

# WATER DIRECTORATE news

## APRIL 2011

This newsletter is sent to General Managers and to Water and Sewer Managers in 103 regional Councils in NSW and also to over 140 contacts in government departments and private industry across Australia.

### JOINT WATER DIRECTORATE/ LGSA WATER LOSS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

At the end of April there are only two months remaining in this program. The total water savings to date is approx 3,900ML. An update on the total water saved through this program can be viewed on the 'meter' at [www.waterloss.lgsa.org.au](http://www.waterloss.lgsa.org.au).

All participating Councils should be finalising their projects and paperwork to get reimbursed from the Federal Government funding before funding becomes inaccessible after June 30. Please direct all queries to Program Manager Ian Maggs on 02 9242 4127.

The Program Team and the Governance Committee have worked on this Program for almost five years and would greatly appreciate it if Councils with completed projects could promote the success of the Water Loss Management Program to their peers and councillors.

### LAST CALL FOR IPWEA (NSW DIV) ONE DAY FORUM AND EXCELLENCE AWARDS, PYRMONT, 17 MAY

Please support the Water Directorate Forum at the IPWEA One Day Forum and Excellence Awards Dinner on 17 May at Doltone House, Darling Island Wharf, Pyrmont.

The Water Directorate Forum features the following stream of technical papers:

- The Five Year Water Loss Management Program by Ian Maggs, Program Manager
- The Armidale Ozonation Plant by David Steller from Armidale Council

- A Riserless Bore Pumping System by Jason Ip from Riverina Water
- Corrosion of Sewer Pipes by Ari Shammai from MWH
- An Overview of Developments at Bray Park in the Tweed Shire by Anthony Burnham from Tweed Shire Council
- Salty Lagoon Ecosystem Monitoring and Rehabilitation by Michael Mackenzie on behalf of Richmond Valley Council

Also a Forum Panel will be held with representatives from the Executive Committee. The suggested topics for discussion during the Forum Panel is the Infrastructure Australia report into *Regional Towns Water Quality and Security*; the National Water Commission's *Findings On Urban Water In Australia: Future Directions 2011* and the Productivity Commission's *Inquiry into Australia's Urban Water Sector*.

Following the One Day Forum, the annual IPWEA Excellence Awards will be held at Doltone House, Pyrmont. Once again this year we have sponsored the *Innovation in Water Supply and Wastewater Award* and we wish our nominees good luck.

For more information please contact Michelle Burgess, Events Manager, IPWEA on 02 8267 3013 or [michelle@ipwea.org.au](mailto:michelle@ipwea.org.au) to register.

### NATIONAL WATER COMMISSION FINDINGS ON URBAN WATER IN AUSTRALIA: FUTURE DIRECTIONS 2011

The Water Directorate agrees wholeheartedly with the LGSA and strongly rejects the findings relating to LWUs in the National Water Commission's (NWC) Report released in April entitled *Urban Water*

*in Australia: Future Directions 2011*. The Report's section on LWUs alleges that public health, the environment and basic levels of service in regional and rural areas were at risk from inadequate processes, skills shortages and poor pricing policies. It recommends structural changes to regional LWUs.

The Water Directorate agrees with the LGSA that the report suffers from a lack of consultation and ignores objective NSW performance data showing the strong performance of LWUs in NSW. It also appears to rely heavily, and almost exclusively, on a report on LWUs in regional NSW produced by AECOM for Infrastructure Australia earlier this year that was already shown to contain significant shortcomings.

Overall the NWC's Report findings inaccurately represent drinking water quality, operator training, water pricing and full cost recovery and water security in non-metropolitan NSW.

As the peak policy advisory body, the LGSA are calling on Minister Tony Burke and Parliamentary Secretary Don Farrell to reject the Report, and request that they consult with councils and the relevant NSW Government agencies before acting on it.

The LGSA are also calling on the NSW Government to immediately reject this report because it is widely acknowledged that councils are consistently delivering best-practice water management and LWUs in NSW are well placed to manage water supplies and sewerage.

Of great concern to the LGSA and the Water Directorate is that the NWC's Report threatens to derail the comprehensive and all but concluded LWU review process that has been underway in NSW with the State Government since 2007.

Conversely, the Productivity Commission produced a favourable report in April in their Urban Water Inquiry. A series of Public Hearings will be now held by the Productivity Commission around Australia with the Sydney meeting scheduled for 31 May. Stewart McLeod, Chair, and Gary Mitchell, Executive Officer, will attend the Sydney meeting on behalf of the Water Directorate.

### **WINNER OF YOUNG ENGINEER – CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AWARD**

It is pleasing to announce that the winner of the 2011AWA/Water Directorate Conference Attendance Award is A.S.M. Mohiuddin, a chemical engineer from Singleton Shire Council.

Mohiuddin will attend OzWater'11 in Adelaide in May courtesy of AWA and receive reimbursement up to \$1,600 from the Water Directorate for travel and accommodation expenses.

Mohiuddin's feedback on the benefits to both him and his Council from attending the conference will be seen in the news section of our website [www.waterdirectorate.asn.au](http://www.waterdirectorate.asn.au)

Congratulations to all the nominees and we encourage water industry professionals with up to 7 year's experience, including those in their final year of study from our member Councils, to apply next year.

### **NEW STATE GOVERNMENT AND WATER RESHUFFLE**

Following the comprehensive NSW Coalition victory at the March elections, Katrina Hodgkinson MP, Member for Burrinjuck, is now the

Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Small Business.

The NSW Office of Water, previously under the former Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW), now comes under the Department of Primary Industries.

The remainder of the former DECCW has been broken up with responsibilities split between the Premier and the Environment Minister, the new Maitland MP Robyn Parker. It is understood that Sydney Water Corporation is now under the responsibility of Greg Pearce MLC, Minister for Finance and Services.

### **NSW FLUORIDATION OF PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES CODE OF PRACTICE NSW**

Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Code of Practice was gazetted on 8 April. The 70 page Code of Practice can be viewed in Government Gazette No 35 by the following link: [www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Government\\_Gazette\\_8\\_April.pdf](http://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Government_Gazette_8_April.pdf)

Technical or design queries can be directed to Bill Ho, Manager Water and Sewerage, NSW Office of Water. Bill is a member of the NSW Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee and can be contacted on 02 8281 7326 or 0458244847 or [bill.ho@water.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bill.ho@water.nsw.gov.au)

### **8TH NATIONAL ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 27-30 SEPT**

Closing date for submission of Abstracts for oral or storyboard/poster presentations is 15th May 2011 (or contact Conference Secretariat re date

matters on a [adam@natsieh.com.au](mailto:adam@natsieh.com.au)). Presentations on current grassroots projects/programs are especially encouraged as previous conference feedback has indicated the value of presentations on projects that are in process as well as those that have been completed.

The NSW Health, Aboriginal Environmental Health Unit encourages attendance and contribution of presentations to this valuable and enjoyable conference.

For further information go to [www.natsieh.com.au/index.html](http://www.natsieh.com.au/index.html) or contact Conference Secretariat on 03 9018 9332 or [adam@natsieh.com.au](mailto:adam@natsieh.com.au).

### **MORE FEEDBACK FROM THE SUCCESSFUL WIOA NSW CONFERENCE IN APRIL**

Delegate feedback has been very positive. In total, there were over 650 people attend the event: 156 delegates, 265 exhibitors and 231 visitors which is very promising and indicates that WIOA's youngest event is picking up great momentum.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING DATES**

Meeting dates for 2011 are 18 May, 14 July, 8 September and 9-10 November. Members are welcome to forward issues for discussion at these meetings.

Gary Mitchell  
Executive Officer  
April 2011  
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