

MEDIA RELEASE

Global Goals for Local Communities: Urban water advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Monday 7 August 2017

Today the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA), the peak body for urban water, released its Paper – Global Goals for Local Communities: Urban water advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Launched at Parliament House by the Hon Luke Hartsuyker, Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Paper outlines how the urban water industry in Australia is already meeting challenges set by the SDGs and provides a framework to further advance the industry's contribution.

'Australian water utilities have an opportunity to make a substantial contribution to advancing the SDGs, creating broader value through collaboration and partnership with government, industry and customers', said Mr Hartsuyker.

WSAA Chair and Managing Director at Yarra Valley Water, Pat McCafferty said the Sustainable Development Goals are a blueprint for a better future. 'They represent a compelling agenda for a sustainable and prosperous future for both people and planet. As providers of essential services we are committed to the realisation of Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.'

The Australian Government recognises the relationship between access to clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) and all other SDGs. Consistent with this, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is a representative on the UN High Level Panel on Water, comprising Heads of State and senior representatives from across the world. The Panel aims to mobilise effective action and advocate on financing and implementation.

Importantly WSAA's Paper includes a commitment from the water industry to the SDGs as well as 13 case studies from water utilities around Australia on their work to advance the Goals. The commitment articulates the intent of the industry to support and promote the SDGs in partnership with other utilities, customers and stakeholders.

'Our desire is that this Paper will lead to more collaboration between water utilities, governments, regulators, stakeholders and the community to enable us to focus on creating a sustainable and prosperous future', said Mr Adam Lovell, Executive Director, WSAA. 'We have developed strong relationships with our neighbours in the Pacific and South East Asia to assist them in achieving the SDGs. Creating a pathway for water utilities to be more involved will help our developing neighbours to provide clean safe drinking water and sanitation.'

WaterAid Australia CEO Rosie When welcomed the Paper and the commitment to SDG 6. 'Our work across the region has benefitted from the commitment and expertise of Australia and New Zealand. The key is to provide local solutions using global expertise and we look forward to working with water professionals to create growth opportunities for communities through accessible water and sanitation.'

The SDGs are a long-term vision for a better world. They describe the values that communities seek, and the values that water utilities must generate. The Goals are ambitious, interconnected and complex – they require breakthrough thinking and commitment to a collaborative approach.



WATER SERVICES
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

The Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) is the peak industry body representing the urban water sector. Our members provide water and sewerage services to over 20 million customers in Australia and New Zealand and many of Australia's largest industrial and commercial enterprises.

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