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FOX SPORTS 501 named Channel of the Year at the 2016 ASTRA Conference

(SYDNEY) FOX SPORTS 501 – Australia's leading producer of sports coverage – has been named Channel of the Year at the 2016 ASTRA Conference today.

ASTRA CEO, Andrew Maiden, said FOX SPORTS 501 has become an enormously popular channel and is a worthy recipient of the Channel of the Year Award due to their exceptional coverage of the 2016 NRL season.

"Sport's not just a form of entertainment in Australia; it's a way of life and deeply embedded in the Australian psyche," Mr Maiden said.

"In selecting FOX SPORTS 501 as Channel of the Year, our independent judging panel said the team set the benchmark for Australian sports coverage with the best pre and post-game shows, and some of the strongest commentators and talent in the business.

"The past 12 months has been a winning year for the FOX SPORTS 501 team, with average audiences up by 9% for all games, with NRL accounting for 50 of the top 100 programs on subscription television.

"All regular live match timeslots have seen year-on-year growth and on Saturday a new ratings record for NRL was set, with an average audience of 486,000 people turning in to watch Storm v Sharks, making it the most watched event on subscription TV in 2016 and the ninth most watched Fox Sports broadcast ever.

"It's all this and more, including some of the most popular entertainment shows on STV, that have helped to make Fox Sports 501 the number 1 subscription TV channel in the 2016 year to date."

The Channel of the Year Award was presented today in front of more than 400 Australian TV and media professionals at the 2016 ASTRA Conference at The Star in Pyrmont, Sydney.

FOX SPORTS CEO, Patrick Delany, said Channel 501 aims to bring Australian sports fans together through their passion and celebration of Rugby League.

"We are immensely honoured to be acknowledged by the subscription TV industry in winning Channel of The Year. Fox Sports 501 represents the best of sports TV in Australia, fuelled by every game of NRL live and supported by an array of weekly entertainment shows. Ratings this year have exceeded projections, with our five exclusive games being 15% up year on year coupled with some amazing weekends of NRL action. I would like to pay tribute to the team that produce

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the channel, including all our contractors – they live and breathe sports and have put in a huge effort this year,” Mr Delany said.

“In 2017 we will be producing a dedicated 24/7 League channel with some new shows and a whole new look – with today's award for 501 providing the perfect platform to build on as we move forward into next year.”

“ASTRA congratulates the FOX SPORTS team and thanks them for their stellar contribution to Australian subscription television,” Mr Maiden said.

“They’re making great TV for appreciative audiences around the country.”

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About the 2016 ASTRA Conference

The annual ASTRA Conference is Australia's largest and most influential television event of its kind, attracting more than 300 delegates to hear challenging and thought-provoking presentations about programming, funding, distribution, audience measurement and public policy. Previous presenters have included Hernan Lopez, President-CEO of Fox International Channels, Bob Bakish, President & CEO of Viacom International Media Networks and Gerhard Zeiler, President of Turner International.

About ASTRA

The Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA) is the peak body representing the subscription media industry in Australia. Members include television operators, independent content companies, technology companies and the industries that support them. ASTRA members produce content seen by nearly 9 million Australians. In 2015/16 the industry invested nearly \$900 million in local production, filming in more than 100 cities and communities across Australia, creating 8300 jobs.

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