WIOA President's Message 2009

Welcome everyone, to the 3rd Annual WIOA NSW Water Industry Engineers & Operators Conference. The Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA) is pleased to organise this annual conference and it is exciting that each year it continues to grow. We have no doubt that this event is now gaining acceptance as a "must attend" annual event for the entire NSW water industry, as more people experience what it is all about.

The past 12 months have seen very significant growth in WIOA nationally. The benefits on offer through involvement with WIOA have been embraced by operators in all states, and NSW is no exception. Our membership base continues to grow significantly each year, particularly during and after these events. We know that many of you are Members of WIOA already, but a significant number of you are not. Keep in mind the draw for the coffee machine valued at almost $4000 will be undertaken at the Thursday Conference Dinner. If you want a chance to win it, either pay up your fees or join as a member right now.

The services and initiatives offered by WIOA are documented in the WIOA Report a little further on in this book. I do want to make mention of a few in a bit more detail here.

Some of you may have been fortunate enough to attend the one day seminar on "Media Filter Optimisation" prior to this conference and experienced for yourself just one of the quality events WIOA is able to offer. There will be more in the future so make sure you get along to them.

Applications for the annual Kwatye (Water) Prize are now open to WIOA Members. If you have an innovative idea, would like to attend an event here or overseas or further your study in the water industry, send us a proposal. More information can be found on our website by visiting: www.wioa.org.au/awards/kwatye.htm.

There is another Operators tour in 2009, this time to the South Island of New Zealand. The tour kicks off in Christchurch on 8th May and will visit water & wastewater plants in South Canterbury, Southland, Otago, Dunedin & Timaru. Included in the trip is attendance at the WIOG Conference in Dunedin and we then make our way home on 16th May. You will meet a great bunch of people, get a PhD in LOTE, be stirred for not understanding a word they say, but, leave NZ with some wonderful new friends & contacts in the water industry overseas. Contact the WIOA office if you are interested in attending or would like more information.

Earlier this year we were confronted with some shocking natural disasters with the horrific bushfires in Victoria and flooding in large parts of Qld & NSW. No doubt operators in these areas will have faced very trying conditions in the day to day running of their systems to provide services that the community just expects will be available. I also have no doubt that the same operators have been able to meet the challenge with practical solutions. These events are devastating at the time, and most likely will pose new challenges even further down the track, particularly when we receive rain in burnt out catchment areas.

Many people will argue that global warming is the cause of nature's changes and just as many will disagree. Either way, as operators we need to look at limiting further environmental impact by adopting cleaner, safer operating principles, not just at work but at home also.

To stage a conference as big as this would not be possible without a lot of hard work and organisation by our wonderful WIOA staff including Executive Officer George Wall, Operations Manager Cynthia Lim along with Marilyn & Sherryn in our office. WIOA is also lucky to have a fantastic group of volunteers on our Committee. Some of them are here in Tamworth, along with a dedicated group of "HELPERS" from NSW and beyond, all working hard behind the scenes. To all these people we extend a very big THANK YOU.

Thank you is also extended to our host, Tamworth Regional Council and we are grateful for the continued support of the NSW Water Directorate. We look forward to the announcement of the 3rd winner of the "Water Directorate, NSW Operator of the Year". WIOA really appreciates the wonderful support of our Prime Conference Partners in Rad-tel Systems, ITT Water & Wastewater, Acromet Australia and ABS Wastewater Technology along with a host of other sponsors and exhibitors. Remember to support these companies if you get the chance. They are only too happy to help out and don't forget to mention that you saw them at this conference.

To everyone attending, enjoy the conference, get in and see the paper presentations, check out the Trade Exhibition, get a group together and have a go at the Conference Competition. Try and be involved and who knows next year you may even have a go at a paper. If you need any help we can point you in the right direction. When you get back to work, let your employer or supervisor know of the value of attending. Tell them all about the event and what you have learnt so that next year they won't hesitate in sending along more operations staff.

I am very proud to have the opportunity to be President of a great organisation like WIOA and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during the conference and during the course of my term. The water industry truly is an exiting place to be working in, enjoy it.

Anthony Evans
WIOA President