

All three finalists for the Walkley Book Award were also ABC journalists, and it was won by Louise Milligan for *Cardinal: The rise and fall of George Pell*.

The ABC winners are:

INNOVATION

Rachael Brown, Jeremy Story Carter and Jesse Cox (ABC): “Trace”

COVERAGE OF INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Jane Bardon (7.30, ABC TV, AM, PM, ABC Radio, ABC Online): “Demanding Justice: Marshall Wallace, BushMob and Stolen Generation 2”

RADIO NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS JOURNALISM

Matt Brown (AM, ABC Radio): “The War on Islamic State”

COVERAGE OF A MAJOR NEWS EVENT OR ISSUE

Peter Ryan (AM, PM, The World Today, ABC Radio, ABC NEWS, BBC World Service): “Commonwealth Bank Scandal – accused of 53,000 breaches of anti-money laundering and terror financing laws”

TELEVISION/VIDEO: NEWS REPORTING

Sally Sara (ABC NEWS): “Six Days in Somaliland”

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Adele Ferguson, Sarah Danckert and Klaus Toft (Fairfax Media and Four Corners): “Bleed Them Dry Until They Die”; “Villages of the Damned”; “The Retirement Racket (part 3)”; “Some things can't be forgiven”

DOCUMENTARY AWARD

Martin Butler, Liz Jackson, Bentley Dean and Tania Nehme (Four Corners): “A Sense of Self”

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Media Release