

FEBRUARY 2020

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

Welcome to the February edition of the newsletter. Issues we have been working through this month on behalf of our members include:

- Drought updates from Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and WaterNSW.
- Water industry training
- Telcos on Tanks
- Reform of water industry frameworks and regulations
- Bushfire and risk to drinking water quality

We will keep you up to date on progress in future editions.

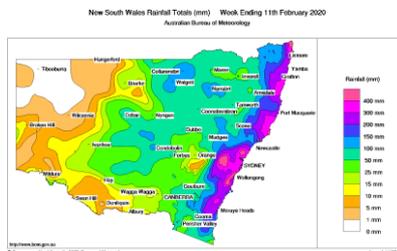
DROUGHT UPDATE

The number of towns with high risk of failure of water supply has reduced to 38 in February, down from 49 in January due to significant coastal rainfall. Many inland small towns continue to cart water by truck, whilst larger towns are urgently investing in emergency water supply works to strengthen water supplies, including bores and desalination.

It is important to keep your DPIE [Regional Manager](#) up to date on your situation to access any assistance you need.

RAINFALL WELCOMED

Heavy rain has relieved immediate issues in as many as 20 towns. In Sydney, WaterNSW's storages rose an incredible 20% from 43% to 63% in less than a week and is likely to reach 70% with predicted further rain.



NSW Rainfall Totals w/e 11 Feb

While some parts of inland NSW did receive useful rainfall, deficiencies remain. Although places such as Robertson in the Southern Highlands collected more than 700 millimetres, inland towns such as Bathurst and Orange received less than 15 millimetres.

Predictions in [BOM's Climate and Water Outlook - 6 Feb 2020](#) are for neutral climate conditions in the next three months, drier than average in parts with risk of bushfire and heatwave and mostly low streamflows likely.

BUSHFIRE CRISIS

A number of our member utilities have been dealing with massive bushfires, evacuations and power outages this summer.



There have been numerous offers of assistance received here at the Water Directorate from interstate to provide relief engineers and operators. If you need additional resources, please [email me](#) and we will connect you. Fatigue management is an important aspect of your safety at work.

WATER QUALITY RISK

The Water Directorate hosted a workshop on bushfire and drinking water quality risk at UNSW's CBD campus on 3 February, in partnership with UNSW, WSAA and AWA. The workshop was also livestreamed and recorded for later viewing. Members interested in reviewing the workshop recording, or the PowerPoint presentations please [email me](#) for instructions on how to access this information. We also have links to a wide range of information on this topic in our [Blog](#) space on our website.

A short [video](#) has been shared with us, courtesy of North East Water, showing the impacts that an intense storm can have on a bushfire affected catchment.

WATER INDUSTRY TRAINING WORKSHOP THIS MONTH

The Water Directorate together with the NSW Public Sector Industry Training Advisory Body (ITAB) are hosting a workshop on **25 February 2020** to explore strategic directions in water industry training in NSW. A number of changes have occurred to VET training arrangements in NSW over the last year which has significantly impacted the supply of accredited training to the water industry. Please [email me](#) if you are interested in contributing.

FINAL CALL FOR NOMINATIONS WIOA OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

A **final reminder** that nominations are open until **tomorrow Friday 21 February** for the [WIOA NSW Operator of the Year Award](#). Water Directorate has sponsored this Award in partnership with WIOA for many years. The honour will be bestowed at the upcoming WIOA NSW Operators Conference on 1 April.

[Nominating your operator](#) is a great opportunity to recognise the value and importance of their work. The winner will participate in WIOA's study tour of New Zealand. Don't forget to ask your nominees whether they hold a current passport!

NEW DAM SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN FORCE

Dams Safety NSW will be publishing guidelines to help declared dam owners comply with the requirements of the legislation and will be seeking feedback on the draft guidelines prior to publication. The [Dams Safety NSW website](#) lists the current schedule for release of the guidelines.



The guidelines do not contain compulsory requirements. Compliance with the dam safety legislation may be achieved by adopting other methods, if they fit better with a declared dam owner's systems.

SMALL COMMUNITIES FORUM GOONDIWINDI, QLD

The NSW and Queensland Water Directorates are collaborating to host a forum on water and sewerage in small and remote communities. The forum will consider strategic aspects of operating in a remote area, as well as achievable technical solutions. **Save the Date: 13 - 14 May 2020.**

OZWATER '20 DISCOUNTS

AWA has offered discounted full registration for Local Government attendees for Ozwater '20, in Adelaide. Further details available by [emailing me](#).

CONSULTATION DRAFT AUSTRALIAN GUIDELINES FOR WATER RECYCLING

A consultation draft of the *Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risks (Phase 1)* has been issued incorporating proposed revisions to public health components of the guidelines. You can obtain a copy by [emailing me](#).

A summary explaining the proposed changes is also available. The draft revision has been released for targeted consultation with key

stakeholders. Consultation is open until **31 March 2020**.

IN THE NEWS

- [Towns running out of water helped after deluge of rain in NSW – but many miss out](#)
- [How long until drought-stricken towns run out of water?](#)
- [Mobile desal plants to treat brackish water in regional NSW](#)
- [As inflows drop, will 'extreme' water restrictions become the norm?](#)
- [Federal government withholds water funding from NSW in Murray-Darling standoff](#)
- [IPWEA NSW appoints new CEO](#)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **AWA NSW Heads of Water Forum**, Sydney, 28 Feb
- **AWA/IWA Australia-NZ YWP conference**, Brisbane 12-13 March
- **WIOA NSW Operators Conference**, Tamworth, 1-2 April
- **Ozwater '20** Adelaide, 5-7 May
- **Qldwater Small/remote communities workshop**, Goondiwindi, 13-14 May

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Proposed 2020 meeting dates, venues to be confirmed:

- Thursday 12 March
- Thursday 21 May
- Thursday 9 July
- Thursday 10 September
- Wednesday 11 and Thursday 12 November

Brendan Guiney
Executive Officer
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