

Deborah Tabart OAM CEO of Australian Koala Foundation, to Receive IABC EXCEL Award

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – 22 March 2011 – Deborah Tabart, OAM, CEO of the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF), has been selected to receive the 2011 Excellence in Communication Leadership (EXCEL) Award from the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).



The EXCEL Award is the association’s highest award given to a non-member, and recognizes individuals who exhibit strong leadership in fostering excellence in organizational communication. Tabart is scheduled to accept the award at the IABC 2011 World Conference in San Diego, California.

Tabart, known affectionately worldwide as “The Koala Woman,” has dedicated the past two decades of her life to conserving the koala and its habitat. Under her leadership, the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) has grown from a small group of scientists to an internationally recognized organization. She is a gifted communicator who works tirelessly to influence decision makers and the community to protect our environment.

“Very few CEOs can say that they’re saving lives with their communication,” said Brad Whitworth, ABC, chair of the EXCEL Award selection committee. “Deborah Tabart is doing that—and more. She is using the power of communication to heighten awareness, raise funds and enact legislation that’s saving a symbol of Australia—and an entire species— from extinction.”

“I am delighted to win this award, especially at a time when communication about the environment is more important than ever. I feel privileged to be the first woman to receive this accolade and look forward to teaching as much as I learn from my peers in their chosen field of communication,” said Tabart.

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- **For interview opportunities** please contact Deborah Tabart OAM on 011 61 407 750 668
- **For further information on the IABC or the EXCEL Award** please contact Archana Verma on +1 415.544.4700 or email averma@iabc.com

About Deborah Tabart

When she joined AKF in 1988, Tabart was thrust into the tough world of environmentalists, government officials, business executives and tourism operators. Her common sense and solutions-focused approach to environmental issues has brought scientists from around the world together and she has led the AKF to fund one of the largest bodies of research on a single species in the world.

Over the past 20 years, Tabart has coordinated AUS\$8 million worth of research across the huge landscape of Australia, with 2,000 field sites and 80,000 trees individually surveyed. She has worked at all levels: from planting trees in rural Australia to cooking dinners for hundreds of fieldwork volunteers to communicating with prominent politicians (domestically and internationally).

Tabart is a regular speaker around the world in forums such as NASA, Cornell University, and environmental conferences, and has made countless media appearances, including on CNN, Discovery, *National Geographic* and *60 Minutes*, where she articulates her vision for better environmental practice in the future. Tabart was also awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM)—one of Australia's highest honors. The citation identifies her service to the conservation, management and protection of koalas and their habitat, reinforcing her role as a leader in the field.

About the EXCEL Award

For the past 50 years, the Excellence in Communication Leadership (EXCEL) Award has recognized a senior executive who consistently demonstrates vision and leadership in his or her commitment to effective business communication. Contributions to communication include achievements such as initiating, directing, supporting or sustaining outstanding and effective communication programs.

Past recipients of the EXCEL Award include: Kevin M. Warren, CEO of Xerox Canada; Brian J. Dunn, president and chief operating officer of Best Buy Co. Inc.; J.W. Marriott, Jr., chairman and CEO of Marriott International; and many others.

The nomination process for the 2012 EXCEL Award will begin in October 2011. Visit www.iabc.com/awards/excel.htm for details.

About IABC

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) is a global network of communication professionals committed to improving organizational effectiveness through strategic communication. Established in 1970, IABC serves almost 15,000 members in more than 70 countries. For more information, visit www.iabc.com.

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