



WATER SERVICES
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



WSAA

Water Services
Association of Australia

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



ABOUT WSAA

The Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) is the peak industry body that connects the Australian urban water industry, representing over 85 public and privately owned water or water related organisations. Our members provide water and wastewater services to over 20 million customers in Australia and New Zealand.

WSAA's activities focus on collaboration, knowledge sharing, networking and cooperation in the urban water industry through a structure of Committees and Networks. Our strength lies in the support and contribution of our members and their collegiate attitude which has led to industry-wide approaches to national water issues. It is this type of candid exchange of information, experiences and ideas which sets WSAA apart from other water industry associations.

Formed in 1995, WSAA is a non-profit organisation fostering the exchange of information between industry, government and the community, and promoting sustainable water resource management. WSAA can demonstrate success in the standardisation of industry performance monitoring and benchmarking, as well as many research outcomes of national significance. The Executive of the Association retain strong links with policy makers and legislative bodies and their influencers, to monitor emerging issues of importance to the urban water industry. We are regularly consulted by decision makers when developing strategic directions for the water industry.

To view our 2016 - 2017 Financial Statements visit [wsaa.asn.au/annualreport2017](https://www.wsaa.asn.au/annualreport2017)

WSAA's main activities focus on four areas:



Fostering the exchange of information on education, training, research, water management, water and sewage treatment, water supply, sewage disposal and other matters of common interest



Promoting debate on environmentally sustainable development and management of water resources and the community health requirements of public water supplies



Industry performance, establishing benchmarks and industry leading practices for water service processes



Influencing national and state policies on the provision of urban water services and sustainable water resource management

CONNECT WITH WSAA

WSAA members enjoy connecting with water industry thought leaders and decision makers in forums that allow open and frank discussions. Staff at all levels and in all professions of WSAA members can sign up to the WSAA online community.

<https://www.wsaa.asn.au/user/register>



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MESSAGE FROM PAT MCCAFFERTY

WSAA CHAIR

Our sector delivers the most essential of all essential services. Health, well-being and prosperity are underpinned by the provision of safe drinking water and effective sanitation. It's a privilege to be WSAA Chair and my first year in the role has been very rewarding. The work of WSAA through collaboration and the delivery of major papers, reports and submissions continues to help shape the urban water industry and capture the attention of state, national and international policy makers.

Our Committees, Networks and Communities of Practice continue to focus on WSAA's five strategic priorities which position the urban water industry for current and future challenges. Key initiatives from the year include the work by the Utility Excellence Committee on the workforce skills of the future, the work by the Liveable Communities Committee to deliver the Next Gen Urban Water Paper and the work by the Customer and Industry Leadership Committee to better understand customer value. These are just a few of the great projects being delivered through the WSAA Committees and Networks.

In relation to future challenges for the industry, it's important we understand the contribution we can make to a sustainable and prosperous future for both people and planet and demonstrate our leadership at a local, regional and global level. In this regard we launched Global Goals for Local Communities: Urban Water Advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Paper provides a platform for water utilities, and the ecosystem in which we operate (including communities, governments and regulators). It starts a conversation about how we can make a difference through the fundamental role we play in the liveability and productivity of every major urban area in Australia.

Importantly the Paper includes a commitment by the water industry – we believe the first of its type in the world, where an entire national industry has expressed its support collectively to the SDGs. I'd like to thank the WSAA Board for its support and commitment to our industry and also recognise the great work delivered by the various contributors from member organisations and indeed the WSAA staff who continue to deliver high quality outcomes. I'm proud of this work and the other work that WSAA and our industry has achieved together in the last year and I look forward to the year ahead.

“

As the urban water industry considers future challenges we need to demonstrate our leadership at a local, regional and global level. WSAA plays a key role though facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing to lift the industry.

”

Pat McCafferty,
WSAA Chair





MESSAGE FROM ADAM LOVELL

WSAA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



It's been a busy year with the delivery of a number of significant programs. These include providing collaborative opportunities through workshops, position papers, understanding future trends, educational pieces, advocacy, guidelines development, benchmarking, innovation platforms and partnerships with key organisations. We also welcomed eight new members including our very first Alliance comprising 13 small council utilities.

While there are many highlights, two for me are the launch of our papers on approaches to inclusion and diversity and the value of water's contribution to liveable cities. Our Paper - Tapping the power of inclusion and diversity in urban water demonstrates the breadth and depth of initiatives in the water industry. It highlights that our members are increasing their efforts to support broader diversity dimensions while recognising that inclusive and diverse workforces can improve innovation, make better decisions and deliver better outcomes for the community.

Our Next Gen Urban Water Paper focuses on the role of urban water in vibrant and prosperous communities. It demonstrates the broader economic, social and health benefits of water businesses to their communities and is underpinned by over 20 case studies. The Paper, together with our paper on urban water's role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals are important in reframing how water businesses contribute beyond taps and toilets to create thriving cities and communities.

With all WSAA Networks now well established under the new Board Committee structure we continue to develop a robust member led program which addresses our five key strategic priorities. The year ahead will see growing momentum for reform at a national level with the Productivity Commission's (PC) National Water Reform Inquiry. It has been pleasing to see that WSAA's advocacy efforts over the past few years have culminated in our priorities being reflected in the PC's Draft Report.

Special thanks to the WSAA Board, WSAA staff and the staff from our members. Through collaboration we are ensuring the industry is well placed to meet current and future challenges.



While we continue to deliver a robust member led program, the year ahead will see growing momentum for reform at a national level. It is encouraging to see our advocacy efforts over the past few years being reflected throughout the Productivity Commission's National Water Reform Inquiry Draft Report.



Adam Lovell,
WSAA Executive Director



MEMBERS OF THE BOARD



PAT MCCAFFERTY, CHAIR

Pat was appointed Managing Director of Yarra Valley Water on 1 July 2014. He has extensive experience in the water sector having previously held General Manager roles covering a wide range of operational and strategic leadership functions, and working in the USA water sector. He is also a member of the Monash Infrastructure Advisory Council.



JOHN KNOX, DEPUTY CHAIR

John is the Managing Director of Icon Water which owns and operates the water and sewerage business in the ACT and is a 50% owner ActewAGL, a provider of electricity and gas services to the ACT and surrounding regional NSW centres.

John is also a member of the ActewAGL Joint Venture Partnerships Board and was previously the Chief Finance Officer of ActewAGL. John has an extensive background in private sector commercial management and experience across various business sectors.



LOUISE DUDLEY

Louise was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Queensland Urban Utilities on 1 July 2012, and was a part of the organisation since it was formed on 1 July 2010. Louise previously held the position of Chief Financial Officer and played a key role in the creation of Queensland Urban Utilities during her time as Executive Manager, Water Retail, Brisbane City Council.



JEFF RIGBY

Jeff is the Managing Director of Coliban Water. Jeff has 33 years of experience in the water industry, including 17 years in executive management roles. He was previously the Managing Director of Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water from 2007 until joining Coliban Water in 2011.



KEVIN YOUNG

Kevin is the Managing Director of Sydney Water and a former Chair of WSAA. He has a degree with honours in engineering, and a Masters of Business Administration. Kevin is a Board Member for WaterAid, a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia, and a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



ROCH CHEROUX

Roch is the Chief Executive of SA Water. He has 25 years' experience in the water industry in design, construction, financing, operating and customer service activities in both line management and executive management positions. Roch has had various senior roles in leading private water companies in Australia, Estonia and France and holds a Masters degree in Engineering and Business Management.



MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

SUE MURPHY

Sue is the Chief Executive Officer of the Water Corporation of Western Australia and former Chair of WSAA. She graduated as a Civil Engineer from the University of Western Australia. Sue is a member of the University of Western Australia Senate, Board Member of the UWA Business School and also a Board Member for the AFL Fremantle Dockers. Sue has been listed in the top 100 most influential engineers in Australia by Engineers Australia in each year from 2009 to 2015.

DAVID HARRIS

David Harris is the CEO of WaterNSW. David is leading the transformation of the company following its formation in 2015. That transformation is geared to delivering an efficient and high performing bulk water supplier. David has over 20 years' experience in the Australian water industry and has been involved in various key policy and market reforms in the water, energy and utilities industries over that time.

NICOLE HOLLOWS

Nicole was appointed SunWater Chief Executive Officer on 26 April 2016. Nicole is an experienced senior executive, with a career spanning more than 20 years in the resources sector. Prior to joining SunWater, she was Managing Director of global resources firm AMCI Australia and South East Asia. Nicole is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, a fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is a Graduate of Harvard Business School's Program for Management Development.

ADAM LOVELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Adam is the Executive Director of WSAA. He has a BSc (Hons) in Chemistry and a Masters of Environmental Engineering Science from the University of Sydney. He is a Board member of the National Centre of Excellence for Desalination, and a member of the National Health and Medical Research Council Water Quality Advisory Committee.

ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBERS:

JOHN RINGHAM

Former Managing Director,
SA Water

MICHAEL WANDMAKER

Managing Director,
Melbourne Water



HIGHLIGHTS

Year at a glance

8

new members including our first Alliance comprising 13 small council utilities



Member meetings

9

Board Committee meetings

Over **25** 
Network meetings

Over **35** other workshop and training opportunities for members

1

Chairs and MDs Symposium



170+

discussions on the WSAA online member community

392

codes sales through the WSAA Code Shop

2500

active members on the WSAA online member community



5 submissions to state and national reviews and inquiries

Second annual Water Utility Regulators Forum



HIGHLIGHTS



HARNESS THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

DIGITAL UTILITY WHITE PAPER

WSAA developed a White Paper outlining the current state of the digital economy along with the elements of what is required to become a digital utility. The paper poses key questions for the industry to address in moving towards becoming an integrated digital entity and forms the basis of a roadmap being developed by the Business Transformation Network (under the Utility Excellence Committee).

BE A CUSTOMER CENTRIC WATER UTILITY

KEY PROJECT

UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER VALUE

Understanding what drives a customer's perception of value is the goal of all water utilities. Using detailed surveys and case studies, WSAA brought together the most recent utility research in this area. Delivery included a successful workshop and report. Findings will help utilities design their engagement processes, develop their customer strategies and measure success.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING

WSAA carried out a desktop study of customer journey mapping in Australian water utilities. It delivered a report along with shared case studies as part of a workshop. This study will help utilities avoid some of the pitfalls of journey mapping and share their approaches to overcoming common pain points.

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Bringing together case studies from different utilities on how they approach their customer engagement process, an online site was created. The site houses case studies, articles, strategies and research in this area and creates a one-stop-shop for any utility developing their own strategy.



HIGHLIGHTS



IDENTIFY THE VALUE OF WATER'S CONTRIBUTION TO LIVEABLE CITIES

KEY PROJECT

NEXT GEN URBAN WATER: THE ROLE OF URBAN WATER IN VIBRANT AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES

Next Gen Urban Water was launched in May 2017 and demonstrates the broader economic, social and health benefits of water businesses to their communities through over 20 case studies. The Paper is already being used to inform state and Federal Government on the broader contribution of urban water to communities.

[SEE MORE](#)

KEY PROJECT

GLOBAL GOALS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES: URBAN WATER ADVANCING THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Launched at Parliament House by the Hon Luke Hartsuyker, Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Global Goals for Local Communities 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. The 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.



[SEE MORE](#)



HIGHLIGHTS

CUSTOMER FOCUSED INNOVATION, ADVOCACY AND REGULATION

URBAN WATER COST CHAIN

In conjunction with 10 members, WSAA measured costs of individual stages across the urban water value chain (eg treatment, transport, retail etc). The project provided utilities with greater understanding of their costs. The information is being used for advocacy and as a tool to communicate with customers about the composition of their bills.

KEY PROJECT

SUBMISSION TO THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION'S INQUIRY IN URBAN WATER REFORM

WSAA is ensuring the voice of its members is heard throughout the inquiry process with a submission and as part of the Stakeholder Reference Group.

[SEE MORE](#)

WET WIPES

WSAA continued its advocacy for members both nationally and internationally ensuring collaboration to progress a standard for flushability and elevating the key messages around what can and can't be flushed down the toilet. As a founding member of the recently formed International Water Service Flushability Group (IWSFG), WSAA is directly involved in representing the Australian water industry in developing and finalising a Publicly Available Standard.

[SEE MORE](#)

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION IN WATER UTILITIES

This paper examines the current state of innovative technology adoption in Australian water utilities. Utilities report high levels of awareness of innovative technologies, which they access through a variety of avenues, primarily the WSAA Technology Approval Group (TAG). However there are many barriers to deploying promising technologies. This paper assists utilities to understand potential barriers and how the WSAA members can work collaboratively to overcome these barriers.

FOSTERING INNOVATION PROJECT

This project, led by Water Research Foundation, developed a set of guidelines to assist utilities build an innovation program, providing a framework to embed innovation across all business units. It also helps utilities to communicate the value of innovation. For a small cash contribution Australian utilities were able to access and contribute to this valuable research worth over USD \$650,000.

TECHNOLOGY APPROVAL GROUP (TAG)

TAG continues to be one of the most successful subscription projects. Since its inception, there have been 22 rounds of workshops, presenting 110 novel technologies to the 29 members. Of these technologies, approximately half have gone onto trial or installation. WSAA and Isle Utilities have re-signed an agreement which will deliver the TAG program until 2019.

[SEE MORE](#)

TECHNOLOGY EXCHANGE PLATFORM

Launched in December 2016, the Technology Exchange Platform (TEP) is an inventory of technologies considered, trialed or installed in utilities. It aims to foster information sharing between utilities and avoid duplication of effort in considering which technologies to adopt. To date, approximately 90 technologies have been entered and 155 utility members have joined up to access the TEP.



HIGHLIGHTS

ELEVATE PERFORMANCE

KEY PROJECT

CHAIRS AND MDs SYMPOSIUM

Over 70 Chairs and MDs came together in Canberra to network and hear from leading speakers. Two keynote speakers were from the UK: Colin Skellett, Group Chief Executive Wessex Water and Tony Smith, Chief Executive Consumer Council for Water. In addition attendees heard from Catherine Thomas, Director, Customer and Partner Experience, Microsoft Australia, Jane Doolan, Commissioner at the Productivity Commission and Patrice O'Brien, General Manager Workplace Beyondblue.

OZWATER 2017 STREAM

In collaboration with the Australian Water Association, WSAA coordinated an Ozwater Policy Stream with sessions on:

- **National Water Reform** – The Triennial Assessment of the National Water Initiative and a look at the main issues facing the water industry
- **Water security** – a snapshot of its importance, current levels and future challenges
- **UN Sustainable Development Goals** – highlight progress and future commitment by the industry

BENCHMARKING

- **Efficiency Benchmarking of operating costs (lite)** – water utilities participated in the project focused on providing a detailed breakdown of operating costs against predefined categories and normalisers
- **Asset Benchmarking (Asset Management Customer Value)** – The project included 44 participants from 6 countries and assessed leading practice asset management processes and major areas of opportunity for utilities to enhance asset management
- **Health and Safety Benchmarking** – Over 26 participants contributed data on over 15 key health and safety indicators for both internal and external workforces. A new indicator framework has been developed with a greater 'lead' and 'cultural' focus and new database created to facilitate data collection and reporting against indicators
- **Energy Benchmarking Wastewater Treatment Round 2** – Following a very successful first round of benchmarking in 2014/15, the aim of this project was to build the industry's understanding and capabilities to achieve more energy efficient operations. It included analysis of 245 Wastewater treatment plants

JAPANESE WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION VISIT

In February 2017, WSAA hosted a delegation of Japanese wastewater utility executives. The visit showcased a range of programs and case studies from the Australian urban water industry as well as overviews of regulation, customers, climate change, asset management and research and innovation.



HIGHLIGHTS



ELEVATE PERFORMANCE

KEY PROJECT

TAPPING THE POWER OF INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY IN URBAN WATER

Launched on International Women's Day, the Paper describes approaches to inclusion and diversity in the sector and highlights an increasingly comprehensive approach to setting inclusion and diversity strategies. The Paper demonstrates the breadth and depth of initiatives for industry stakeholders as well as encouraging collaboration within the industry through sharing leading practices.

[SEE MORE](#)

KEY PROJECT

CODES AND APPRAISALS

- Revised the Sewage Pumping Station Code (WSA04) with input from the members
- Revised local editions of the Water Supply and Gravity Sewerage Codes
- Eighty products appraised related to high and medium risk applications in water and sewer networks
- Revised and published Issue 5 of WSAA Product Specifications

[SEE MORE](#)

CONDITION ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR CIVIL STRUCTURES AND MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL ASSETS

Guidelines were developed for the condition assessment of civil assets other than pipelines. Part of the project contributes to a wider research effort to better understand the condition of mechanical and electrical assets. The information can be used to make life cycle decisions for the management of these assets.

CHALLENGING DESIGN ASSUMPTIONS

Desktop study to understand existing practices in the selection, review and process of planning and design criteria. The study also considered assumptions for water demand and sewage generation. The final report included a leading practice compendium, utility survey and literature review.

DESIGN ASSURANCE COURSE

Five design assurance accreditation course were run by Melbourne water utilities and another two by Hunter Water. The purpose was to certify and accredit designers to work with the WSAA Codes in a manner that provides a high degree of assurance to WSAA members.



COMMITTEES

Utility Excellence

UTILITY EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

The Utility Excellence Committee assists water businesses to continue to improve efficiency and maintain affordability through a targeted work program. The Committee is primarily concerned with the internal business 'variables' that water utilities have direct control over.

NETWORKS

- Asset Management, Optimisation and Strategy
- Asset Maintenance, Operations and Renewals
- Asset Planning, Resilience and Creation
- Australian Standards
- Health and Safety
- People and Culture
- Pipe Condition Works Program
- Service Planning and Optimisation
- Wastewater Source Management
- Water Services Sector Group

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Civil Assets
- IT Systems
- Mechanical, Electrical and SCADA
- Metering
- Dam Owners

PROJECTS

- Digital Utility White Paper
- Partnering with the Victorian Intelligent Water Networks (IWN)
- Workforce skills of the future project with Water Environment & Research Foundation
- Efficiency benchmarking of operating costs
- Asset Management Customer Value
- Health and Safety Benchmarking
- Paper: Tapping the Power of Inclusion and Diversity in Urban Water
- Energy Benchmarking Wastewater Treatment Round 2
- Aquality 'Refresh'
- SCADA Guideline Update
- Condition Assessment Guidelines for Civil Structures and for Mechanical and Electrical Assets
- Desktop study and report on challenging design assumptions
- Input to the Asbestos Safety Eradication Agency
- Design Assurance Courses
- Input into international flushability standards
- Management framework for wet weather overflows: a risk based approach



COMMITTEES

Liveable Communities

LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

The Liveable Communities Committee plays an important role in delivering on WSAA's vision – Customer driven, enriching life. 'Liveable communities' captures the water industry's role in enriching life through secure, safe and reliable water and wastewater services that enables health and wellbeing, environmental sustainability and economic prosperity.

NETWORKS

- Adaptive Planning and Integrated Water Management
- Climate Change, Energy and Environment
- Research Managers
- Water Quality and Health

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Water Efficiency

PROJECTS

- Paper: Next Gen Urban Water
- Paper: Global Goals for Local Communities: Urban water advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Fact sheets: Emerging Pathogens of concern for the Water Industry
- Fact sheet: Copper, Lead and Campylobacter
- Vector-borne Pathogens, Climate Change and Water Sensitive Urban Design
- Smart Control of Water Systems to Improve the Management of Drinking Water Quality
- Energy Efficiency Benchmarking WWTP and Sub Metering Guidance
- Aquality Refresh
- National Guidelines for the Management of FFOG
- Value of research advocacy paper
- Fostering innovation within utilities with WaterRF
- Submissions to relevant reviews and inquiries, both State and Federal



COMMITTEES

Customer and Industry Leadership

CUSTOMER AND INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Customer and Industry Leadership Committee supports the industry's desire to improve customer engagement and deliver value for money. It is WSAA's focal point for better understanding customer values and preferences as an input to other committees. It also assists the industry to influence and respond appropriately to government reform agendas, using transparent data and information to build well informed industry positions.

NETWORKS

- Customer and Community
- Financial Sustainability and Regulation

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

- Economic Regulation Forum
- Communications Managers

PROJECTS

- Financial Health Check
- Value Chain
- Customer Value Report and Workshop
- Key pricing and Consumption Data
- Customer Journey Mapping review
- Value Capture report
- Submissions to relevant reviews and inquiries, both State and Federal



WSAA UTILITY MEMBERS

NT

- Power and Water Corporation

WA

- Aqwest
- Water Corporation

QLD

- Banana Shire Council
- Cairns Regional Council
- City of Gold Coast
- City of Townsville
- Gladstone Area Water Board
- Isaac Regional Council
- Logan City Council
- Mackay Regional Council
- Mount Isa Water Board
- Queensland Urban Utilities
- Redland City Council
- Seqwater
- Southern Downs Regional Council
- SunWater
- Toowoomba Regional Council
- Unitywater
- Western Downs Regional Council
- Whitsunday Regional Council
- Wide Bay Water

NSW

- Byron Shire Council
- Central Coast Council
- Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Goldenfields Water Board
- Hunter Water
- Lismore City Council
- Lithgow City Council
- Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance
- MidCoast Water
- Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
- Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
- Sydney Water
- Tweed Shire Council
- WaterNSW

VIC

- Barwon Water
- Central Highlands Water
- City West Water
- Coliban Water
- East Gippsland Water
- Gippsland Water
- Goulburn Valley Water
- Goulburn Murray Water
- GWM Water
- Lower Murray Region Water
- Melbourne Water
- North East Water
- South East Water
- South Gippsland Water
- Wannon Region Water
- Westernport Water
- Western Water
- Yarra Valley Water

TAS

- Taswater

SA

- SA Water

ACT

- Icon Water

INTERNATIONAL UTILITY MEMBER

- Watercare NZ
- Wellington Water



WSAA UTILITY MEMBERS

PRIVATE UTILITY MEMBERS

- Suez
- Trility
- Veolia Australia and New Zealand

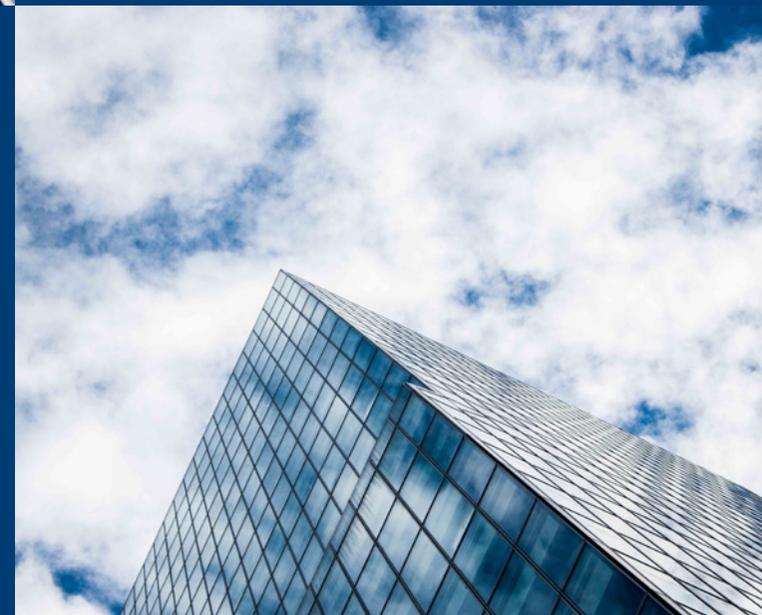
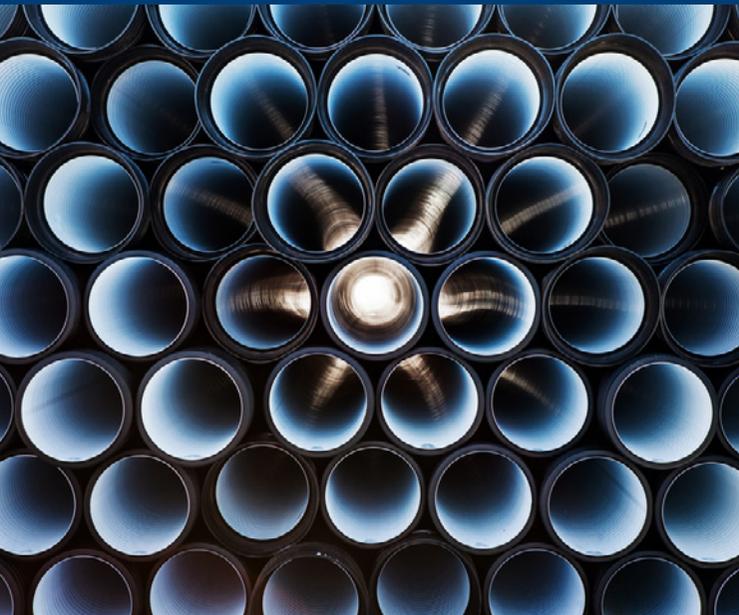


CONSULTANT MEMBERS

- AECOM
- Arup
- Beca
- CH2M Australia
- EY
- GHD
- KPMG
- WSP

STAKEHOLDER MEMBERS

- Department of Health Victoria
- NSW Department of Primary Industries – Water
- NSW Water Directorate
- QLD Water Directorate
- Victorian Water Industry Association



Melbourne Office

Suite 802, Level 8
401 Docklands Drive Docklands
VIC 3008

Telephone 03 8605 7666

info@wsaa.asn.au
www.wsaa.asn.au



twitter.com/wsaa_water



linkedin.com/company/
water-services-association-of-australia

Sydney Office

Level 9
420 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000

GPO Box 915
Sydney NSW 2001

Photography acknowledgments

Unsplash and Pexels



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