



WIOA President's Message 2008

Welcome everyone, to the 71st Victorian Water Industry Engineers & Operators Conference.

For many of you who have participated in past conferences, you will know what a great event it is and you would have looked forward to attending all year. For those of you who are attending the event for the first time we want you to use this opportunity not only for networking and making new friends but also to learn. I know that you will return and look forward to this event in the future.

Every year we report on how WIOA is growing and this year is no exception. Increasing the knowledge and skills of operational staff across all segments of the water industry so that they can perform their important job functions more efficiently and productively is still one of our key drivers. We have continued to run our very successful Qld Workshop and NSW Conference. These events are growing in status and popularity all the time and I have no doubt that they will be as big as Victoria in years to come.

We have run our Filters and Distribution Systems workshops in WA, Qld and NSW and more workshops will be staged later this year. We look forward to adding further seminars on Chemical Dosing, Micro-Filtration and possibly Catchment Management in the coming months. We will organise any or all of these seminars, or consider any other topic of interest, wherever demand exists. Not only do these seminars provide very practical information, they also bring people together to discuss issues which affect them. Sometimes it is easy to hide away doing our jobs and forget how important it is to interact with our fellow water industry colleagues.

The range of resources we provide to our members are increasing and we have the fourth in the series of 'Practical Guides' titled 'Practical Guide to Understanding and Managing Surface Water Catchments' being launched at the Victorian conference. By now I hope that those involved in water treatment have built up the set of Guides at each water treatment plant and that you are using them to provide ideas on how you can improve the operation of your system. If you have gained something good from them remember to tell your colleagues about them as well.

Organising an event like this conference is a huge task. The list of gratitude's are always long when you consider the size and number of people involved. Sincerely, we thank the WIOA Executive Officer, George Wall and our staff, plus our sponsorship coordinator Ron Bergmeier who have done a fabulous job yet again, in putting this event together. I would also like to welcome our newest staff member in Cynthia Lim who has taken on the role of WIOA Operations Manager. With Cynthia's industry knowledge, enthusiasm and drive to make positive things happen, we are excited about the next stage of WIOA's development.

We also have a dedicated group of Committee members and volunteers who have freely given their time and effort to help run the conference. The amount of work that goes on behind the scenes to run an event as large as this is amazing, and to all our helpers we say a big THANK

YOU!!.

We must thank our Hosts, North East Water and EGL Operations who have been brave in taking the big leap to host something in an area outside their own back yard. A big thank you is extended to our conference Prime Partners in Tanspacific Industries Group, ITT Water & Wastewater and Acromet Australia along with the host of other sponsors and exhibitors - we really do appreciate your support. As a result of the generosity and support of these companies, we are able to keep the price of attending this event at an affordable level for all.

To all our delegates, exhibitors, exhibition visitors and paper presenters – thank you for your efforts and for attending and we appreciate the commitment of a number who we know have traveled great distances to be here. There is no question that getting operations staff together to meet one another and discuss, even solve, issues and problems is an important development tool, no matter what State we are in. Adding the trade exhibitors into the mix with their depth of product and application knowledge ensures that we all have the opportunity to learn something new.

To all participants – my advice is to make the most of what this conference has to offer and network with your fellow water industry colleagues. Please take the time to listen to the papers and wherever you can, forge relationships with the trade exhibitors because you never know when you will need their knowledge or help. It is always better to deal with someone you know.

There is a good way to meet a number of the exhibitors – enter the conference competition! The trade exhibitors have put a lot of effort into their stands and we have randomly selected companies to participate in the competition. Just form a group of three and make sure you visit all of the 10 nominated sites before the exhibition closes on Thursday afternoon. If you are here on your own, don't worry - put your name down at the registration desk and we will fit you into a team – what a great way to meet some new people!. You can find more details at the registration desk. Good luck to everyone!

I look forward to meeting and working with many more operational people over the remainder of my term as WIOA President and I am excited to be able to assist the Association to develop and deliver our services Nationally.

In closing, we hope that you enjoy attending this event and make the most of the learning opportunities on offer. We also encourage you to go back to your workplace and tell your supervisor/manager about the many positives that you have obtained from attending the conference. Perhaps they will be encouraged to send even more operations staff along next year. We also hope you will also consider tapping into what WIOA has to offer by becoming a Member. The \$20 fee is money well spent and it is a very affordable way to keep abreast of what is happening in the operational side of your industry.



Peter Tolsher
WIOA President