

WATER DIRECTORATE news

JANUARY 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.

LAST CALL - NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2012 NSW OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

Attention water managers - the Water Directorate urges YOU to nominate your deserving operators now!

Nominations close on 2 March 2012. Please go straight to the website and download the nomination form from: www.waterdirectorate.asn.au/downloads/NSW_WD_Op_Year_Application_2012.pdf.

The winner will receive a set of trophies at the WIOA Tamworth Conference (see next item) and will join the WIOA tour group and attend a conference in New Zealand.

6TH ANNUAL NSW WATER INDUSTRY ENGINEERS & OPERATORS CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION, TAMWORTH, 28-29 MARCH

WIOA's primary focus is to share information between people working in operational roles in the water and waste water industry.

Please send your operators to this conference and come and see for yourself what makes this one of the most practical and valuable conferences around.

A registration form is included in the mail-out to Councils of the hardcopy January newsletter.

CALL FOR PAPERS - 2012 LGSA WATER MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE, WAGGA WAGGA, 22-24 JULY

The NSW LGSA are calling for papers for the annual conference which provides an opportunity for councilors, government representatives, Local Government professionals, and the broader industry to tackle key water management issues and discuss emerging issues in the water portfolio. Councils and stakeholders are invited to forward papers and/or suggestions for consideration in the development of the. In particular, papers are invited on the main topics planned for the conference:

- Integrated water resource planning
- Review of regulatory and institutional arrangements for local water utilities in regional NSW

Papers must be not solely commercial in nature and must be sent to sascha.moeger@lgsa.org.au before 30 March.

For more information go to www.waterconference.lgsa.org.au

2012 PIPES WAGGA EXPO & FIELD DAY, WAGGA WAGGA, 13-14 MARCH

The expo takes on a new look and case study presentations include:

- The \$50m Highland Source Project pipeline from Wingecarribee Reservoir to Goulburn
- Brewarrina Water Study
- Mannus Dam Restoration
- The Kangaroo Valley Sewerage Scheme Project
- Water Main Assessment
- Developing Leadership and Ownership within a Team via Open and Honest Conversations

For more information go to: www.pipeswagga.com.au/register.aspx.

SUBMISSIONS NOW DUE FOR THE INNOVATION IN WATER SUPPLY AND WASTEWATER AWARD AT THE 2012 IPWEA NSW ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS, COFFS HARBOUR, 8 MAY

Thanks for the nominations received for the *Innovation in Water Supply and Wastewater Award* at the IPWEA NSW Engineering Excellence Awards.

The IPWEA (NSW Division) Excellence Awards promote and recognise excellence of Local Government and public works projects.

The Water Directorate is very pleased to sponsor this award and remember that only member councils of the Water Directorate are able to nominate..

Submissions for the nominations are due on 3 February so please complete those for the judges.

We look forward to finding out who the winners is at the presentation dinner on Tuesday 8 May at Coffs Harbour.

Please contact Michelle Burgess, Events and Partnerships Manager on michelle@ipwea.org.au for more information.



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

Be part of Australia's most important annual water industry event organised by water industry personnel where the issues that drive the industry are discussed & 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 an opportunity like no other to network and engage with industry leaders and experts from all over Australia. For more information go to www.ozwater.org.

7TH ANNUAL WATER SYMPOSIUM, SYDNEY, 24 FEBRUARY

Explore the issues of delivering environmental efficiencies for rural Australia and ensuring productivity and sustainability in the urban water sector. For more information please contact Legalwise Seminars on 02 9387 8133 or go to: www.legalwiseseminars.com.au/7th-annual-water-symposium

NSW LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL SCHEME LAUNCHED

In January the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Don Page MP, launched a Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) by releasing a circular and guidelines. The documents explain how the DLG administered LIRS provides interest subsidies of 4% that will substantially reduce the borrowing costs on significant loans that Councils take out specifically to pay for infrastructure projects including water facilities.

Such measures are necessary to address the \$6billion Local Government infrastructure renewal backlogs identified in the 2006 Percy Allan Report.

LIRS encourages Councils to make greater use of debt funding to accelerate investment in infrastructure backlogs and augment funding options already available to Councils. While preference will be given to projects with a total cost of \$1 million, Councils will now be able to bundle projects. Smaller projects or programs may also still be considered for smaller Councils provided they satisfy the criteria. Applications will be subject to NSW Treasury Corporation assessment of the Council's financial position.

DLG is establishing an Assessment Panel comprised of an independent chair and reps of the DLG, NSW Treasury and the DPI, to assess applications. LIRS is set to provide interest rate subsidies of \$70 million over five years.

For more information about LIRS go to www.dlg.gov.au. Item courtesy of LGSA.

IPART REVIEW OF WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE & STORMWATER DEVELOPER CHARGES GUIDELINES, - FINAL REPORT TO MINISTER 2007

In January this long awaited report was posted on the IPART website. IPART reviewed the current Water Supply, Sewerage & Stormwater Developer Charges Guidelines and recommended improvements and identified broad objectives that developer charges should aim to achieve. These objectives include:

- Full cost recovery: charges should reflect the full efficient costs of providing water-related infrastructure to new developments.
- Effective price signalling: charges should send effective price signals about the costs of development in

different locations.

- Appropriate risk sharing: charges should appropriately share the risks of development between LWUs and the developers.
- Equity: charges should equitably share the costs of development between developers, LWUs and existing ratepayers.
- Simplicity, transparency and consistency: charges should be set through a method that is simple for LWUs to administer, transparent to all interested parties, & be implemented consistently.

IPART aims for the Guidelines to be consistent with good regulatory practice and particularly considered the benefits of any potential changes to the Guidelines compared to the costs that those changes would impose on LWUs and developers. IPART is confident that the benefits of the recommended changes will outweigh these costs.

Overall, IPART found that the Guidelines could be improved to better meet the above objectives. It believes that DWE (currently NOW) should redraft the Guidelines in consultation with IPART to improve clarity, transparency and precision in the calculation of charges.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Vacancies exist on the Executive Committee for reps from the Hunter and from the South West group of member Councils.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held in Sydney on Thursday 8 March. Please email gmitchell@waterdirectorate.asn.au if you are interested in attending.

Gary Mitchell
Executive Officer
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