

WATER DIRECTORATE news

MARCH 2012

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.

FEEDBACK FROM 6TH ANNUAL NSW WIOA CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

WIOA's NSW conference continues to go from strength to strength. The sixth conference was held in March in Tamworth and drew ten submissions for the Water Directorate sponsored NSW Operator of the Year Award.

This is the most nominations received so far and I'm pleased to announce that a very proud Erwin Balsar is the 2012 NSW Operator of the Year.

Erwin is the Water Treatment Plant Operator Northern Headworks from Shoalhaven Water and was presented with a set of trophies and a certificate at the conference dinner by Chair

of the Water Directorate Stewart McLeod.

Erwin also wins a place on the WIOA delegation to attend the New Zealand Operators conference and study tour.

Congratulations to Erwin who has given 35 years of excellent work performance and was judged to have shown the highest level of initiative and all round attention to detail. Thanks also to the supervisors for preparing their nominations.

The Water Directorate encourages all our member Council operations staff to attend this conference and exhibition next year to meet and share industry knowledge with your colleagues. We also encourage

member Councils to consider the benefits of WIOA membership.

We urge water managers to start considering who you would like to nominate for the 2013 NSW Operator of the Year Award. Nominations will be called in about December this year.

INNOVATION IN WATER SUPPLY AND WASTEWATER AWARD AT THE IPWEA NSW ANNUAL CONFERENCE, COFFS HARBOUR, 8 MAY

This award is the longest running of the four awards that we sponsor throughout the year and was first presented in 2000.

This year it will be presented at the IPWEA NSW Engineering Excellence Awards dinner on Tuesday 8 May and we look forward to the announcement of the winner on the night.

The Water Directorate will also be facilitating a Forum at the IPWEA NSW conference on Wednesday 9 May. A copy of the Forum program will be available on our website shortly. Please attend and support the presenters by registering soon. For more details contact Michelle Burgess by email: michelle@ipwea.org.au

WATER DIRECTORATE/AWA CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AWARD

Nominations closed on 30 March and I'm pleased to announce the winner of the 2012 Water Directorate and AWA Conference Attendance Award is Luke Drury from Wyong Shire Council.

Luke graduated from Newcastle University in Civil Engineering in 2006 and will attend Ozwater'12 in Sydney from 8-10 May. The award comprises a full registration to Ozwater'12 valued at \$1,570 courtesy of AWA plus travel and accommodation expenses to \$1,600 from the Water Directorate.



Stewart McLeod congratulates this year's winner of the Water Directorate Operator of the Year Award, Erwin Balsar, Water Treatment Plant Operator North Headworks, at the 6th WIOA NSW Conference at Tamworth.

This award gives an opportunity for a young water industry professional to experience a world class event (see next item) much earlier in his or her career than the budget might normally allow.

Nominees must be working for a Water Directorate member Council and have less than seven years experience in the local government water industry. We encourage members to consider suitable candidates for this award and nominate them in 2013.

AWA OZWATER'12, SYDNEY CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE, 8-10 MAY

Be part of Australia's most important annual event for the water industry organised by the water industry where the issues that drive the industry are discussed and future directions decided.

Ozwater'12 will feature inspirational international and national keynote speakers, numerous invited speakers, scientific and technical papers, case studies, workshops and poster sessions. This will be a great opportunity to network and engage with industry leaders and experts from all over Australia. For more info go to www.ozwater.org

CHANGES TO THE POEO ACT AND REGULATIONS

The Executive Committee alerts member Councils that the *Protection of the Environment Legislation Amendment Act 2011* introduced changes to the way pollution incidents are reported and managed. Most of the changes apply to the holders of environment protection licences under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO Act) which was amended in November 2011.

Member Councils should be aware of the changes as well as the impacts, implications and obligations. Any person carrying on an activity or an occupier of a premises also has revised obligations relating to the notification of pollution incidents.

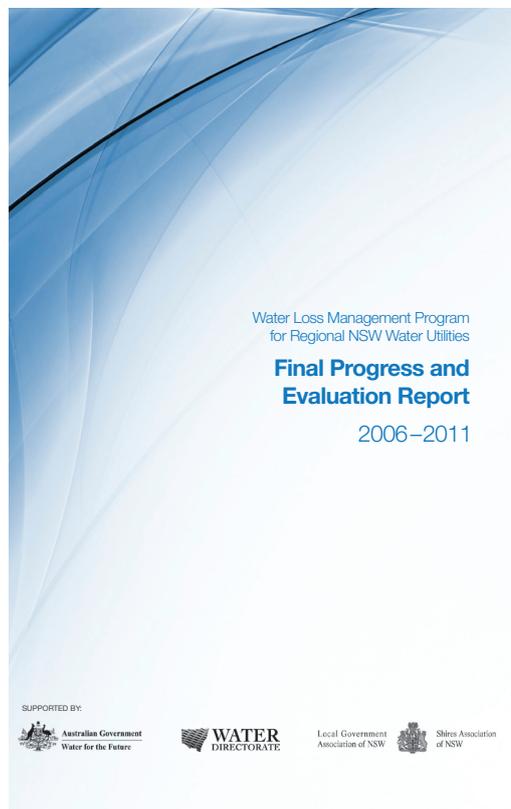
The amended POEO Act now includes tighter notification requirements of pollution incidents, a new requirement to prepare pollution incident response management plans for each licensed activity, and a new requirement to publish on the website monitoring data of the monitoring required under

the licence. The main impact for councils will be to depots, STPs and any other licensed premises under the POEO Act.

The EPA advised Councils in January of the new requirements and its consultation on the content of a regulation on the detailed requirements for a pollution incident response management plan as well as on guidance on the requirement to publish monitoring data.

Concerns have been expressed by members about the very short timeframe to participate meaningfully in consultation; privacy in relation to the requirement to include resident information in incident the response plan; and resource implications and cost-effectiveness of requirement to publish monitoring data for normal water treatment plants.

Member Councils should refer to the



EPA website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au/legislation/poelegisamend2011.htm that advises notification and plan commencement dates in February; and the monitoring commencement date in March; and the compliance date in July.

JOINT WLMP FINAL PROGRESS AND EVALUATION REPORT

The Water Directorate is pleased to advise our member Councils that the *Water Loss Management Program Final Progress and Evaluation Report* was submitted to the Australian Government in December 2011.

This report was approved by the Director Water Smart Australia at the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities earlier this year. The Water Directorate Executive Committee resolved to send a copy of the final report to our members after it was approved and publicly released.

A CD Rom containing the final report and nine appendices was posted to all member councils for information in March. If you have any queries please contact me on 02 8267 3010 or gmitchell@waterdirectorate.asn.au

FIRE FLOW DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Water Directorate's *Fire Flow Design Guidelines* was published in July 2011 and provides guidance on the criteria and standards pertaining to fire flows in street hydrants plus a review of standards around Australia.

The Executive Committee has recently become aware that the guidelines are not necessarily applicable for small villages that do not have capacity to store 4 hours water supply in the reservoir and wishes to alert member Councils accordingly.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A vacancy still exists on the Executive Committee for a representative from the Hunter group of Councils. I urge and invite interested senior water professionals from Singleton, Upper Hunter or Muswellbrook Shire Councils to consider attending a meeting as an observer.

At the February Executive Committee meeting Jeffery Sharp, Director Infrastructure Services at Port Macquarie-Hastings Council was presented with a medal recognising 10 years of voluntary service as a Mid North Coast representative. Jeff is the 9th Executive Committee member to be presented with a medal. Thanks to Jeff and his Council for their long term support.

The remaining Executive Committee meeting dates for 2012 are as follows: 7 May, 12 July, 13 September, and both 7 & 8 November.

Gary Mitchell
Executive Officer
March 2012
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