

MAY 2019

This newsletter is sent to General Managers and to Water and Sewer Managers in 89 regional Councils in NSW and also to 80 contacts in government departments and private industry across Australia.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S UPDATE

At the time of writing I'm into my fifth week leading the Water Directorate. I'm grateful to our retiring Executive Officer Gary Mitchell for making the time to ensure I've had a comprehensive handover. Thanks Gary once again, and thanks to all who have been in touch to welcome me to the new role.

It is an interesting time to take this role on to say the least. Some of the current issues we are working through on behalf of our member Councils have included:

- Drought and water security for our regional towns
- Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substance (PFAS) chemicals in water
- Telcos on Tanks
- Upcoming changes to Dam Safety

More on some of these topics below, and to continue in future editions.

DROUGHT UPDATE

We estimate that 23 water supplies in Central NSW, Far West NSW, and the Northern Tablelands are either at risk of

water supply failure in the next 12 months or their main water supply has already failed.

We urge Councils to maintain regular communication with your DoI Water Regional Managers – Glenn George, Peter Ledwos or David Swan – with regards to your water security status and technical assistance.

You can also contact James McTavish, NSW Regional Town Water Supply Co-ordinator who has been appointed to coordinate a whole-of-government response.

Either way, the Government has committed to come to councils soon rather than wait for applications for urgent water security projects.

The Water Directorate can also assist. Our ***Drought Management Guidelines*** were reviewed in 2016, and are available to members for free download [from our website](#). Non-members may purchase from the [online Bookshop](#).

Given the lead times that some utilities currently have,

some of the potential short-term solutions are plans to lower water intakes, access 'dead storage' in reservoirs or drill emergency bores.

ALL OPTIONS ON THE TABLE

With the drought currently affecting NSW being worse than the Millennium drought, it is clear that past records are not the best indicator of what will happen next. Having strategies in place that include multiple alternative water sources such as stormwater harvesting and water recycling will improve the resilience of our water supplies in the long term.

While many in the water industry and community have indicated they may be ready, it will be important to engage with our community and regulators to discuss the options rather than 'sell' a particular solution.

It makes sense to work with our regulators to remove any policy bans on feasible options, including drinking recycled water, and give our communities more information to help them decide.

WATER DIRECTORATE STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024

We are working on delivering the actions in our Strategic Plan, with the following key objectives in mind:

- Provide strong technical and industry advocacy based on the policy positions of LGNSW
- Improve collaboration /partnerships between industry bodies and government organisations
- A clear, overarching long-term strategy for regional water sector in NSW
- Address staff shortages and lack of skills
- Consistent ongoing system of performance measurement and reporting
- Improve funding/resources for the sector.

The Strategic Plan is available [on our website](#).

SAFE AND SECURE WATER PROGRAM: APPLICATION FOR STREAM 2 IWCM STRATEGY CO FUNDING

Is your IWCM Strategy up to date? The NSW Government is providing co-funding under the Safe and Secure Water Program for the development of Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategies (IWCMS). Submit your Expression of Interest [via this link](#).

AWA NSW STATE CONFERENCE 2019

Registrations will be opening soon for the [Australian Water Association NSW State Conference](#) on 8-9 August,

hosted by Orange City Council. The conference theme is *Strengthening Communities through Collaboration and Technology*. Hope to see you there and talk about your water issues.

WATER DIRECTORATE/AWA CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE AWARD

Congratulations to Amy Hart, Water and Trade Waste Technical Officer at Ballina Shire Council, who attended AWA's Ozwater'19 in Melbourne 7-9 May, after winning the joint Water Directorate/AWA Conference Attendance Award. This award includes registration to Ozwater'19 provided by AWA plus travel and accommodation expenses reimbursed by the Water Directorate.



Amy receives her award from Water Directorate and AWA representatives

This award aims to provide an early opportunity for younger water industry professionals in LWUs with less than 7 year's work experience to enjoy this massive event.

LIQUID TRADE WASTE

The Draft 2019 Liquid Trade Waste Regulation Guidelines are now available for review. The document can be accessed [via this website](#).

All regional NSW councils are offered access to the draft Guidelines for comments and feedback. The draft has been prepared in consultation with a working group of experienced trade waste officers from 15 regional NSW councils. A key objective of the updated Guidelines is to facilitate more efficient trade waste approval process

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **AWA NSW State Conference**, Orange 8-9 August
- **LGNSW Water Management Conference**, Albury, 2-4 September
- **12th National Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference**, Perth, 16-19 September
- **IPWEA (NSW Div), Annual Conference and Excellence Awards**, Hunter Valley, 6-8 November

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meeting dates for 2019 are:

- Thursday 11 July
- Thursday 12 September
- Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 November

Brendan Guiney
Executive Officer

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