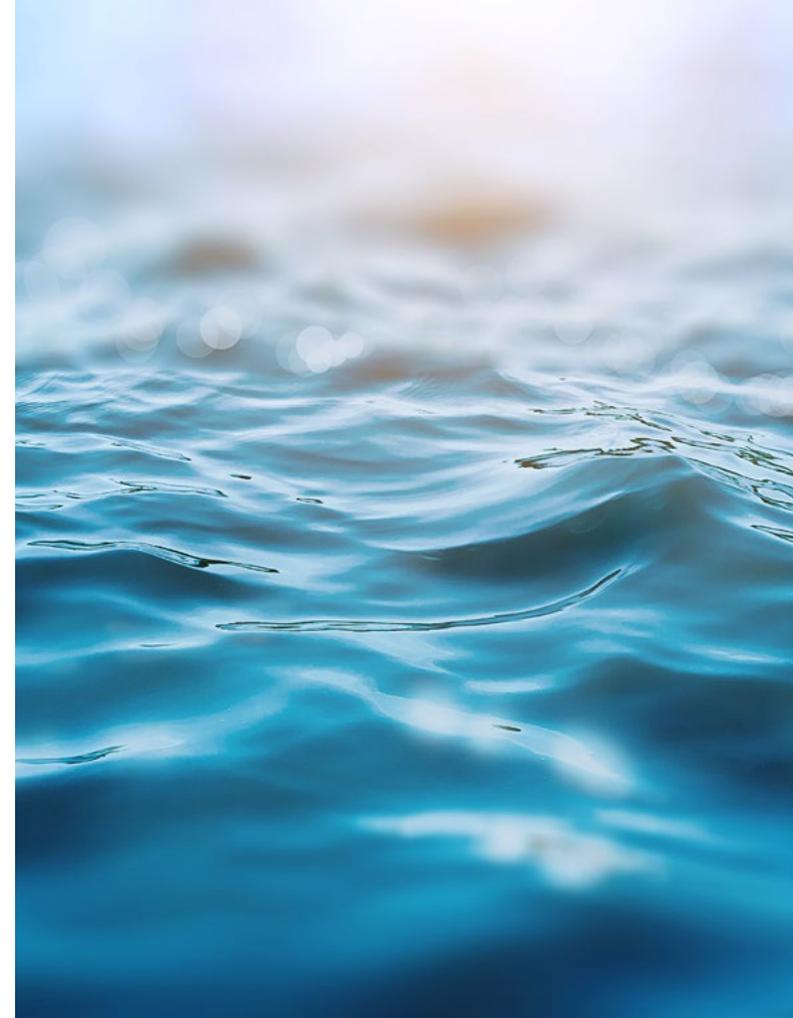




WSAA

ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



WATER SERVICES
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

ABOUT WSAA



The Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) is the peak industry body that connects the Australian urban water industry, representing over 100 public and privately owned water or water related organisations. Our members provide water and sewerage services to over 24 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.

The urban water industry is committed to anchoring its services to customers' values, and to enrich communities where water services have broad economic, environmental and social values. In line with this our main activities focus on four areas:



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



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



Improving industry performance and establishing benchmarks and industry leading practices for water service processes



Fostering the exchange of information on education, training, research, water and wastewater management and treatment and other matters of common interest.



CONNECT WITH WSAA

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

[REGISTER](#)

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MESSAGE FROM ROCH CHEROUX

WSAA Chair



In my first year as WSAA Chair, it has been a privilege to see the urban water industry continue its focus on collaboration and knowledge sharing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. While much of the year has seen lockdowns across Australia and New Zealand, the industry continued to provide the most essential services through the provision of safe drinking water and effective sanitation.

The value of partnerships and collaboration was never more evident than during the COVID-19 pandemic. With that in mind, WSAA has continued to provide members and staff with opportunities to engage through groups, discussions and projects.

The WSAA online community has seen over 20 per cent growth in active members in the last year. An example of the value members gain from participating in Committees, Networks and Communities of Practice, to contributing to projects and submissions and sharing their own experiences and learnings to grow the industry as a whole.

The Association remained focused on responding to COVID-19, progressing healthy, liveable cities and

communities, understanding customers, promoting people and safety, embedding innovation and demonstrating industry leadership.

Key initiatives and projects were delivered through the three Board Committees and numerous Networks and Communities of Practice, including 11 major reports and ongoing initiatives like W-Lab, Opex Benchmarking, Asset Management Customer Value and work around mental health to name a few.

I'd like to thank the WSAA Board and all members for their support and commitment to our industry. I'm proud of the work that WSAA and our industry has achieved together in the last year and I look forward to the year ahead.



In my first year as WSAA Chair, it has been a privilege to see the urban water industry continue its focus on collaboration and knowledge sharing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Roch Cheroux,
WSAA Chair

MESSAGE FROM ADAM LOVELL

WSAA Executive Director



With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing and changing through 2020 and 2021 and new challenges and opportunities emerging for the urban water industry, the importance of collaboration, advocacy and innovation remain crucial as we seek to grow as an industry. The work that WSAA does in these areas is only successful through the participation of its members and their people and I want to thank the WSAA Board, WSAA team and all our members for their continued support of our Association over the past year.

This year we reviewed our Strategy and engaged with members about future challenges and the role of the Association in ensuring the industry is equipped to meet the new landscape beyond COVID-19. The outcomes for the industry have evolved and include a focus on embedding water's role in the circular economy, accelerating the industry transition to net zero in response to climate change and enhancing the industry's resilience, including through diversity of supply. These focus areas sit alongside meeting and exceeding customer expectations while maintaining affordability for customers and leading water's contribution to thriving communities.

It has been pleasing to see the growth in engagement across our groups and channels as we continued to provide opportunities for collaboration and knowledge

sharing. Whilst we all miss face to face meetings, other online platforms have assisted WSAA in reaching more members more regularly. We are grateful for the efforts of all leaders involved in WSAA, along with the dedicated WSAA team and people from our members across the urban water sector in Australia and New Zealand. I would also like to thank Raveen Jaduram who finished on the WSAA Board during the last year.

As we look to the future through our Young Utility Leaders Program, I see the enthusiasm and passion of our industry's emerging leaders. It's been wonderful to watch our Young Utility Leaders flourish in their careers since the program began 4 years ago. If they are the future of the urban water industry, we're in good hands.



This year we reviewed our Strategy and engaged with members about future challenges and the role of the Association in ensuring the industry is equipped to meet the new landscape for urban water services beyond COVID-19.

Adam Lovell,
WSAA Executive Director

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD



ROCH CHEROUX CHAIR

Roch is the Managing Director of Sydney Water. Before joining Sydney Water, Roch held roles as Chief Executive of SA Water, Chief Executive Officer of SUEZ for the

South East Asia region and SUEZ-Degrémont Australia and New Zealand, Managing Director of United Utilities Asia and Pacific (TRILITY), and Chief Executive and Chairman of Tallinn Water in Estonia. Roch holds formal qualifications in Engineering and Business Management.



JON LAMONTE

Jon is the Chief Executive at Watercare Services Limited. Most recently, Jon was CEO of Sydney Metro, leading the procurement, construction and delivery of Australia's first fully-automated

metro rail network. Prior to this, Jon was CEO of Transport for Greater Manchester since 2013. Jon has also served in the Royal Air Force and was CEO of Tubelines in London, looking after three of London's underground lines during the 2012 Olympics.



ANDREW GEORGE

Andrew is the Chief Executive Officer of WaterNSW, which is responsible for the supply of raw water throughout regional NSW and Greater Sydney. Andrew has held Executive positions

in WaterNSW since its inception in 2015, where he was part of the inaugural executive team and has since been involved in the strategic transformation of the NSW water sector. Andrew has over 10 years' experience in bulk water supply utilities with extensive experience in regulatory and market strategy, government relations, engineering, asset management, and major Infrastructure delivery.



PAT MCCAFFERTY

Pat McCafferty is the Managing Director of Yarra Valley Water and a former Chair of WSAA. In a career spanning over 30 years in the water industry, Pat has extensive experience in strategic

leadership positions, including planning, regulation, finance and operations. Pat is the Chair of the Thriving Communities Partnership (a cross sector collaboration to improve support for vulnerable customers of essential services) and is a member of the Monash Infrastructure Advisory Council and the Victorian Government's Women in Water Leadership Program Oversight Committee.



JASON DEVITT

Jason is the Director of Engineering and Commercial Infrastructure at Mackay Regional Council which includes managing the Water Utility business. He has held a Director's role since 2009

and has approximately 25 years' experience in the water industry working across all aspects of the water business. He has led the transformation of Mackay Water into a recognised leading regional water utility through its use of digital technology to enhance customer outcomes.



ADAM LOVELL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Adam is the Executive Director of WSAA. Adam provides national leadership in policy positions for the Australian urban water sector on issues including industry

reform, liveable cities, water quality, climate change, customer engagement and asset management. Prior to joining WSAA in 2008, Adam was at Sydney Water for 11 years in leadership roles in the Science, Technology and Research area. Adam is currently the Chair of the Global Water Research Coalition.



LOUISE DUDLEY

Louise is the Chief Executive Officer of Urban Utilities and has been a part of the organisation since it was formed in 2010. Louise previously held the

position of Chief Financial Officer

and played a key role in the creation of Urban Utilities during her time as Executive Manager, Water Retail, Brisbane City Council.



PAT DONOVAN

Pat is the CEO of Water Corporation, Western Australia's principal supplier of water, wastewater, drainage and bulk irrigation services. Pat is leading the Corporation's transition to

a new operating model to achieve their vision to deliver greater value to their customers, community and owner by ensuring operations are safe for all, lowest total cost and lowest environmental impact. Prior to joining Water Corporation, Pat was President of ATCO Gas, Chief Operating Officer at ATCO Gas Australia, Executive Director at ATCO Australia and Chief Operating Officer at WA Gas Networks.



LARA OLSEN

Lara is the Managing Director of South East Water. She has extensive experience in the utility sector, focused on customer experience and innovation.

Before joining South East Water,

Lara was the Global Head of Business Development and Industrial Products at Tesla Energy based in the USA and also led the Business Development and Industrial Products team for Tesla Australia. Lara was also Head of Strategy for CitiPower PowerCor and the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), Project Leader with the Boston Consulting Group and co-founded Billcap.



DAVID RYAN

David is the Chief Executive of SA Water, one of Australia's largest integrated water utilities, serving more than 1.7 million customers across urban, regional and remote areas. Prior to joining SA Water,

David was Managing Director of Melbourne's City West Water, and held executive roles at bulk water company Melbourne Water in operations and capital delivery, waterway management and customer solutions.

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS:

RAVEEN JADURAM

MARLON BRIDGES

HIGHLIGHTS

at a glance

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Chairs and MDs
Forum

3

member meetings



90,000

Visitors to the website



11

Major reports released



38,000

Downloads of
WSAA reports

200+

Online events
and workshops

20

Submissions to state
and national reviews
and inquiries

260+

Discussions on the
WSAA online member
community

5800+

(21% growth)
Active members on the
WSAA online member
community


20%

Increase in downloads of
WSAA Product Appraisals

5

Young Utility
Leaders

1200+

Products sold through
the WSAA shop

ACHIEVEMENTS



RESPONDING TO COVID-19

National COVID-19 Coordination Commission

Represented the urban water industry on the Federal Government's National COVID-19 Coordination Commission in the Utilities Work Stream. Our Executive and team provided data and information on issues including bulk supply of chemicals and materials, safe work practices and hardship programs for retail customers.

WSAA COVID-19 Community of Practice

Formed the WSAA COVID-19 Community of Practice to provide a forum to promote collaboration between water utilities, identify risks, and share approaches to embracing opportunities and practices related to COVID-19.

KEY ACHIEVEMENT

The ColoSSoS Project

Supported Water Research Australia to lead The ColoSSoS Project, to understand the impacts of COVID-19 and the associated virus (SARS-CoV-2) on wastewater systems. The support for this project is

based on establishing national standards and protocols for a system that will not only support utilities in their current management of COVID-19 but also for future disease outbreaks and pandemics in the future.

COVID-19 advocacy

Worked to ensure stakeholder and community awareness around COVID-19 and drinking water, wastewater, essential workers, flushable products and chemical supply chains.

Water sector macro trends

[See more](#)

Released Water sector macro trends, an analysis report for the Victorian water industry that investigates the impacts of COVID-19 on historic megatrends as a thought starter for discussion of the New Utility.

ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

PROGRESSING HEALTHY, LIVEABLE CITIES

All options on the table: urban water supply options for Australia

[See more](#)

Released All options on the table: urban water supply options for Australia, a report that aims to inform water security discussions with the community and stakeholders and to increase understanding around the attributes and costs of different water supply options.

KEY ACHIEVEMENT

WSAA industry climate change position

[See more](#)

Released the Industry climate change position, a statement which outlines the commitments of the industry to mitigate our impact on our climate, respond and adapt to the impacts of a changing climate on the delivery of our services, and improve the resilience of our communities and the environment in adapting to a changing climate.

Transitioning the water industry with the circular economy

[See more](#)

Released Transitioning the water industry with the circular economy, a paper that guides water utilities to unlock the circular economy to better manage resources, make and use products and to regenerate natural systems.

Integrated water management: principles and best practice for water utilities

[See more](#)

Released Integrated water management: principles and best practice for water utilities, a paper that provides a framework with a set of principles and agreed best practice outcomes supported by case studies, that allow water utilities to step through the IWM planning process in a way that suits their own particular circumstances.

Sustainable Development Goals

[See more](#)

Released a Sustainable Development: Goals framework for driving sustainability outcomes for urban water utilities, a discussion paper by the Monash Sustainable Development Institute including a framework that identifies priority targets and indicators for water utilities to measure their impact on the SDGs now, and utility of the future targets and indicators for water utilities to consider their future impact.



ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMERS

Water literacy

Held workshops to share leading practice around public water literacy, understand the challenges and develop shared objectives in this space.

Measuring affordability

Developed a methodology for measuring affordability, carried out an analysis of the results for water utilities and shared the challenges and implications in the use of this measure for the affordability of customers that struggle to pay as well as future customers.

KEY ACHIEVEMENT

Customer Support Better Practice Framework

[See more](#)

Developed a Framework to help water corporations evolve, improve and strengthen their support programs for customers that are struggling to pay their water bill. The Framework will help achieve a consistent approach across the water sector to how we individually and collectively support customers experiencing financial difficulty.

Complaints management

Developed a guideline to ensure consistent interpretation of the definition of a complaint and worked to support water utilities to bring in this new approach to complaints management across their businesses.

WE (Water and Energy) collaboration

Held a series of webinars with The Energy Charter to discuss areas of better practice that the water and energy sectors can share and operationalise across both sectors by working better together. The sectors have worked closely together on issues such as getting concessions to the right people, working with indigenous communities, support for vulnerable customers and innovation opportunities.



PROMOTING PEOPLE AND SAFETY

KEY ACHIEVEMENT

Water industry mental health framework

[See more](#)

Released 15 water utility case studies to accompany the Water industry mental health framework, many which draw on recent workplace experience during COVID-19. The framework and case studies seek to drive a step change in mental health awareness and management in the urban water industry.

WSAA Young Utility Leaders

[See more](#)

Welcomed a new group of WSAA Young Utility Leaders to work alongside our board committees and participate in leadership coaching through the Peter Cullen Trust.

Ross Young Scholarship

Awarded the Ross Young Scholarship to WSAA Young Utility Leaders Sophie McGuinness and Bianca Petrevski to progress their successful pitch 'Diving and Thriving into the Water Industry' which aims to build and develop current and future water professionals.

ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

EMBEDDING INNOVATION

W-Lab

Held a number of technology showcases and webinars as part of W-Lab, a partnership with Isle Utilities and ThinkPlace, to deliver an industry-leading innovative technologies program for members.

KEY ACHIEVEMENT

Technology Road Map

[See more](#)

Released the W-Lab Technology Roadmap co-created by over 100 water utilities across Australia and New Zealand, an industry first. The Roadmap will guide the water industry, as it seeks to leverage innovative technology solutions to secure a new water future.

Digital Reference Framework

[See more](#)

Released the Digital reference framework for the water sector with the Internet of Things Alliance Australia (IoTAA) to encourage a common approach to IoT for water utilities to simplify the understanding of digital systems, improve clarity and streamline digital procurement.

CRC-P Smart Linings Project

Key documentation for the CRC-P Smart Linings Project developed and reviewed by water industry participants. Four sensors to measure key installation parameters developed, lab tested and trialed in the field successfully. Research and laboratory testing completed for CIPP and Spray liners (for water mains) and continues for CAC and Geopolymer liners (wastewater assets).

INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

National Water Reform webinars

Ran a series of interactive National Water Reform Webinars to understand the right issues, priorities and what matters most to our members.

Benchmarking

Completed the next round of the OPEX Benchmarking and Asset Management Customer Value benchmarking and continued development of the Your Utility Dashboard, an interactive, utility specific tool combining numerous benchmarking data.

Cyber security

Represented the urban water industry with the Water Services Sector Group at The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security public hearing to ensure that serious cyber security risks can be met effectively with the lowest possible regulatory burden and cost to our customers.

Financial stocktake

Completed a financial stocktake of the urban water industry with a high participation rate across members.

Advocacy

Made over 20 submissions to state and national government reviews and inquiries to ensure the voice of members was heard including the Productivity Commission's Inquiry in National Water Reform. WSAA also played a key role into influencing the NSW Government decision to reintroduce developer charges in Sydney and the Hunter.

Codes and Standards

Released guidelines and codes of industry significance as eBooks including Issue 7.3 of the WSAA Product Specifications, the 4th edition of the Conduit Inspection Reporting Code of Australia and the Manual for Selection and Application of Protective Coatings.



FOCUS

for the year ahead



FOCUS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

In 2021/22 we will launch the WSAA Strategy 2021-23. The new Strategy will be ambitious and thought leading and continue a strong focus on core services. Already our three Committees have a significant program of work planned for completion in the year ahead.

Customer and Industry Leadership Committee

- National Performance Report Review, ensuring the NPR delivers a report that promotes transparency of the urban water sector.
- Customer Perceptions Survey 2021, conducting sentiment monitoring to compare performance and understand the drivers of trust and value.
- Water Literacy ACARA Review, ensuring water literacy remains in the school curriculum and the water sector is viewed as a stakeholder and resource in education.
- CX Capability Maturity Framework, developing a maturity framework to assist organisations in determining their gaps, priorities for improvement and guidance on how to reach their desired state.

Liveable Communities Committee

- All Options on the Table, updating the costs database completed in 2019 and developing a Toolkit with resources, along with a new Water360 website, a digital repository of water industry research and engagement materials on a wide range of industry topics.
- Circular Economy, releasing the final Action Plan, identifying priority actions for WSAA to undertake working with the industry, including a Hydrogen 101 fact sheet for utilities.
- Indigenous and reconciliation, progressing a portfolio of projects including a WSAA Reconciliation Action Plan, Talking Water (a second short film), and Making Waves podcast.
- Climate Change, continuing to work for the industry on extreme event preparedness.

Utility Excellence Committee

- Health and Safety and People and Culture Benchmarking, measuring people and productivity and developing scorecards and a framework to better understand gaps and improve performance.
- Smart Linings for Pipe Infrastructure Project, progressing a portfolio approach to pipe condition assessment and rehabilitation.
- Flushable Products Standards, progressing the standard through public consultation and final Standard approval with Standards Australia.
- Bulk Chemical supply chains and contract positions, gaining a better understanding of sources and possible contract issues.



WSAA UTILITY MEMBERS



WA

- Aqwest
- Busselton Water
- City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Water Corporation

NT

- Power and Water Corporation

SA

- SA Water

TAS

- TasWater

ACT

- Icon Water

QLD

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

NSW

- Byron Shire Council
- CENTROC
- Central Coast Council
- Dubbo City Council
- Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Goldenfields Water Board
- Hunter Water
- Kempsey Shire Council
- Lismore City Council
- MidCoast Water
- ORANA
- Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
- Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
- Riverina Water
- Rous Water
- Sydney Water
- Tweed Shire Council
- WaterNSW

VIC

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

WSAA MEMBERS



PRIVATE UTILITY MEMBER

- Suez
- Trility
- Veolia Australia

INTERNATIONAL UTILITY MEMBER

- Watercare NZ
- Wellington Water

STAKEHOLDER MEMBER

- NSW Office of Water
- NSW Water Directorate
- QLD Water Directorate
- Department of Health Victoria
- Vicwater

CONSULTANT MEMBER

- AECOM
- Arup
- Aurecon
- GHD
- Jacobs
- KPMG



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Acknowledge of Country

The Water Services Association of Australia acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation. We recognise their continuing connection to land and waters and thank them for protecting our waterways and environment since time immemorial.

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