

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Infrastructure tsar joins calls for a renewed, modern National Water Initiative

Infrastructure Australia has joined the Productivity Commission this week in calling for a renewed and modernised National Water Initiative. Following two of the worst droughts recorded in recent history, it is time to update Australia's national water plan.

We call on all governments to progress the recommendations in the 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan relating to water.

The Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) welcomes the release of the 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan that outlines a 15-year roadmap to improve the resilience and sustainability of essential infrastructure, including urban water.

"We welcome Infrastructure Australia's 2021 Plan and its focus on delivering resilient and adaptable infrastructure for a stronger Australia in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic", said Mr Adam Lovell, Executive Director.

"WSAA is pleased to see the comprehensive Water Chapter in the Plan and supports the recommendations on the development of a renewed National Water Initiative incorporating a national approach to water security", said Mr Lovell.

"As the Plan outlines, water is critical to our cities and communities in contributing to liveable and healthy environments and as a key economic enabler. We are pleased to see recognition that the water industry is uniquely exposed to pressures from climate change, and as an industry we are seeking to accelerate our response through mitigation and adaptation measures as we transition to a net zero future.

"We note there are challenges, including ensuring that all options for water supply are on the table. We will continue to advocate for the consideration of all safe, climate-resilient and economically efficient sources to be discussed with communities when planning future water supplies.

"We agree that given the critical role of water in creating prosperous and liveable places, it needs to be better valued with a national focus and a renewed National Water Initiative with independent oversight. In addition, we support the recommendations in the Plan to prioritise a whole-of-water-cycle management approach including establishing a national stormwater management framework", said Mr Lovell.

The Plan also acknowledges the need for consistent and reliable water and wastewater services in remote communities. We support the call for better servicing of remote communities and the role that collaborative arrangements can play, particularly in communities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.



WATER SERVICES  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

We congratulate Infrastructure Australia on the release of the Plan and the associated suite of documents, in particular the addition of chapters for Waste and Social Infrastructure. The urban water industry in Australia already plays a role in the circular economy and seeks to increase awareness of its broader role in communities through contribution to resource recovery and blue and green infrastructure to enhance quality of life.

WSAA is the peak body representing the urban water industry in Australia. Its members provide water and wastewater services to over 24 million customers in Australia and New Zealand, including many of Australia's largest industrial and commercial enterprises.

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