



WATER SERVICES  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



# WSAA

Water Services  
Association of Australia

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018



# 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 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.

## 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.

REGISTER



## The Association facilitates collaboration, knowledge sharing, networking and cooperation in the urban water industry. The Association'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;



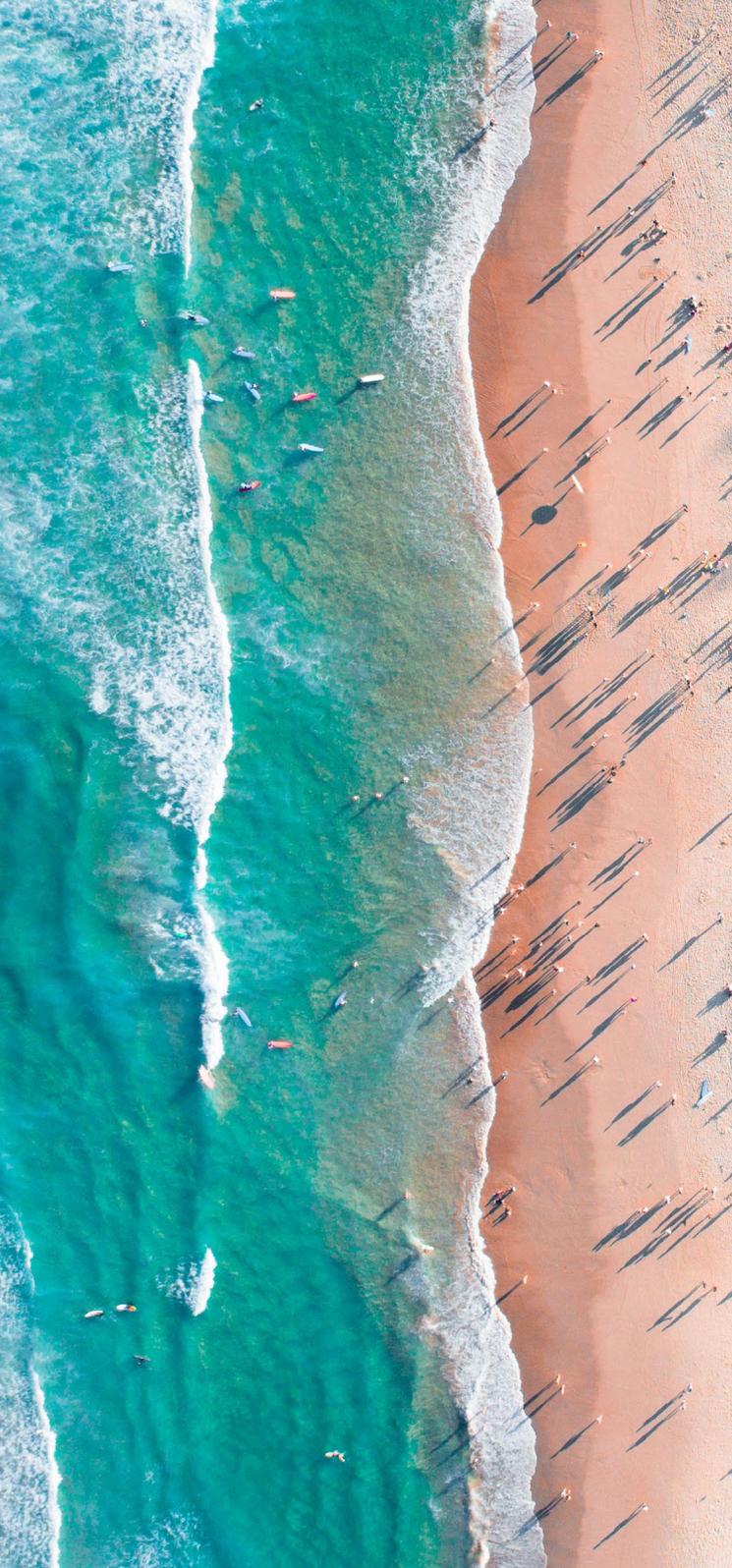
Promoting debate on environmentally sustainable development and management of water resources and the community health requirements of public water supplies;



Industry performance and 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.



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## MESSAGE FROM PAT MCCAFFERTY WSAA CHAIR

“

Ours is a sector that collaborates deeply, with a focus on achieving the best outcomes we can for the communities we provide our essential services to.

”

**Pat McCafferty,**  
WSAA Chair

In the last year WSAA has delivered a number of significant programs and projects to help lift and shape the urban water industry into the future. Personally it has been inspiring to see the industry continue to engage with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The launch of WSAA's Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report demonstrates how water businesses are continuing to explore their contribution to and support for the Goals and in particular SDG 6: clean water and sanitation. Our activity in this area is not going unnoticed, with the Australian Government recognising the work of the water industry to raise awareness of the SDGs with customers, governments and stakeholders.

Collaboration and knowledge sharing continue to provide the highest value for strengthening our industry and ensuring we have a strong voice on important issues. In the last year WSAA has coordinated over 70 meetings and workshops for members to connect and progress work to help us meet current and future challenges. As they say, “people vote with their feet”, so the tremendous participation we are seeing confirms that the topics and the discussions are highly relevant to our members.

Importantly, in the last year, WSAA has also provided 12 submissions to state and federal inquiries and reviews that have the potential to impact on WSAA members and where it is important for the urban water industry to have a voice.

I'm tremendously proud of the work that WSAA and its members have undertaken this year. Ours is a sector that collaborates deeply, with a focus on achieving the best outcomes we can for the communities we provide our essential services to.





## MESSAGE FROM ADAM LOVELL WSAA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We continue to focus on providing opportunities for our members to collaborate and share at all levels on a broad range of issues in pursuit of excellence for the urban water sector in Australia and New Zealand.



**Adam Lovell,**  
WSAA Executive Director



As many areas in Eastern Australia return to drought – worse than the Millennium Drought in some areas – it is pleasing to see the hard work of our members in customer and community engagement, benchmarking and urban planning which places the industry well to face new challenges.

The past 12 months have again seen an increase in opportunities for members to collaborate through workshops, position papers, advocacy, guideline development, benchmarking, innovation platforms and partnerships with key organisations.

While there were many highlights a couple really stood out to me. Our Regional Forum held in Albury and Wodonga saw regional members come together to focus on issues and challenges facing regional water utilities including incident response and recovery, energy procurement, future investment needs and diversity and inclusion. Regional water utilities face unique challenges and more and more provide economic uplift for their local areas. It was great to see members engaging and sharing on things they do well and things they want to do better.

It was also the first year we had a dedicated program for young leaders. Our Inaugural Young Utility Leaders Program saw four leaders complete the personal development program which aims to engage and advance young utility staff through involvement in WSAA Board Committees and at key WSAA events. Following its success we have expanded the program this year giving seven candidates the opportunity to participate, and we plan to expand it even further in the future.

Special thanks to Pat McCafferty for his work as Chair over the past two years. I would also like to thank Sue Murphy, Chief Executive Officer Water Corporation who is finishing on the WSAA Board and at Water Corporation. In her time with WSAA Sue has been both a Board Member and Chair and we are grateful for her contribution to WSAA and the national and international urban water industry. Her leadership in the sector will definitely be missed.

Special thanks to the WSAA Board, the hard working WSAA staff and the dedicated staff from our members who provide expert advice and case studies. Every one of you contributes to the success of our collaboration and sharing at all levels and on such a variety of issues.

# MEMBERS OF THE BOARD



## **PAT MCCAFFERTY, CHAIR**

Pat McCafferty was appointed Managing Director of Yarra Valley Water on 1 July 2014 and has been Chair of WSAA since November 2016. 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. He has also worked in the USA water sector and advised the Australian Federal Government as part of the National Water Initiative. Pat is also 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.



## **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 region.

John is also a member of the ActewAGL Joint Venture Partnerships Board and was previously the Chief Finance Officer of ActewAGL. John has worked across various segments of the utilities sector, including water, environmental services, energy and telecommunications.



## **LOUISE DUDLEY**

Louise is the Chief Executive Officer of Queensland Urban Utilities and has been 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 34 years of experience in the water industry, including 18 years in executive management roles. He was previously the Managing

Director of Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water from 2007 until joining Coliban Water in 2011.



## **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 his current role as Chief

Executive of SA Water, Roch is leading the transformation of South Australia's largest water utility to embed technology, culture and systems changes to deliver improved experience for the corporation's 1.6million customers.

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.



## **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.

# 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. In 2017 Sue was listed at number 8 for the "Top 25 Global Water Leaders" by Water and Wastewater International Magazine.



## 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 and was previously CEO and Managing Director of ASX100 listed company at the time, Macarthur Coal Limited. 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.



## DAVID HARRIS

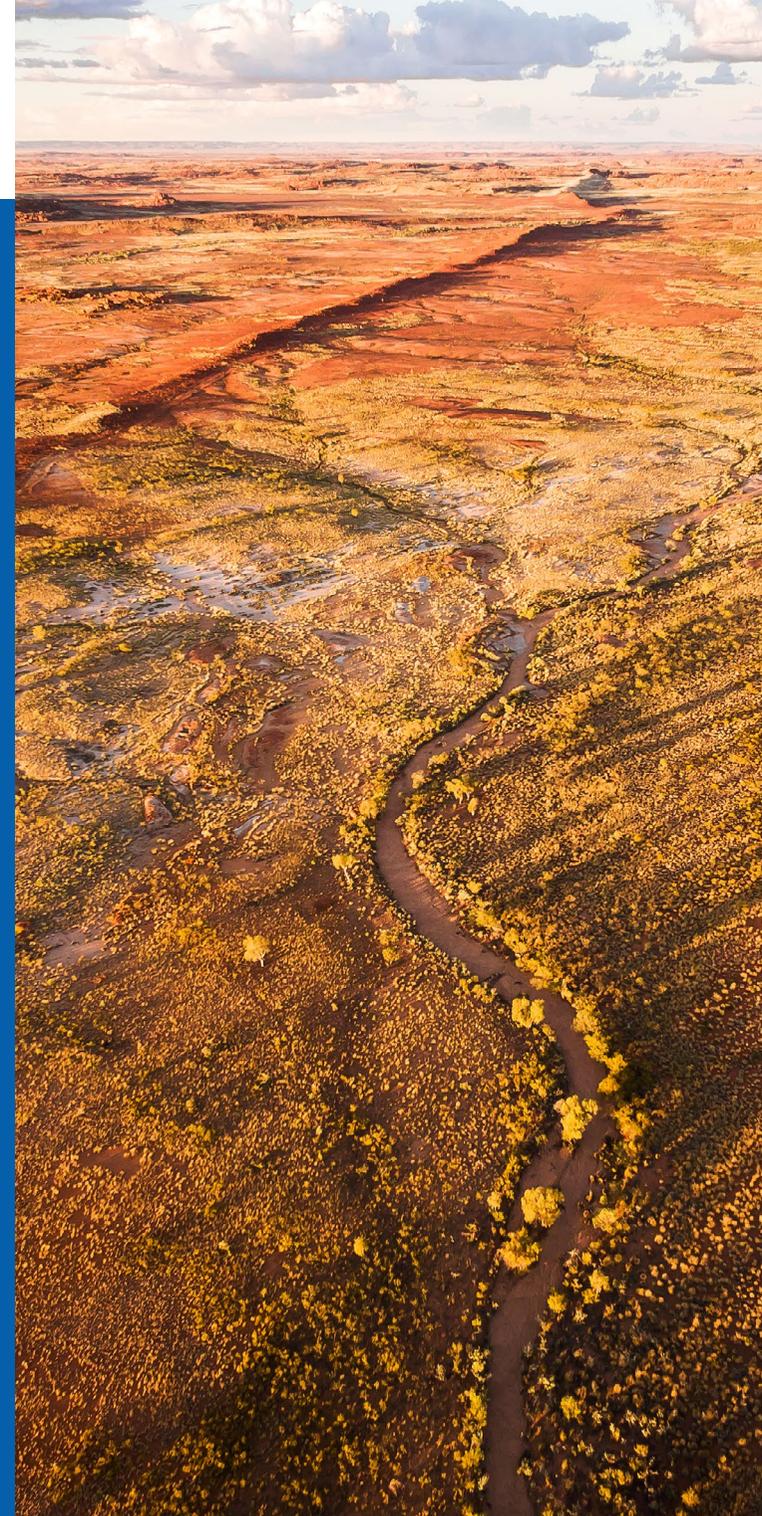
David Harris is the CEO of WaterNSW. David is leading the transformation of the company following its formation in 2015. That transformation is geared to delivering an efficient and high

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.



## 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 the Chair of the Global Water Research Coalition.



# HIGHLIGHTS

At a glance

**8**

New Members



**3**

Member Meetings



**9**

Board Committee Meetings

Over **25**

Network Meetings

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

**1**

Chairs and MDs Symposium

**200+**

Discussions on the WSAA online member community

**669**

Code sales through the WSAA Code Shop

**3200**

Active members on the WSAA online member community

**10** Submissions to state and national reviews and inquiries

**4**

Reports



**70+**

Australian Standards that WSAA members are represented on



# HIGHLIGHTS

## BE A CUSTOMER CENTRIC WATER UTILITY

### KEY PROJECT

#### NATIONAL CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS SURVEY

WSAA surveyed almost 9000 customers across the 34 largest water businesses in Australia and New Zealand. The survey included benchmarking of customer perceptions of water businesses and identified drivers of value for money and trust. The survey built on the results of the 2015 Customer Perceptions Survey.

#### CUSTOMER OF THE FUTURE REPORT

A report on The Customer of the Future to determine how the motivations, behaviours and expectations of urban water customers may change over the next 5 – 10 years. It includes a review of existing segmentation research and new ethnographic research mapped against megatrends.

[SEE MORE](#)

#### DRIVERS OF CUSTOMER VALUE

WSAA facilitated workshops, case studies and surveys to bring to members the latest research and findings on the drivers of customer value.

## HARNESS THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

### KEY PROJECT

#### HARNESSING THE DIGITAL ECONOMY PAPER

Released in March 2018 this paper lays out the many opportunities the digital age offers water utilities, outlines the risks and challenges, and how these can be managed. It also includes discussion questions on strategic knowledge gaps for the industry to consider.

[SEE MORE](#)

#### DIGITAL UTILITY ROADMAP

A Roadmap that includes an analysis of 17 organisations and highlights drivers, enablers, barriers and future themes, and recommends a future work program.

#### INTERNET OF THINGS (IOT) WORKSHOP

WSAA hosted a workshop to identify current IoT trends and opportunities, promote collaboration and share leading practice inside and out of the water industry.



# IDENTIFY THE VALUE OF WATER'S CONTRIBUTION TO LIVEABLE CITIES



## PROGRESS REPORT: GLOBAL GOALS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The Report explores the significant work over the past year by the Australian urban water industry on building industry capacity around the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Supported by case studies, the Progress Report demonstrates the progress by the industry to support and promote the SDGs in partnership with other utilities, customers and stakeholders, and shows the industry's contribution to achieving national and global SDG commitments.

A video was also developed to help build awareness of the Goals and demonstrate how the urban water industry connects to them.

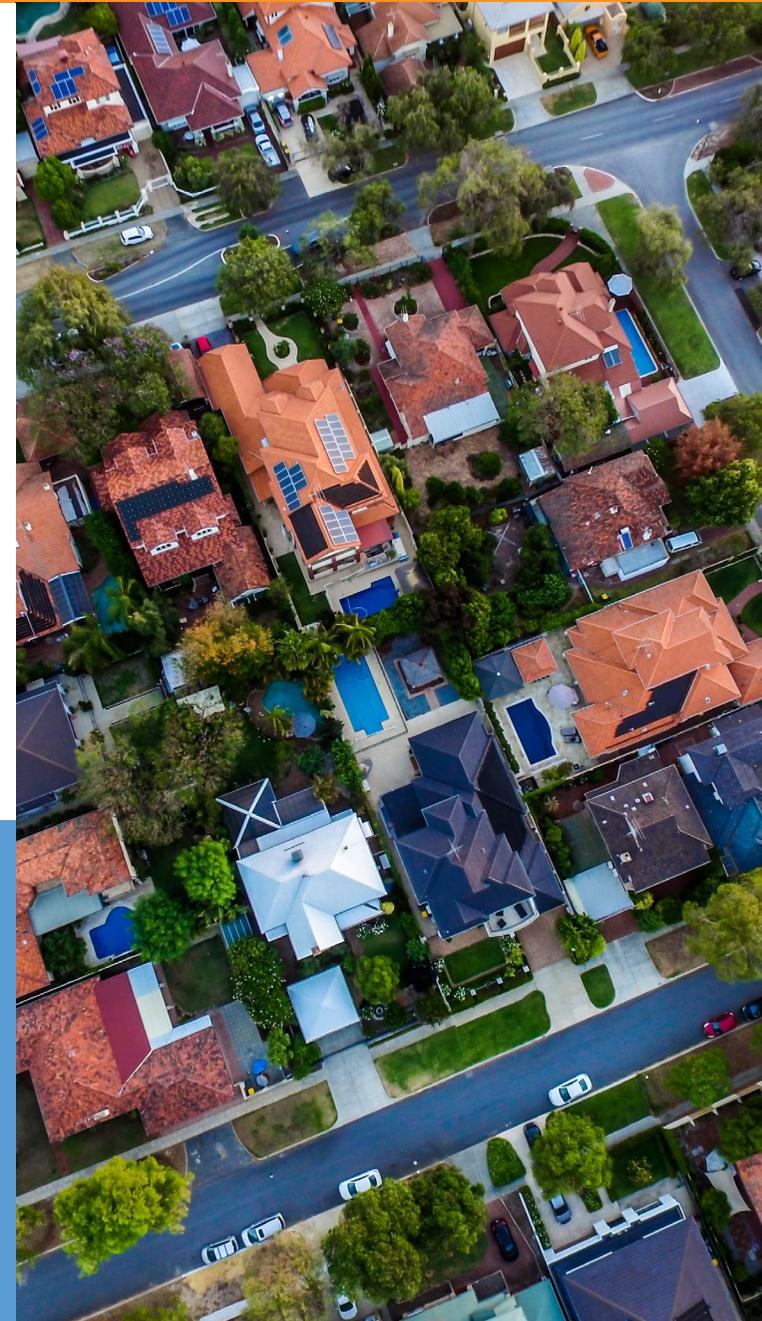
[SEE MORE](#)

## ECONOMIC EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Continued initiative with CRC Water Sensitive Cities on developing a comprehensive economic evaluation framework to identify and quantify economic, environmental and community values of investments in water-sensitive practices and systems.

## WATER EFFICIENCY 2017

Released the Water Efficiency 2017 Report by Smart Approved WaterMark (SAWM) that demonstrates the breadth of water initiatives being undertaken by water utilities and councils around Australia to engage with customers, encourage water conservation and tackle demand management.

[SEE MORE](#)


# CUSTOMER FOCUSED INNOVATION, ADVOCACY AND REGULATION

## SUBMISSIONS

WSAA coordinated submissions to over 10 state and national government inquiries and reviews, including the Productivity Commission's National Water Reform Inquiry: WSAA ensured the voice of members was heard throughout the Inquiry process and continues to advocate for reform that is in the interest of members and their customers.

Other submissions included:

- PFAS National Environmental Management Plan
- IPART inquiry into developer charges
- Innovation and Science Australia 2030 Strategic Plan issues paper
- Legislative Council Select Committee on TasWater Ownership
- Federal inquiries into impacts of climate change on housing and infrastructure, National Cities Performance Framework, Government's role in development of cities
- Amendments to the Telecommunications Act and Regulations
- Review of the Security of Critical Infrastructure Bill

## TECHNOLOGY APPROVAL GROUP (TAG)

TAG continues to be one of the most successful WSAA subscription projects. Since its inception, there have been 24 rounds of workshops, presenting 120 novel technologies to the 28 TAG members. Of these technologies, approximately half have gone onto trial or installation. A highlight was the Internet of Things themed TAG workshop.

## WATER INNOVATION LAB AUSTRALIA

Partnered with Waterlutions to deliver the Water Innovation Lab Australia, a training initiative for young water leaders. The inaugural WSAA innovation seed funding of \$5,000 was awarded to The Native Water Network. Their innovation aims to resolve the problem of the absence of traditional knowledge and people in mainstream water governance and management decisions, often resulting in biased policies and potentially poor decisions.

## EMBEDDING INNOVATION WITHIN ORGANISATIONS

Partnered with the Water Research Foundation to commence project on leading water utility innovation to assist utilities embed innovation within their organisations.

### KEY PROJECT

#### 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.

WSAA has worked with The International Standards Organisation Committee on Flushability, comprising over 20 manufacturers and water utilities, to develop a framework that defines the key aspects of the sewerage network that need to be considered in defining a flushability standard. Due to be published in early 2019.

As a founding member of the International Water Service Flushability Group (IWSFG), WSAA was directly involved in representing the Australian water industry in developing and finalising a Publicly Available Standard. The PAS was published in June 2018.

WSAA is also progressing the development of an Australian Standard.



## ELEVATE PERFORMANCE

### KEY PROJECT

#### CRC PIPES PROJECT

Secured \$3 million Commonwealth funding for the Smart Linings for Pipe and Infrastructure Project, a collaboration between WSAA, manufacturers, applicators, utilities, and researchers. This project seeks to improve and validate product and application knowledge, enabling the development of industry standards, specifications and tools and confirming the demand for lining technologies. The project is valued at a total of over \$24 million and will strategically position Australia as a global leader in smart water infrastructure design, engineering, testing and management.

#### OZWATER'18

A highlight of the WSAA stream was the Closing the Gap session covering the provision of water and wastewater to remote indigenous communities. The session included case studies from Water Corporation, Cairns Regional Council and Torres Strait Island Regional Council. Building capacity of indigenous drinking water operators was a focus.

#### CHAIRS AND MDS FORUM

Over 70 Chairs and MDs came together in Sydney to network and hear from leading speakers. Jean Spencer, Executive Director of Strategic Growth and Resilience at Anglian Water spoke on hot topics for water in the UK, their customer strategy and ambitious plans for Newmarket – an innovation shop window collaborating with over 100 organisations across 95 projects. Goals for Newmarket include 100% customer satisfaction, zero leaks and bursts and usage of 80 litres per person per day. George Hawkins, former CEO of DC Water joined us to talk about the ambitious agenda he led to transform DC Water into a customer-oriented enterprise that is driving innovation and delivering improved value to its ratepayers.

WATCH



NOW

## REGIONAL FORUM

Held in Albury and Wodonga in June 2018 the Regional Forum saw over 30 WSAA members come together to focus on issues and challenges facing regional water utilities including incident response and recovery, energy procurement, future investment needs and diversity and inclusion.

## YOUNG UTILITY LEADERS PROGRAM

Inaugural Young Utility Leaders Program: four young leaders completed the personal development program which aims to engage and advance young utility staff through involvement in WSAA Board Committees and at key WSAA events.

## MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOP

Held a Managing Mental Health Workshop to identify leading practice, current programs and available tools, resources and to foster relationships with external organisations.

## WORKFORCE SKILLS OF THE FUTURE

Partnered with Water Environment & Research Foundation on the Workforce Skills of the Future paper in December 2017. The paper helps members understand and prepare for future trends affecting the urban water industry and its workforces.

[SEE MORE](#)

## CODES, STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

A number of publications of industry significance have been released:

- Condition Assessment Guidelines for Civil Structures
- Condition Assessment Guidelines for Mechanical and Electrical Assets
- SCADA Guidelines Stage 2 update
- National Guidelines for Managing Food, Fats, Oils and Greases (FFOG)
- Hunter Water Version of the WSAA Water Supply Code of Australia and the Gravity Sewerage Code of Australia
- Sydney Water Version of the Sewerage Code of Australia



# COMMITTEES

## 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

- Health and Safety
- People and Culture
- Business Transformation
- Wastewater Source Management
- Water Services Sector Group
- Asset Management, Optimisation and Strategy
- Asset Maintenance, Operations and Renewals
- Asset Planning, Resilience and Creation

### COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

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

### REFERENCE GROUPS

- Codes and Appraisals

### PROJECTS

- Harnessing the Digital Economy Paper
- Digital Utility Roadmap
- Workforce Skills of the Future Paper
- Health and Safety Excellence Project
- Dam Owners Benchmarking Report
- Challenging design assumptions of buried infrastructure
- International flushability guidelines with International Water Services Flushability Group
- Managing Mental Health Workshop
- Internet of Things (IoT) Workshop
- Review of the AMCV Benchmarking Project
- Asset Capital Investment Optimisation
- Asbestos Cement and Cast Iron Pipe Rehabilitation Technology Evaluation
- Submissions to relevant reviews and inquiries, both State and Federal

## 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
- Research Managers
- Climate Change, Energy and Environment
- Water Quality and Health

### COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Water Efficiency

### PROJECTS

- Global Goals for Local Communities Progress Report
- Sustainable Development Goals video
- Energy Efficiency Benchmarking WWTP and sub-metering guidance project
- Health Based Targets Manual video
- Smart control of water systems
- Aquality refresh tool
- Ozwater session on closing the gap in remote and indigenous communities
- Fostering Innovation
- Technology Approval Group
- Submissions to relevant reviews and inquiries, both State and Federal

## 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

### COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Economic Regulation Forum
- Communications Managers
- Vulnerable Customers

### PROJECTS

- National Customer Perception Survey
- The Customer of the Future
- Chanel Migration Strategies
- Ozwater's sessions on growth and water, and building trust with customers
- Submissions to relevant reviews and inquiries, both State and Federal

# WSAA UTILITY MEMBERS



## NT

- Power and Water Corporation

## WA

- Water Corporation
- Aqwest
- Busselton Water

## SA

- SA Water

## TAS

- Taswater

## ACT

- Icon Water

## QLD

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

## NSW

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

## VIC

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

# WSAA MEMBERS



## PRIVATE UTILITY MEMBER

- Suez
- Trility
- Veolia Australia

## INTERNATIONAL UTILITY MEMBER

- Watercare NZ
- Wellington Water

## CONSULTANT MEMBER

- AECOM
- Jacobs
- GHD
- KPMG
- WSP
- Arup
- EY
- Downer Group



## STAKEHOLDER MEMBER

- Victorian Water Industry Authority
- NSW Office of Water
- NSW Water Directorate
- QLD Water Directorate
- Department of Health Victoria





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