



# WSAA ANNUAL REPORT

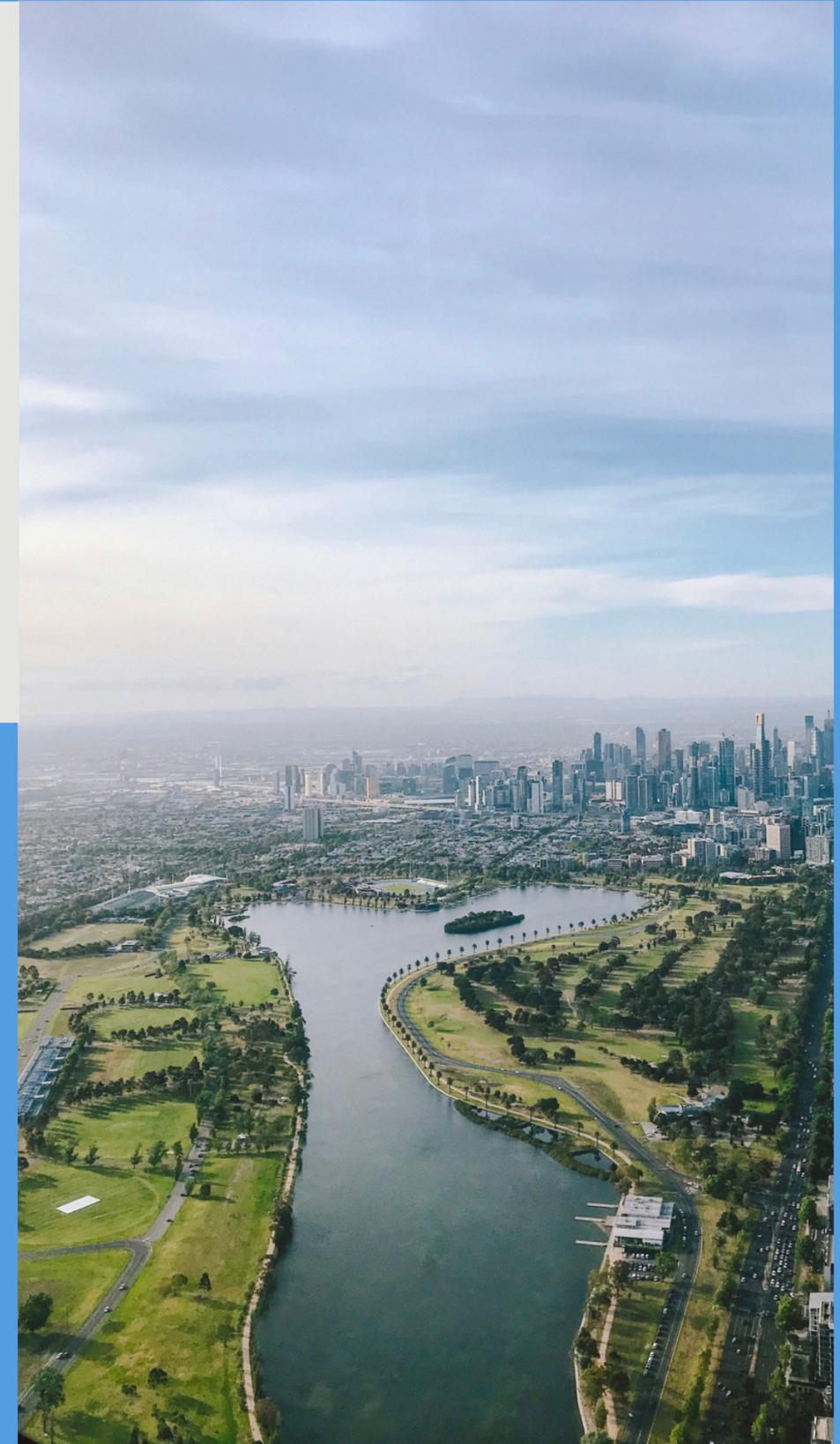


**2021-2022**





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.



2021-2022



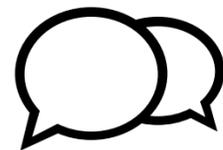
**ABOUT  
WSAA**

## ABOUT WSAA

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 the 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 THE WSAA CHAIR



As WSAA Chair it has been a privilege to observe how well our industry works together as we continue to provide essential water and wastewater services to cities and towns around Australia and New Zealand. The ongoing participation of our people in WSAA's Committees, Networks, projects and other groups is key to shaping and strengthening our industry.

In the last year, the WSAA Board has considered and discussed the impact of macros trends on the industry and WSAA's current and future activities and focus areas. We agreed that WSAA's independent and trusted knowledge is key as we seek to increase advocacy efforts with the new Federal Government. The work of WSAA to elevate awareness and understanding of the role and value of the urban water industry and its contribution to healthy and liveable communities, a prosperous economy and circular economy will continue to form an important part of this advocacy work.

This year we also established a new People and Capability Committee to cover health, safety, wellbeing, people, capability and culture (including an emphasis on diversity and inclusion). The existing Utility Excellence Committee has also been renewed with a focus on business strategy, digitalisation, asset management and business resilience. These two Committee's together with the Customer and Industry Leadership Committee and the Liveable Communities Committee will continue to lead the work of WSAA in meeting its strategic priorities.

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 encourage you and your staff to continue to make the most of WSAA's meetings, webinars and workshops.

“

**As WSAA Chair it has been a privilege to observe how well our industry works together as we continue to provide essential water and wastewater services to cities and towns around Australia and New Zealand.**

”

**ROCH CHEROUX, WSAA CHAIR**

# MESSAGE FROM THE WSAA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The last year has seen us move back to in person meetings, while at the same time offering an increased number of online events. COVID-19 provided many challenges, however it also resulted in a significant increase in the number of people from our members that we connect and engage with regularly. It is these engagements through our Committees, Networks, Communities of Practice and other groups that provide the greatest benefit to the broader industry as we share, collaborate and innovate together.

In the last year we have increased our advocacy efforts, firstly to both the Government and Opposition in the lead up to the election and then with the new Federal Government as it looks to implement its policy commitments to water, including a renewed National Water Initiative and National Water Commission.

We will be continuing these efforts as we produce papers, reports, case studies and submissions that highlight the broader value and contribution of the urban water industry across many areas including closing the water gap, all options on the table for water supply, our role in a circular economy and supply chain resilience.

This year we welcomed a number of new Board members and said goodbye to others. I would like to thank Pat McCafferty, Louise Dudley, Andrew George and Jason Devitt for their time on the WSAA Board. Pat and Louise both served in the position of Chair over numerous years and their leadership has contributed to our ongoing success.

The work that WSAA does 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.

“

**We have increased our advocacy efforts with the new Federal Government as it looks to implement its policy commitments to water, including a renewed National Water Initiative and National Water Commission.**

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**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.



## 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.



## TRACEY SLATTER

Tracey is the Managing Director of Barwon Water and Barwon Asset Solutions which provides water, sewerage and recycled water services in Victoria's south west. She is also a Board Director of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (Victoria), and Zero Emissions Water, and the Deputy Chair of the Barwon Regional Partnership.



## 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.



## NICOLE DAVIS

Nicole is the General Manager, Infrastructure & Operations at Redland City Council which provides facilities and services for Redlands in Queensland including the delivery of water and sewerage services. Nicole has also previously worked in executive level roles as: Director of Operations at SEQ Water Grid Manager; at Mackay Regional Council as Chief Operating Officer, Water and Waste; and has also spent time in the private sector as a consultant.



## 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.



## DJUNA POLLARD

Djuna is the Chief Executive Officer of Power and Water Corporation which transmits and distributes electricity, and provides water and sewerage services, across the Northern Territory. Djuna is also a Director of Energy Networks Australia. Ms Pollard held a number of senior leadership positions in Power and Water Corporation over two decades before being appointed CEO in 2020.



## 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.



## NEIL BRENNAN

Neil is Chief Executive Officer of Seqwater which is the bulk water supply authority across South East Queensland. Neil had a 40 year career in the Victorian water industry, before joining Seqwater in 2018. Neil was Managing Director of Western Water, Interim Managing Director of Goulburn Murray Water, Managing Director at Central Highlands Water and held various Ministerial appointments to industry committees.



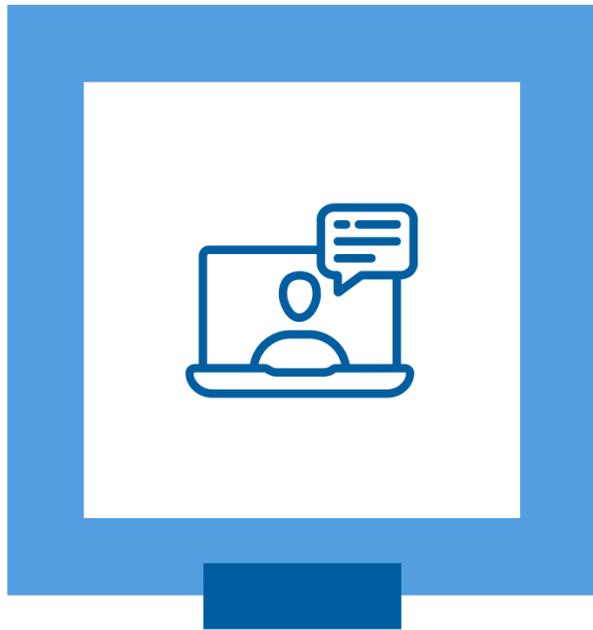
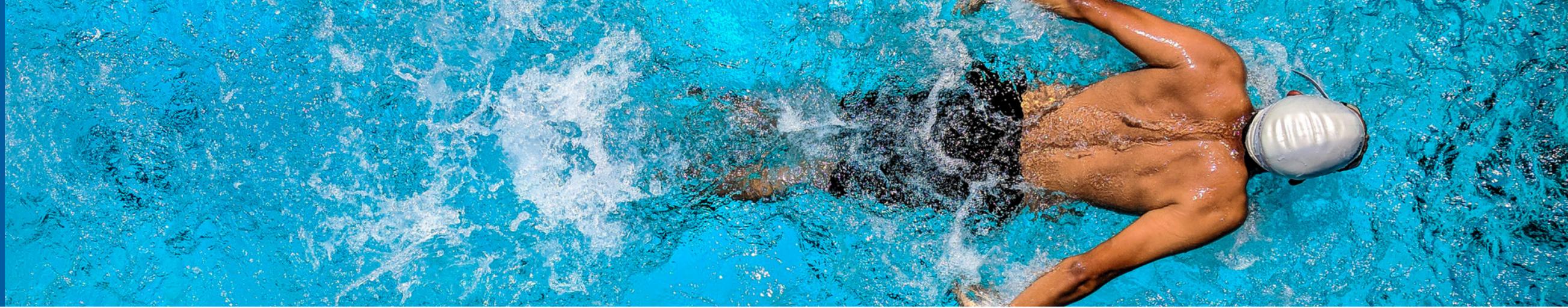
## PAT DONOVAN

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.

## OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

- JASON DEVITT
- ANDREW GEORGE
- LOUISE DUDLEY
- PAT MCCAFFERTY

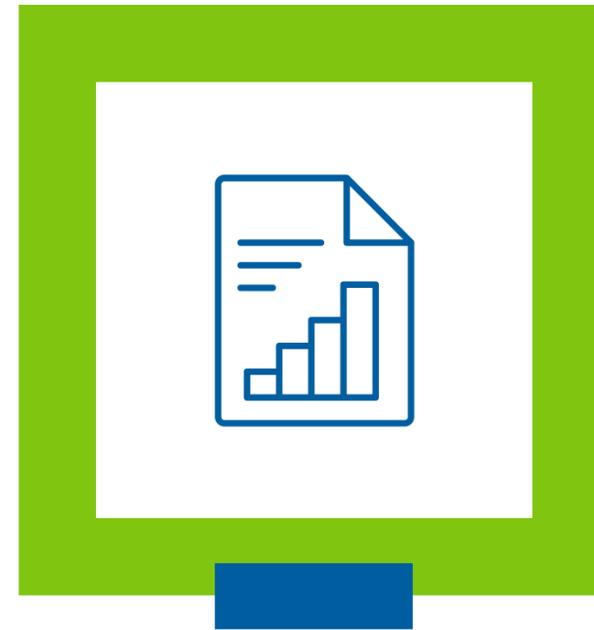
# HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE



**500+**  
ONLINE MEETINGS  
& WORKSHOPS AND  
20+ WEBINARS



**16%**  
GROWTH IN THE  
NUMBER OF  
PARTICIPANTS ON  
THE WSAA  
COMMUNITY SITE



**10**  
MAJOR REPORTS  
RELEASED



**90,000+**  
VISITORS TO THE  
WSAA WEBSITE

# ACHIEVEMENTS



## RESPONDING TO COVID-19

- Continued to represent the urban water industry interests at Federal level through the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission in the Utilities Work Stream.
- Ongoing work to ensure stakeholder and community awareness around COVID-19 and drinking water, essential workers, flushable products, chemical supply chains.
- COVID-19 collaboration through a dedicated Community of Practice which also delivered outputs such as "vaccination mapping approaches" and case studies across the industry.
- 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.



## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Released ***Towards Resilience: Climate change and the urban water industry in Australia and New Zealand***
- Brought 14 Australian and New Zealand water utilities onboard the **Race To Zero**, a United Nations-backed global initiative where business publicly pledge to reach net zero.
- Released the ***Circular Economy Action Plan***, a follow-up volume to our paper Transitioning the water industry with the circular economy.

## FOSTERING THE TRANSITION TO A LOW CARBON FUTURE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- Released our report ***Water fuelling the path to a hydrogen future. The role of the urban water industry in Australia and New Zealand's renewable energy future***
- It outlines the basics of hydrogen for the urban water industry, answers some key emerging questions, and points to questions that warrant exploration in the years ahead. WSAA has engaged extensively with federal and state government entities around the report.
- Conducted a resource recovery survey on the momentum across the industry towards renaming wastewater treatment plants as resource recovery facilities.

# ACHIEVEMENTS



## UNDERSTANDING DRIVERS OF CUSTOMER TRUST AND VALUE

- Carried out the fourth Customer Perceptions Survey with 8,500 customers across Australia and New Zealand.
- Delivered the **Customer Centricity Maturity Framework** along with supporting material that allows water utilities to assess their maturity across a range of customer capability areas.
- Delivered the **Better Practice Customer Support framework** and workshop to encourage a more holistic and consistent approach to how we support customers experiencing financial difficulties.
- Completed a study on the **Willingness to pay for carbon offsets** with over 4000 customers across Australia which will be used as a valuable input to pricing submissions for water utilities.
- Through our MoU with the Energy Charter, delivered four **WE (Water + Energy)** Lunch and Learn webinars to share case studies and best practice around customer engagement. This has resulted in two new Communities of Practice with the Energy Sector in the areas of Customer and Community Engagement and Aboriginal Engagement.

# ACHIEVEMENTS

- Welcomed release of the **final Flushable Products Standard** by Standards Australia. It is the result of ground-breaking collaboration between manufacturers, water utilities, peak bodies and consumer groups
- Delivered an online '**Purified Recycled Water Toolkit**' with presentations, maps, videos and many resources for education on purified recycled water. Included a separate library of global video and education resources including case studies, about all options on the table and other water industry topics in the new Water360 website
- Delivered a **series of global webinars** for utility members and their stakeholders, and presentations at myriad stakeholder and public forums.

**PROMOTING HEALTH,  
LIVEABILITY AND  
WELLBEING**



# ACHIEVEMENTS



## DRIVING PROGRESS ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS INCLUDING A FOCUS ON UPLIFT OF REGIONAL, REMOTE AND INDIGENOUS WATER SERVICES

- Commenced the development of a report on **Water servicing for remote Indigenous communities around Australia**, mapping the governance arrangements and highlighting recommendations to close the gap in water servicing outcomes.
- Commenced collaboration with the Australian Water Association to host the inaugural **Voices for the Bush Conference** in August in Alice Springs with a focus on smaller water supplies for Indigenous communities, local governments and remote communities in regional, remote and rural Australia.

# ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed the next round of **OPEX Benchmarking and Asset Management Customer Value benchmarking** and continued development of the Your Utility Dashboard
- 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.
- Implemented a **new People and Capability Committee** to improve performance and prepare for the future through the delivery of a targeted work program
- Delivered a **health and safety and people and productivity** benchmarking project
- Explored contemporary lead focussed health and safety measures through an extensive review and developed recommendations for future reporting and delivered a metric selection tool.

- Incorporated the **Pride in Water group** within WSAA to help further the water industry conversation on the importance of LGBTIQ+ inclusion.
- Completed the **international CRC-P Smart Linings Project**
- Launched the updated **Water360 website**
- Held a number of **technology showcases and webinars** as part of W-Lab, a partnership with Isle Utilities and ThinkPlace, to will deliver an industry-leading innovative technologies program for members.
- Released **16 guidelines** and codes of industry significance as ebooks

## PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

# ACHIEVEMENTS

## NATIONAL ADVOCACY SUPPORTING INDUSTRY OUTCOMES

- **Over 17 Submissions** to state and national government reviews/inquiries to ensure the voice of members was heard including to State water strategy and water security reviews. Key submissions include:
  - Submission to Draft Greater Sydney Water Strategy
  - Submission to Urban National Performance Reporting Framework Indicator Review - Draft Report
  - Submission to the MUSIA stormwater review
  - Submission to the Central and Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy Discussion Draft
  - Submissions to Draft Lower Hunter Water Security Plan and Draft Central Coast Water Security Plan
  - Submission to IPART Discussion Paper: Encouraging Innovation in the Water Sector.
- **Engaged with Government and Opposition and Federal stakeholders** on key policy points for urban water in the lead up to the Federal Election

# WSAA STRATEGY 2021-23

The **WSAA Strategy 2021-23** was launched at our Virtual Chairs and MDs Forum in 2021. It is underpinned by four key drivers of i) Climate change, ii) Customer and community expectations, iii) Macro industry trends and iv) Circular economy as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is based on extensive consultation with Members including the WSAA Board and each of the Board Committees.

## FOCUS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

### WSAA STRATEGY 2021-23

#### INDUSTRY OUTCOMES

- Meet and exceed customer expectations, maintain affordability and support customers in difficulty
- Accelerate the industry transition to net zero in response to climate change
- Water sector resilience, including through diversity of supply
- Lead water's contribution to thriving communities
- Embed water's role in the circular economy

#### WSAA PRIORITIES

- National advocacy supporting industry outcomes
- Understanding drivers of customer trust and value
- Driving progress on the Sustainable Development Goals including a focus on uplift of regional, remote and Indigenous water services
- Promoting health, liveability and wellbeing
- Fostering the transition to a low carbon future and circular economy
- Performance improvement initiatives

#### INDUSTRY ENABLERS

- Leadership, capability and culture
- Diversity and inclusion
- Health, safety and wellbeing
- Sharing and lifting performance
- Deep knowledge through data and actionable insights
- Stakeholder engagement and partnerships
- Driving an industry innovation ecosystem

# FOCUS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

WSAA'S COMMITTEES ARE DELIVERING A SIGNIFICANT BODY OF WORK AND SCOPING POTENTIAL PROJECTS ALIGNED WITH THE WSAA STRATEGY. COMMITTEES HAVE A SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM OF WORK PLANNED FOR COMPLETION IN THE YEAR AHEAD.



## Customer and Industry Leadership Committee

- National Performance Report Review
- KPIs for Debt and Customer support
- Demonstrating Efficiency
- Benchmarking
- Vulnerability and Debt
- Water Literacy

## Liveable Communities Committee

- Circular Economy Action Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Climate Change Position
- Net Zero
- Water Servicing for Remote Indigenous Communities
- All options on the table
- Nutrient Offsets
- Wet Weather Sewer Overflow Guidelines
- Making Waves podcast

## Utility Excellence Committee

- Asset Management Customer Value (AMCV) Initiatives
- Smart Linings for Pipe Infrastructure Project
- Digital Strategy
- Safe Work Australia (SWA) Workplace Exposure Review - Hydrogen Sulphide

## People and Capability Committee

- Health and Safety and People and Productivity Benchmarking
- Health and Safety Reporting Indicators Framework and Manual
- Fatal Risk Controls
- Industry Employee Value Proposition Collaboration
- Pride in Water Initiatives

# WSAA UTILITY MEMBERS

## 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
- Rockhampton Regional Council
- Seqwater
- Southern Downs Regional Council
- SunWater
- Toowoomba Regional Council
- Unitywater
- Urban Utilities
- Western Downs Regional Council
- Wide Bay Water

## NSW

- Byron Shire Council
- Central NSW Joint Organisation
- Central Coast Council
- Dubbo City Council
- Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Goldenfields Water Board
- Hunter Water
- Kempsey Shire Council
- Lismore City Council
- MidCoast Water
- Orana Water Utilities Alliance
- Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
- Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
- Riverina Water
- Rouse 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
- Riverina Water County Council
- South East Water
- South Gippsland Water
- Western Water
- Wannon Regional Water
- Westernport Water
- Yarra Valley Water

## WA

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

## NT

- Power and Water Corporation

## SA

- SA Water
- Mount Barker District Council

## TAS

- TasWater

## ACT

- icon Water



# WSAA MEMBERS

## PRIVATE UTILITY MEMBER

- Suez
- Trility
- Veolia Australia

## 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

## INTERNATIONAL UTILITY MEMBER

- Watercare NZ
- Wellington Water



### Acknowledgement 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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