

# **ANNUAL REVIEW 2009**

**Including**

**MEMBER INFORMATION  
HANDBOOK**



**WATER INDUSTRY  
OPERATORS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**



# YEAR IN PHOTOS



**1.** January – WIOA's new office, first official month in the new building. **2.** March – Attendees at the Weekend Seminar and AGM at Lakes Entrance, Victoria. **3.** April – Tamworth Regional Entertainment Centre, venue for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual WIOA NSW Water Industry Engineers & Operators Conference. **4.** May – Some of the attendees at the Southern Man Tour of New Zealand. **5.** June – Peter Tolsher (L), Entertainer Scott Williams – 'The Doctor' and Frank Placko (R) at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Qld Water Industry Operations Workshop, Caloundra

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

## INTRODUCTION TO WIOA

The Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA) has a long history of servicing its members and those employed in the “operational” sector of the water industry. Originally founded in Victoria in 1973 as the Wastewater Purification Plant Superintendent and Operators Association, the organisation has continually evolved and expanded its focus from just wastewater. It now covers operational issues across all sectors of the water and wastewater industry. This changed focus was implemented in order to meet the changing needs of members and the water industry in general.

WIOA has grown remarkably over the past few years and is a truly National organisation with members from every Australian State and Territory, New Zealand and from all sectors of the Water Industry.

Until very recently, we have operated entirely as a voluntary group. At the end of 2009, we have a full time Executive Officer assisted by an Operations Manager and two administrative support staff. We also have a highly committed voluntary committee and a network of helpers in all States.

There are a number of fundamental ideals and values that have been passed down “through the ages” which influence all our activities. These include:

- keeping the cost of membership as low as possible so the annual fee is never seen as a deterrent to joining;
- keeping politics and Industrial Relations issues out of mainstream Association business;
- ensuring the Association provides value to ALL members; and
- keeping a strong focus at all times on members and their needs, and concentrating our efforts towards predominately operational issues.

Our services are many and varied. They include developing technical resources, conducting seminars and conferences, having input into the development and maintenance of the Water Training Package, providing information & videos to encourage more people to consider the water industry as a career of choice and a range of other operator focussed activities and initiatives right across Australia. We do all this in order to share knowledge, skills and expertise amongst water industry operational staff and to provide opportunities for professional and personal development of our members. By participating fully at Association events, operational professionals can improve their knowledge and skills in turn allowing them to improve their own performance and that of the systems they operate or control.

To successfully manage our Organisational growth and continue to deliver quality services and events, requires well structured support mechanisms. Above all, it is imperative that a focus be kept on where we are going and what we want to achieve. In 2009, WIOA developed a framework to allow the introduction of a national “Operator Certification” system. Importantly, the consultation process undertaken thus far has revealed strong support for the implementation of such a system and we have been overwhelmed by the encouragement of a number of organisations and water industry interest groups to make sure this happens. It will be a priority area for us in 2010.

The WIOA strategic plan was updated in 2009. It reflects the goals and strategies we intend to achieve for WIOA and in particular, for our members. The plan is comprehensive and provides the Executive, Committee and members many and varied exciting challenges.

We'd like to extend an invitation to anyone employed in the operational side of the water industry to assist us in our quest to deliver improvements from the ground up. You can do this by becoming a member of the Association and by proactively sharing any knowledge or information with your water industry colleagues.

### WIOA Committee



*“Excellence in Water Industry Operations.”*

## WIOA Vision

“To be recognised as a leading professional organisation promoting excellence in water industry operations”

## Mission

“To promote and support the development of people in water industry operations”

## Values

An important aspect when conducting our business is to recognise and apply our core values. In this sense WIOA commits to demonstrate our values through:

“A **happy, healthy** and **safe** approach to all our activities”

“A **professional** and **consistent** approach”

“A **commitment** to innovation and sustainability”

“**Integrity**”

“Celebration and **recognition** of achievements”

“**Open, honest** and **timely** communications”

“**Respect**” and

“**Supportive** behaviour to all”

## WIOA Goals:

“To build a National Association of Members who are actively engaged in the operation and maintenance of water and wastewater systems”;

“To accumulate and disseminate information on the design, control, operation and maintenance of such systems to improve Members understanding and knowledge”;

“To promote and develop education and training standards to ensure the highest possible levels of efficiency and competency for all operators”;

“To provide opportunities for the recognition of individual achievements of both Members and other operators employed in the water industry”;

“To encourage new people into the industry and ensure adequate skill levels and succession planning across the sector”;

“To promote health and safety issues as a key element of the workplace”;

“To develop consistent and reciprocal levels of training and qualifications of Members across all States and Territories”;

“To promote the protection of the environment in all member activities and functions”.

# WIOA Inc Annual Review - 2009

## WIOA President's Message



Dams full to capacity, service and quantity charges affordable, no restrictions on usage times and amounts, lush green lawns and gardens - I doubt that I will see this again for a long time, if ever. Our changing climate and prolonged droughts has not only altered our lifestyles but also our attitude towards the way in which we manage and preserve our precious resource.

The community in general has risen to the task and has accepted that we all need to use less water at our homes. Industry has also embraced a new and creative range of water saving measures which are now being integrated as part of their general operations. Some of this is no doubt driven by cost increases associated with being connected to a reticulated supply, to others it has just become an accepted way of life.

Encouraging the preservation of water is important, but so too is protecting our urban communities from running out of water. After a lengthy period of relatively low investment on major infrastructure projects like dams, Governments Australia wide have realised the need for a more diverse range of water supply options. Almost every day we read about the progress of new pipelines that will supply water to different areas of different states, upgrades of plant and equipment, farmers having to account for water used, the construction of enormous desalination plants (that only a handful of years ago were considered totally unaffordable), and the list goes on. Obviously indirect potable reuse will be in the mix in the future and our industry needs to further engage with the public to educate them on the benefits.

Now more than ever, the important role and real value of water industry operators is beginning to be recognised. Operators are the front line people solely responsible for the successful management and operation of our plants and distribution systems. Operators are becoming increasingly more professional in their training, competence and responsibilities. If we get it wrong, there could be dire consequences for the community or the environment. There is no room for shortcuts, complacency or cowboys. Over the last few years the drought has had an increasing impact on our water supplies and the day to day operations. Operators around Australia have had to be innovative, and in some cases prepared to step outside the square to achieve the goal of delivering clean, safe drinking water to our customers. As we move into the new decade, we will see operators become Certified and as the peak industry body for "operational professionals", WIOA is already intimately involved in developing and implementing this process.

As a member of WIOA you are exposed to a myriad of information and resources that can help you perform at the highest level possible. We have a network of operators that would be happy to help in solving a problem, could offer assistance or recommend someone if they can't do it themselves. Each year WIOA runs a number of events including conferences and specialised training seminars. These are a fantastic way of meeting people and keeping up with the new technologies available, as well as getting first hand industry experience. Try and get to one of these events and I guarantee that you won't be disappointed.

Our events are so successful due to the efforts put in by the full time staff and Directors of WIOA Ltd, including Executive Officer - George Wall, Operations Manager - Cynthia Lim, our admin team of Sherryn and Marilyn along with Directors in Ron Bergmeier, John Harris and Tony Hourigan.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the support of our Committee Members and their respective employers for allowing them to be a part of WIOA and contribute to the successful staging of our events. All these people and their employers are detailed a little later in this document. In addition, there are a number of volunteers in each State that freely give up their time to help us out. If I name some, I'm sure I will miss out on important people, so please take it from us – you know who you are and we really do appreciate your efforts and support.

In 2009, we reviewed and updated our Strategic Business Plan to ensure that we continue to deliver the services that our members have come to expect. Updating the plan ensures that we will continue to:

- Initiate and organise conferences across Australia focused primarily on Operational issues in the Water Industry;
- Develop and deliver specialised targeted training courses and seminars on specific topics that have a major impact on operational productivity;
- Develop and publish technical reference resources aimed specifically for operations staff;
- Gather expert people together to assist with operational problems that members are experiencing;
- Maintain representation on a number of key National forums which enables us to influence industry operational outcomes.

In closing, I would like to encourage you to use the WIOA network to help you in your workplace and I hope to see you at one of our events somewhere in the country.

The water industry is an exciting place to be, so do the best you can to get the most out of it.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'A. Evans'.

Anthony Evans  
**WIOA President.**

## WIOA Executive Officer's Report

Each year we take great pride in updating our Members on the various projects, events, outcomes and achievements of WIOA. Each year we seem to have a new and exciting list of achievements to report and 2009 was no exception.

The highlight of the year occurred in March when our Member numbers topped 1,000 for the first time in our history. We enjoyed the company of the lucky 1000<sup>th</sup> member – Patrick Berry from Veolia Water in NSW, who joined us at the Bendigo conference as our guest. By the end of the year, numbers had climbed to almost 1,200 so we are now well on the way to the 2,000 milestone. More information on the numbers and distribution of our members appears later in this booklet.



Our three main events – the operationally focussed conferences in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria again broke new ground in terms of delegate and visitor attendance, trade exhibition participation and sponsorship support. All three were outstanding successes and provided an ideal forum for delegates, visitors and trade representatives to see and hear about important operational issues, products and service developments.

We also had the opportunity to meet and work with a number of new companies as either sponsors or exhibitors. In particular, we'd like to make mention of the outstanding contribution of our Prime Sponsors in Rad-tel Systems, ITT Water & Wastewater, Acromet Australia and ABS Wastewater Systems. Along with the Prime Sponsors, we had a number of other companies take up sponsorship opportunities at one or more event. We greatly value the support and commitment of every company participating at a WIOA event and we look forward working with all of them in the future.

There are a number of awards presented each year, some National and others State based, again with the support of very generous sponsoring companies. We take this opportunity to congratulate all the winners and acknowledge all these sponsors as well. A photo of each of the prize winners appears later in this booklet along with a sponsors page acknowledging all of our event sponsors. We ask all Members to keep these companies in mind and try to return the support when you purchase products or services for your workplace.

WIOA's Technical Advisor, Peter Mosse and his fantastically committed team of co-authors and reviewers continued the development of technical resources for our industry. The fifth and final Operator resource book in the water series – the "Practical Guide to the Operation and Optimisation of Chlorine and Chloramine Disinfection" was released in August. On the back of the success of the water titles, WIOA and a number of industry support partners have now committed to producing a series of at least four guides covering wastewater treatment issues. These books will be progressively released from late 2010.

Whilst mentioning publications, with Peter Mosse at the helm as editor, we again released two issues of our technical Journal "WaterWorks". In recent times, sourcing companies prepared to take out print based advertising in "WaterWorks" has become increasingly difficult. At other times we have also needed to call in "favours" just to obtain enough material to publish. Having said that, we believe that the Journal is an integral tool for informing our members about practical issues and developments within the industry, and we are committed to keeping it going. We also produced four editions of our newsletter "Operator" along with a monthly instalment of our enews "Words". We again ask all our members to contribute to the Association by providing information that we can distribute in any of our publications. An article, letter to the editor, opinion on a particular topic, or a snippet of info would be gratefully received.

Our seminar series continued in 2009 with events held in Tamworth, Caloundra and Kempsey and with many more on a wider range of topics planned for 2010. We have revised the content and delivery methods for the Distribution seminar in particular. We can now offer it as a "lecture style" or "hands on, interactive style" depending on enterprise requirements. We can also offer more personalised seminars with smaller numbers of participants, so if anyone is looking for this type of help, we would be only too pleased to discuss the options available.

Our relationship with kindred water industry organisations has remained strong and WIOA has continued to be represented on a number of National industry working groups. Amongst a variety of forums, project and working group commitments, we have again been actively involved with Government Skills Australia (GSA) as a member of their Water Industry Advisory Committee (WIAC). In conjunction with GSA, we provided considerable input into submissions to the Water

Industry Skills Taskforce (WIST) outlining issues relating to training, skills development and certification. Part of this information was used in the development of the National Water Skills Strategy recently signed off by COAG. Much of the information supplied was collected as a result of open discussion forums on training related issues held at each of our conferences in 2009. As a result of feedback from these forums, we look forward to contributing even more positive ideas to the Taskforce in 2010.

We have continued to work proactively with the Victorian Department of Health and the water businesses in the development of Best Practice Guidelines for Water Treatment Operator Competencies. Once implemented in 2010, for the first time in Australia we will have some specified minimum training and competency requirements in place, as well as refresher training to keep skills updated. Further, the operators will be "Certified" under a new system implemented by WIOA, as having the appropriate training and experience to match the types of systems they are operating. WIOA will continue lobbying for the implementation of the program into all States, and will also look at expanding it to cover wastewater and other operational disciplines throughout 2010.

WIOA maintained its involvement with the Qld Water Directorate project relating to E-Learning training resource development. This project is one way of bridging the distance gap for operators in regional and rural communities but in our opinion, it is important to ensure that it is used for the transfer of knowledge and some (but not all) skills. It must be recognised that some of our technical and process based skills cannot be passed on via a computer simulation and the industry needs to provide adequate feedback to ensure our operators are being trained to the right level.

As our staff and supporters travel around the country, it is interesting to note the large numbers of water industry people who have never heard of WIOA or what we do. Presently, we rely heavily on existing Members and supporters to spread the word. To be more proactive in this regard, in 2009 we participated in and attended a large number of industry events including the NSW LGSA water conference, the WME Industrial Water conference and the Trenchless Technology conference to spread the word about what we do. This process will be continued in 2010 and beyond. We will investigate all options to further expand our networks in the future.

The operator tour of the South Island of NZ in May 09 was a major success and our colleagues from the Water Industry Operations Group of NZ (WIOG) looked after the attendees amazingly well. The WIOG operations conference in Dundee was also their biggest event yet – shows how important the operational side of the industry really is. Unfortunately, the Operator Exchange program did not run in 2009 and we would like to see it resurrected in 2010. We have continued dialogue at an Executive level with WIOG in an effort to grow our relationship, maximise the benefits either way and share as much information as possible.

Financially, the Association is in a strong and stable position and we have now accumulated modest cash reserves in case of unforeseen events. Our strong position is mainly due to the support, generosity and commitment to WIOA of the many companies with whom we have forged a strong working relationship. We need this support to continue in the future if we are to continue to deliver high quality and affordable service and events and maintain our position within the industry.

Last year we reported on our move to new offices at 22 Wyndham St, Shepparton. A number of Members have called in over the past 12 months and we again extend an open invitation to any member to drop in and say hello. An additional reason to call in is to inspect the small "museum" which has been set up with the kind assistance of many members. We thank everyone who donated items and in particular, we'd like to thank Gippsland Water and Russell Mack for all the help with sourcing, storing and then delivering many of the items now on display. We still have some room to expand a bit more so if anyone wishes to donate more pieces please give us a call.

There is no question that 2009 was a ground breaking year for WIOA but all our successes would not be possible without the hard work and fantastic assistance of our committed staff, the WIOA Committee, our band of amazing voluntary helpers and all the Members. We look forward to working again with everyone to make 2010 even more successful.



George Wall  
**Executive Officer WIOA**

# Governance

## WIOA Incorporated Office Bearers and General Committee Members 2009

Name	Position	Employer	Meetings Eligible to attend	Number Attended
Anthony Evans	President	Wannon Water	4	4
George Wall	Secretary/Treasurer	WIOA	4	4
John Day	Vice President	Goulburn Valley Water	4	4
Peter Tolsher	Immediate Past Pres	EGL Management Services	4	3
Stephen Wilson	Committee Member	Water Industry Training Centre	4	3
Barry Waddell	Committee Member	East Gippsland Water	4	4
Peta Thiel	Committee Member	Activated Carbon Technologies	4	3
Graham Thomson	Committee Member	Barwon Water	4	4
Russell Mack	Committee Member	Gippsland Water	4	3
Peter Kitney	Committee Member	Melbourne Water	3	1
Stan Stevenson	Committee Member	SEQWater	3	1
Tony Davies	Committee Member	Water Infrastructure Group	1	1
John Harris	Committee Member	Wannon Water	1	1

WIOA Committee and Directors who attended the 72<sup>nd</sup> Victorian Water Industry Engineers & Operators Conference, September 2009



### WIOA Ltd Board Meeting Attendance

Board Member	Employer	Number of Meetings Eligible to attend	Number Attended
Ron Bergmeier (Chairman)	Bergmeier Engineering	6	6
George Wall	WIOA	6	6
Peter Tolsher	EGL Management Services	6	6
John Harris	Wannon Water	6	2
Russell Mack	Gippsland Water	6	5
Tony Hourigan	Grundfos Pumps	6	4

## Membership

### Life Members

The list below outlines Members who have been awarded Life Membership of the Association since its inception in 1973 and the year it was awarded.

Ray Holloway	– 1986 (deceased)
Stan Franzi	– 1994
Ron Bergmeier	– 1998
George Wall	– 2004
Barry Waddell	– 2007



L to R (George Wall, Barry Waddell, Stan Franzi, Ron Bergmeier)

## I.D.I.O.T.S. Award

In 2004, the WIOA Committee introduced a new award recognising the services of individuals to the Association. This service award is given to an individual in recognition of their commitment to the vision and philosophies of the Association and the active promotion of WIOA. This award is designed to complement the existing Life Membership which is the Association's most prestigious award for distinguished service to the Association over many years. To be eligible, a person must have demonstrated their commitment to the Association over a minimum period of five years, either as an Individual Member or as an employee of a Corporate member.

These individuals will be:

- Inducted as
- Delegates of the
- Inextricably
- Obstructed
- Tap
- Society



*Photo of some of the IDIOTS including IDIOTS from New Zealand taken at the 72<sup>nd</sup> Victorian Water Industry Engineers and Operators conference at Bendigo, September 2009.*

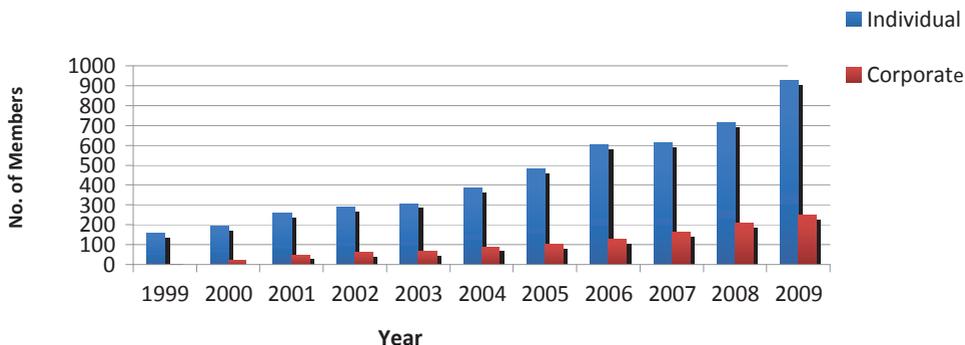
Below are Members who have been inducted as I.D.I.O.T.S. since the award's inception:

Barry Waddell	– 2004	Russell Mack	– 2005	Owen Braybrook	– 2008
Ron Bergmeier	– 2004	Ken Herbert	– 2006	Ian Bicknell	– 2008
George Wall	– 2004	Pat Davis	– 2006	Leigh Strange	– 2009
Richard Greenhough	– 2004	John Harris	– 2006	John Park	– 2009
Tony Hourigan	– 2004	Peter Jackson	– 2007	Brian Davis	– 2009
Mal Farnham	– 2005	Cynthia Lim	– 2007		
Neil Healey	– 2005	Stephen Wilson	– 2007		

## Membership Statistics

In 2009, some 309 new Individual Members joined the Association. There were 35 Member resignations attributed to retirements, changes in employment or other reasons. Unfortunately, there were 62 Members whose names were removed from the database in December due to non-payment of fees. The combined effect of caused the number of Individual Members to increase by 212, taking the total to 925 at years end.

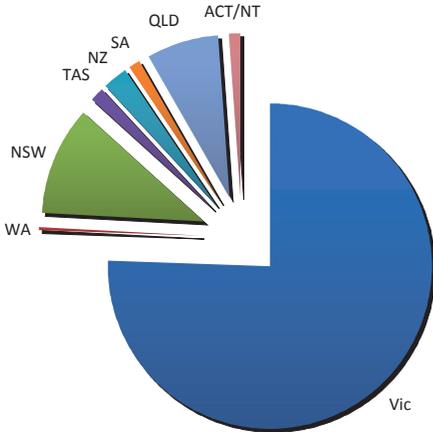
There was again a steady increase in the Corporate member category with numbers increasing from 210 to 249 which included another twenty companies that resigned their membership during the year.



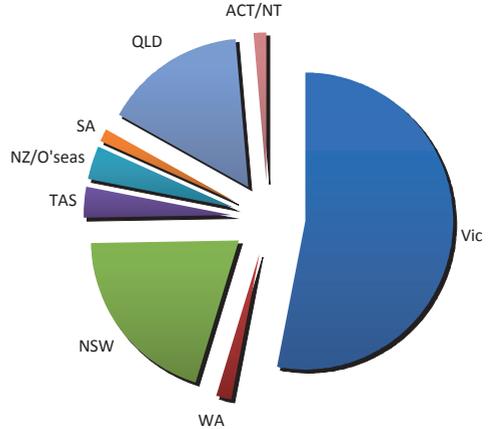
## Membership Distribution

Due to the expansion and National promotion of the Association, the majority of new members in 2009 came from outside Victoria. The ratio of members from Victoria to other States is now reducing significantly. This trend is likely to continue in 2010 as the benefits of membership of the Association are communicated to potential new members in the other States and additional services and events are provided. A comparison of how the distribution of members is changing is best demonstrated by the charts below outlining Individual Member distribution by State for the years 2005 & 2009.

### Membership Distribution 2005



### Membership Distribution 2009



## WIOA meets 1000th Member

In March this year WIOA reached an important milestone when we signed up our 1000th Member. To celebrate this significant achievement, we invited the lucky new member, Patrick Berry, to an all expenses paid trip to one of our conferences. We enjoyed Patrick's company for the duration of the Victorian conference in Bendigo. We now look forward with great anticipation to signing up the 2000th Member!!



## 2009 Award Winners

### NATIONAL

#### Kwatye Prize

Bernd Vetter - 2009 Winner  
(Sponsored by Thermo Fisher Scientific)



Bernd Vetter (L) pictured with Rohan Latham from Thermo Fisher Scientific.

#### Member Prize

Stu Craib - 2009 Recipient  
(Sponsored by Royce Water Technologies)



Stu Craib pictured with his prize.

# Congratulations to

AWARD	NSW	
<p><b>OPERATOR OF THE YEAR WINNER</b></p>	<p>Ross Waugh (R) Coffs Harbour Council pictured with Stewart McLeod, NSW Water Directorate</p>	
<p>SPONSORED BY</p>		
<p><b>BEST PAPER OVERALL</b></p>	<p>Peter Outtrim (L) Riverina Water County Council pictured with Ian Jesson, Iwaki Pumps</p>	
<p>SPONSORED BY</p>		
<p><b>BEST PAPER BY AN OPERATOR</b></p>	<p><b>First</b> - Peter Outtrim, Riverina Water County Council pictured with Alex Madarasi (R) <b>Second</b> - Lindsay Walsh - MidCoast Water <b>Third</b> - John Day - Goulburn Valley Water</p>	
<p>SPONSORED BY</p>		
<p><b>BEST TRADE EXHIBIT</b></p>	<p>Life &amp; Rescue International</p>	
<p>SPONSORED BY</p>		
<p><b>YOUNG OPERATOR OF YEAR</b></p>	<p>No entries received - Award to commence next year</p>	
<p>SPONSORED BY</p>		
<p><b>BEST POSTER PAPER</b></p>	<p>No entries received - Award to commence next year</p>	
<p>SPONSORED BY</p>		

# 2009 Award Winners

QLD	VIC
<p>Brian Caplick (R) Wide Bay Water pictured with Peter McLennan, AWA QLD</p>	<p>Steve Hunter (L) Veolia Water pictured with Andrew Chapman, AWA VIC</p>
 <p>Leon Henry Memorial award</p>	 <p>Wal Whiteside Memorial award</p>
<p>Charlie Suggat� (R) Gold Coast Water pictured with Brian Davis, WITA</p>	<p>Greg Comer (R) Goulburn Valley Water pictured with Damien Alston, Iwaki Pumps</p>
	
<p><b>First</b> - John Granzien (R) SEQWater pictured with Bob Smith <b>Second</b> - Ian Johnson - Gold Coast City Council <b>Third</b> - Sam Magill - Aqualift Pacific</p>	<p><b>First</b> - Greg Comer (L) Goulburn Valley Water pictured with Alex Madarasi <b>Second</b> - Gwynn Hatton - Barwon Water <b>Third</b> - Bert Pynapples - GWM Water</p>
	
<p>SebaKMT Aus</p>	<p>Australian Valve and Filter Industries (AVFI)</p>
	
<p>No entries received - Award to commence next year</p>	<p>Lee Franke (L) North East Water pictured with Peter Quinn, IWA VIC</p>
	
<p>No entries received - Award to commence next year</p>	<p><b>First</b> - Peter Tolsher (R) EGL Management Services pictured with Stephen Wilson <b>Second</b> - Sean Doyle - Barwon Water <b>Third</b> - Bill Mackrell - Wannon Water</p>
	

WIOA wish to acknowledge and thank our valued conference sponsors in 2009

Prime Sponsors



Hosts



Sponsors



# WIOA Consolidated Financial Information 2009

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

for period 1 January to 31 December 2009

### Income (excluding GST)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Conference Income	\$ 1,039,869.89	\$ 965,575.14
Interest	\$ 9,955.91	\$ 20,316.78
Membership	\$ 75,155.03	\$ 39,269.86
Events and Misc Income	\$ 74,846.13	\$ 43,619.86
Resource Book Sales	\$ 34,915.69	\$ 39,024.31
Petty Cash (opening balance)	\$ 1,064.65	\$ 1,337.50
GST refund ex ATO	\$ 4,120.55	\$ 277.55
GST Collected	\$ 119,317.38	\$ 106,078.93
<b><u>Total Income</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,359,245.23</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,215,499.93</u></b>

### Expenditure (excluding GST)

Office & Administration Expenses	\$ 128,679.64	\$ 81,750.23
Staff Expenses	\$ 223,003.73	\$ 177,152.36
Activity Based Expenditure	\$ 157,608.08	\$ 109,404.59
Asset Purchases	\$ 43,031.96	\$ 27,475.88
Conference Expenditure	\$ 615,293.90	\$ 513,876.19
GST, FBT & PAYG Tax Paid to ATO	\$ 90,418.94	\$ 74,751.55
GST Paid on purchases	\$ 90,914.98	\$ 73,277.52
Closing Petty Cash Balance	\$ 1,647.90	\$ 1,066.65
<b><u>Total Expenditure</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,350,599.13</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,076,590.41</u></b>
<b><u>Net Trading Surplus/(Deficit)</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 8,646.10</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 138,909.52</u></b>

## FUNDS HELD

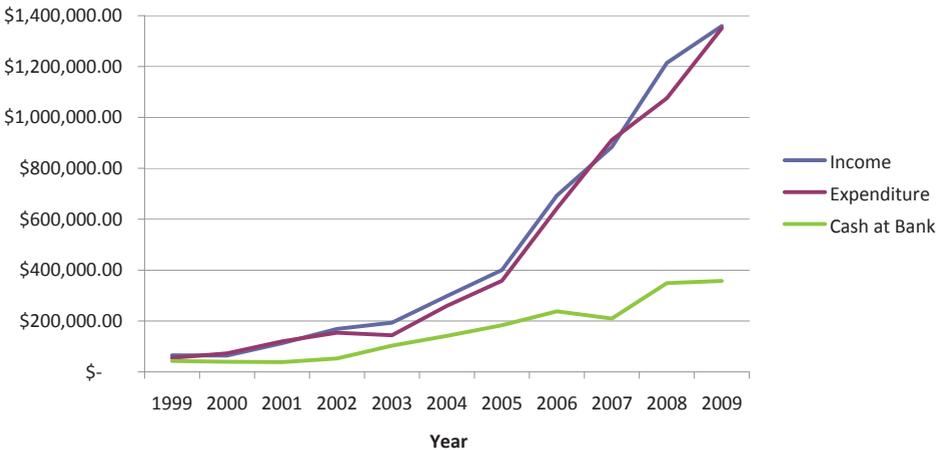
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Balance beginning of Year	\$ 348,785.22	\$ 209,875.70
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 8,646.10	\$ 138,909.52
<b><u>Balance at end of Year</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 357,431.32</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 348,785.22</u></b>

## Summary of WIOA Financial Position

In January 2009, WIOA ratified an operational budget for the 2009 year which predicted a net trading loss from operational activities of just under \$25,000. This outcome was based on projected income of \$1.099M and expenditure of \$1.124M (both inclusive of GST). As the Association held adequate cash reserves, operating on a close to balanced budget was determined as appropriate and it would not be necessary for increased charges at our events including seminars, conferences and trade exhibitions.

The Association has ended the 2009 year recording an overall net profit from operational activities of \$8,646 on income of \$1.359M and expenditure of \$1.350M (including GST). At the end of 2009, WIOA has cash reserves of just under \$360,000.

## Summary Cash Flows 1999-2009



WIOA is committed to the continuation of the Operators conference in NSW, Qld and Victoria and the introduction of more community engagement with each of the events will be trialled in 2010. The Committee has approved the expansion of the development of the operator resource book series to now cover wastewater issues as well. The content for these books is currently being developed and they will be progressively rolled out during 2010 and 2011.

The one day seminar series was expanded in 2009 and the range of seminar topics and locations of events is planned to be broadened again in 2010. The remainder of the Association activities generally ran according to the original budget and the proposed range of services and events was delivered according to plan.

In summary, the Association is in a strong financial position and has adequate funds to continue to provide member services at existing levels. This sound financial position will enable WIOA to develop and subsidise an expanded range of operator focussed events and services throughout 2010.

## Minutes of 2009 WIOA Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Water Industry Operators Association of Australia Incorporated was held at the Esplanade Resort & Fishermans Co-op, Lakes Entrance, on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2009 with 39 Members in attendance.

The meeting was opened by President, Mr Peter Tolsher at 1.10 p.m.

**Apologies:** Ron Bergmeier, Richard Greenhough, Bob Eden, Neil Healey, Russell Mack, Tim Sells, Pat Davis, Peter Jackson.

### Apology Acceptance :

MOTION: *"That the Apologies be accepted"*.

**Moved** – Barry Waddell;      **Seconded** – Bernd Vetter,      **CARRIED**

### Previous Minutes :

MOTION: *"That the Minutes of the previous AGM (2008) be accepted as published in the "Annual Report" mailed to all Members and as distributed on the day"*.

**Moved** – Nick Bray;      **Seconded** – Mal Farnham,      **CARRIED**

### Correspondence:

**In:**      - Auditors Report

**Out:**      - Minutes of previous AGM plus Annual Report to all Members

            - Minutes of previous AGM and financial statements to Dept Corporate Affairs

MOTION: *"That the AGM Correspondence in and out be ratified"*.

**Moved** – Leigh Strange;      **Seconded** – Darren Sharman,      **CARRIED**

### Treasurers Report:

A full Treasurers report appears in the 2008 Annual Report and an assets list was provided to all at the AGM. It was pointed out that there was a typo in the Expenditure items within the Trading Profit and Loss Statement on Page 12. The sums against each of the Expenditure items were for the opposite year (sums in 2008 column were actually for 2007 and vice versa).

The Treasurer elaborated further on the key expenditure items and performance against budget for 2008 as well as noting items of significant difference from 2007 to 2008.

MOTION: *"That the Audited Treasurers Report be accepted as published and distributed, noting a closing cash balance of \$348,785.22"*.

**Moved** – Owen Braybrook;      **Seconded** – Margarita Grozdanoski,      **CARRIED**

### President's Report:

Outgoing President Peter Tolsher summarised many of the key achievements of the Association over the past couple of years. As he had decided not to nominate in 2009, the outstanding service of John Harris during his 11 years on the Committee was noted.

A detailed Presidents Report outlining all the activities undertaken during the past year is included in the Association's 2008 Annual Report.

## Secretary's Report:

Secretary/EO George Wall provided a summary of the growth in Membership numbers, the trends in relation to financial performance and noted some of the issues facing WIOA into the future. A pictorial summary of the activities undertaken by the Association during the past year was also presented.

MOTION: "That the President and Secretary Reports as published in the 2008 Annual Report" be accepted".

**Moved** – Graham Thomson, **Seconded** – Stephen Wilson, **CARRIED**

## Election of 2009 Committee:

President, Peter Tolsher declared all positions vacant and conducted the election of President.

At the close of nominations, there was one nomination received for **President**:

*Anthony Evans* Nominated - John Harris Seconded - Mark McNeil

**Anthony Evans was duly elected President.**

At the close of nominations, there was one nomination received for **Vice President**.

*John Day* Nominated - Jason Whittaker Seconded by Bruce Anderson

**John Day was duly elected Vice President.**

At the close of nominations, there was one nomination received for **Secretary/Treasurer** :

*George Wall* Nominated by John Day Seconded by Mike Rankin

**George Wall was duly elected Secretary/Treasurer**

At the closing date for nominations the Secretary had received 10 nominations for the 8 **General Committee** positions.

### Committee :

Graham Thomson	Nominated by	Andrew Edmiston	Seconded by Robert Priddle
Peter Tolsher	Nominated by	Chris Keith	Seconded by Adrian Rijnbeek
Stephen Wilson	Nominated by	Graham Thomson	Seconded by Robert Priddle
Peter Kitney	Nominated by	Tim Rodman	Seconded by Ian Smith
Russell Mack	Nominated by	Adrian Harper	Seconded by Ian Soutar
Peta Thiel	Nominated by	Stan Stevenson	Seconded by Peter Cullum
Barry Waddell	Nominated by	Gary Pini	Seconded by Peter Waddell
Stan Stevenson	Nominated by	Neil Frieberg	Seconded by Michael Burns
Robert Kelso	Nominated by	Andrew Allinson	Seconded by George Wall
Tony Davies	Nominated by	Bob McAlister	Seconded by Angela Davies

An election utilising a secret ballot was undertaken with the order of positions on the ballot drawn at the WIOA Committee meeting held on 13 March 09.

The following Members were duly declared elected to the General Committee.

Graham Thomson	Russell Mack
Peter Tolsher	Stan Stevenson
Stephen Wilson	Barry Waddell
Peter Kitney	Peta Thiel

## **General Business :**

As there were no other items of General Business, the President declared the AGM closed.

**Meeting Closed at 1.55 pm.**

# MEMBER INFORMATION

## WIOA Corporate Member Listing as at 1 January 2010

For more information about WIOA corporate members and their products and services visit: [www.wioa.org.au](http://www.wioa.org.au) and click on the "membership" tab.

### Company Name

AAP Industries  
 ABS Wastewater Technology  
 Accurate Detection  
 Acrodyne  
 Acromet  
 ActewAGL  
 Action Instrumentation & Controls  
 Activated Carbon Technologies  
 ADS Environmental  
 Aeramix  
 Aeroharmonics  
 AGFAB Engineering  
 Air Liquide  
 Alexandrina Council  
 Alfa Laval Australia  
 Allflow Supply Company  
 Aquabiotics Industrial  
 Aqua Diagnostic  
 Aquafocus  
 AquaManage  
 Aqualift Potable Diving  
 Aquatec Maxcon  
 Arch International  
 Armidale Dumaresq Council  
 Ashland Water Technologies  
 Ativo Maintenance & Project Ser.  
 ATMR - Total Maintenance  
 Australian Drain & Pipe Repairs  
 Australian Innovative Systems  
 Australian Pollution Engineering  
 AVFI  
 Australian Water Association  
 Automation IT  
 Avdata Australia  
 AvivaPure  
 AWIS  
 AWMA  
 Axis Direct  
 B2P Australia  
 Bartlett's Waste Management  
 Barwon Water  
 Bathurst Regional Council

Bell Environmental  
 Bergeimer Engineering  
 Berrigan Shire Council  
 Bilfinger Berger Services  
 Bintech Products  
 BioRemedy  
 BOC Limited  
 Brown Brothers Engineers  
 Burnie City Council  
 By Air Liquid Mixing Solutions  
 CAPS Australia  
 CEA Australia  
 Central Highlands Water  
 Challenger Valves & Actuators  
 Chatoyer Holdings  
 City Water Technology  
 City West Water  
 Cleanaway  
 Clearbore  
 Clearwater Recruitment  
 CMG  
 Coliban Water  
 Complete Tapping Services  
 Conhur  
 Convergent Water Controls  
 Cooma Monaro Shire Council  
 CRS Industrial Water Treatment Sys.  
 CSE - Semaphore  
 CSE - Uniserve  
 CST Wastewater Solutions  
 C-Tech Services



Danfoss Australia  
 DCM Process Control  
 DEPS  
 Dermody Diving & Marine Services  
 Dickinsons Environmental Services  
 DMI Australia

Dubbo City Council  
 East Coast Ultra Violet  
 Ecotech  
 Ecowise Australia  
 EDAC Electronics  
 EGL Operations  
 Eimco Water Technologies  
 Electronic Keying Australia  
 Endress + Hauser Australia  
 Enviro Check Enterprises  
 Enviroaer  
 EPCO Australia  
 Epsom Environmental Services  
 Festo  
 Fluidquip  
 For Earth  
 Franklin Electric  
 FRP Engineering  
 GHD  
 Gilgandra Shire Council  
 Gippsland Water  
 Gladstone Area Water Board  
 GMA Water Services  
 Gold Coast Water  
 Goldenfields Water County Council  
 Goulburn Valley Water  
 Government Skills Australia  
 Grating Company  
 Griffith City Council  
 Grundfos Pumps  
 Gutermann  
 GWM Water  
 Gwydir Shire Council  
 H2O Rx/Chemical System Cons.  
 Hamilton Island Enterprises  
 Hardman Australia  
 Hatlar Group  
 Hawk Measurement  
 Hunter Water  
 Hydramet Australia  
 Hydro Innovations  
 IdexFMT  
 ifm effector

Industrial Pumping Solutions Aust  
 Integra Water Treatment  
 Intercapital Property Services  
 International Chemicals Engineering  
 Ionode  
 ITS Trenchless  
 ITT Water & Wastewater  
 Iwaki Pumps  
 Jeem Services  
 Jonoco  
 JS Melbourne Controls  
 Just Dig It  
 KRE Engineering Services  
 KSB Australia  
 Kyabram Rewinding Service  
 Labtek  
 Leak Search  
 Linatex Australia  
 Liquitek  
 Lotic  
 Mack Valves  
 Macleay Water  
 Mars  
 Matrix Process Solutions  
 McBerns  
 Measuring & Control Equipment  
 Melbourne Water  
 MEP Instruments  
 Merck  
 Metaval  
 Mid-Western Regional Council  
 MJK Automation  
 Mt Buller Resort Mgmt  
 Murray Shire Council  
 Nextep Miyama  
 NHP Electrical Engineering  
 Nordical Diving Services  
 North East Water  
 Mono Nov  
 Odour Control Systems (Aust)  
 Odour Control Systems (Vic)  
 Odour Technologies  
 Omega Chemicals  
 Opus International Consultants – ETC  
 Pacific Hire  
 Palmerston Nth CC  
 Parchem Construction Products  
 Parsons Brinckerhoff  
 Paterson Pumps

Peerless Industrial Systems  
 Pentair Water  
 Piping & Automation Systems  
 Power & Water Corporation  
 Process Systems  
 Projex Group  
 ProMinent Fluid Controls  
 Pump Selections  
 Pumpserv  
 Queensland Water Directorate  
 Rad-tel Systems  
 RePipe  
 Research Laboratory Services  
 Richmond Valley Council  
 Rockhampton Regional Council  
 Rod Bain Plumbing  
 Roto Pumps  
 Rotork  
 Royce Water Technologies  
 Ryison



Sealing Solutions  
 SebaKMT Aus  
 SEQ Water  
 Sewer Equipment Company  
 Siemens  
 Simmonds & Bristow  
 Singleton Shire Council  
 Smart Water  
 Smartaflow  
 SMEC Australia  
 Southern Rural Water  
 Sperian Protection  
 Storm Plastics  
 Sykes Group  
 Tamworth Regional Council  
 Technical Projects  
 The Banner Lady  
 The BF Group  
 Thermo Fisher Scientific  
 Thiess Services  
 Thomas & Coffey  
 Tricomm Construction

UAT Pacific  
 Underground Pump Supplies  
 United Group Infrastructure  
 United Water  
 'us'- Utility Services  
 UV Guard  
 Veolia Water – VIC  
 Vertex Water Treatment  
 Vic Pits  
 Virotec Global Solutions  
 VoR Environmental  
 Wagga Wagga City Council  
 Wannon Water  
 WAM Australia  
 Water Bore Redevelopers  
 Water Corporation  
 WITA Qld  
 Water Industry Training Centre  
 Water Infrastructure Group  
 Water Systems Australia  
 Water Technical Consultants  
 Water Training Australia  
 Watergates  
 WEG Australia  
 Western Water  
 Westernport Water  
 Westfalia Separator  
 Westwater Enterprises  
 Whitsunday Shire Council  
 Wide Bay Water  
 WIKA Australia  
 WME Media  
 Xypex  
 Yarra Valley Water

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How do I join, how much is membership and how can I pay?

You can join by completing and submitting an application form, (which doubles as a Tax Invoice) with your payment to WIOA. There is an application form in the middle of this booklet and more forms can be downloaded from the WIOA website – [www.wioa.org.au](http://www.wioa.org.au).

WIOA has two member categories – Individual and Corporate. The fees for 2010 are \$25 and \$200 (GST inclusive) respectively. Payment can be made by cheque, money order, credit card (Visa & Mastercard only) or by EFT. Payment can also be made in person at any Westpac branch using the BSB/account details from your invoice (don't forget to put your invoice number with the payment).

## What dates does the membership year cover and is a pro-rata fee available?

The membership year runs from 1 January to 31 December annually. A pro-rata membership fee is available, but only to Corporate members joining after 1 May annually.

Individual members joining after 1 August annually receive the balance of that year plus all of the next calendar year for their \$25 fee.

## What benefits do I receive as an Individual Member?

All Individual Members receive the following:

- New member pack on sign on which includes details about WIOA, various publications and other important information about the Association and our activities;
- **WaterWorks** Journal twice per annum (June and December);
- **Operator** newsletter quarterly;
- **Words**, WIOA's electronic newsletter monthly;
- Regular notification of events, seminars and conferences plus positions vacant adverts;
- Access to the WIOA website – [www.wioa.org.au](http://www.wioa.org.au);
- New product or equipment brochures from Corporate members;
- Regular updates on industry developments including training;
- Invitation to the free Weekend Seminar & AGM;
- Updates on industry resources and books aimed specifically at the operational side of the industry;
- Discounted registration fees to certain WIOA events;
- Application forms for various industry based Awards.



## What benefits do I receive as a Corporate Member?

All Corporate Supporters receive all the items listed above plus the following:

- Rights of individual membership is afforded to the nominated person only;
- Opportunity to list company details in the Corporate member section of the WIOA website along with a link to the member's own website;
- Ability to distribute promotional material or product brochures to WIOA members on payment of a small fee to cover postage;
- Editorial/promotional space in "Operator" or "WaterWorks";
- Opportunity to participate in "new products/new technology" section of "Operator";
- Recognition at the Annual Conferences through Corporate Supporters sign/board;
- Preference given to Corporate Supporters to act as presenters at weekend seminar;
- Invitation to present material on products etc at specific issues seminars;
- Free copies of the WIOA member Handbooks to distribute around the country.

### What benefits do I receive as a Utilities Corporate Member?

New in 2010, the Utilities Corporate Member category is open to all employees of water industry Operators. This category allows employers of operators to join up and pay for their operational staff to be individual members. All employees will receive all the benefits of an individual member and the employer will receive a free corporate membership, all the benefits of corporate membership plus one complimentary copy of any new release WIOA publication for the company library.

### I have an operational problem. Can WIOA help me sort it out?

WIOA has a wide range of members both individual and corporate, from all Australian States as well as overseas. If you have an operational issue that you are having difficulty resolving, just let us know about it and we can tap into our network to potentially get you an answer.

### Does WIOA have a Privacy Policy and how will my personal details be used?

WIOA has a Privacy Policy which is available from the WIOA website – [www.wioa.org.au](http://www.wioa.org.au). This policy outlines what information will be collected from Members, how it will be used and under what circumstances. WIOA has a policy of not providing personal details to anyone without approval from the Member.

### How do I update my Member details or website listing?

All members can update their contact or other personal details by sending a fax, email or letter to WIOA requesting the appropriate change at any time. Corporate members are also provided details of their listing from the WIOA website annually for review.

### I would like to receive my information by email instead of post. Is this possible?

WIOA members can choose to receive all correspondence either electronically by direct email or by hard copy (via Australia Post). Sending information by email is more environmentally friendly and cheaper for us. If you wish to receive information electronically, you can indicate this on the Membership application form. If you are an existing member and would like to change to email, just contact us and we will add you to the email list.



### What events does WIOA run?

- **Weekend Seminar & AGM** – Each year, an open invitation to attend a free weekend seminar and the Annual General Meeting of WIOA is sent to all members. The seminar is open to the first 50 financial members who register. Attendees are treated to customised hands-on presentations from various companies and guest speakers about specific products, technology improvements or items of general interest to operations staff.

- **Annual Conferences** - WIOA organises and annually stages an operationally focussed conference and Trade Exhibition in each of Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales. These major events are designed to provide an opportunity for operations personnel and trade supply companies to come together to discuss operational issues and see and hear about advances in technology and process methodologies.

- **Special Interest Seminars** - WIOA runs a series of special interest seminars using the expertise of various members and supporters to provide the latest in information on specific topics. These seminars will be staged as widely around Australia as possible. Topics and locations are chosen based on demand from members.

- **Charity Golf Day** – Each year WIOA runs a Charity Golf day in Victoria with proceeds from the day donated to charity. More than \$30,000 has been donated to charity since it started.

**I have a position vacant. Can I advertise it with WIOA?**

WIOA will place all relevant Position Vacant advertisements onto the WIOA website free of charge. Notification of the adverts is included in our monthly newsletter 'Word'. WIOA advertised over 90 positions vacant in 2008.

**I have a position wanted. Can I advertise it with WIOA?**

As an additional benefit to individual members WIOA can place positions wanted adverts on the WIOA website free of charge for any Individual member. Notification of the advert is included in our monthly newsletter 'Word'.

**How do I obtain a copy of the WIOA Constitution?**

The Constitution is included on our website and can be accessed and downloaded whenever required. It can be found by following this link: [www.wioa.org.au/wioa/constitution.htm](http://www.wioa.org.au/wioa/constitution.htm)

**I would like to submit an article for a WIOA publication. What do I have to do?**

We welcome contributions from members for any of our publications including 'WaterWorks', 'Operator' or 'Words'. All you need to do is send us your information/photos and we will arrange the rest. WIOA has an editorial team willing and able to help you put an article together if you require assistance.

**I would like to help the Association. How do I get onto the Committee?**

The Committee is elected by the Members annually and if you wish to be considered, just complete and return the Committee Nomination form which usually comes out each February. The Committee is elected at the AGM held in conjunction with the Weekend Seminar. We have established working groups in Qld, NSW and Victoria to assist us to run the various events. If you don't want to be on the Committee but would like to help out, just contact us and we would be pleased to add you to a group.

## Editors Note:

*In the recent past, numerous articles have been published in various WIOA publications challenging us all to consider our roles within the Water Industry and as WIOA Members.*

*We have reproduced two articles below – the first we believe captures many of the important issues facing the operational side of the water industry and on which WIOA will be concentrating hard in the near future. The second discusses the features and benefits of being involved with our Association. We trust that you will take the time to read them and pass them on to any potential members to read as well.*

### Article extracted from June 2007 Edition of “**WaterWorks**”.

#### The Australian Water Industry - “THE OTHER CRISIS”

The shortage of water in this country, at this time, is clearly the major crisis facing the water industry. There is however a second crisis. This crisis relates to the ability of water supply systems in this country to deliver safe drinking water 100% of the time and the ability to ensure this into the future. The consequences of this crisis are worsened by the impending implementation of indirect potable reuse schemes.

#### Operation

Treatment plant operators are often the last line of defence in the protection of public from waterborne disease. Errors can place thousands of people at risk as has been amply demonstrated in Walkerton (Canada) and Milwaukee (USA).

In Australia at present:

- There is no minimum standard for the operation of treatment plants and there is no minimum educational or training standard required for operators
- There is essentially no minimum standard for the quality of water produced from a water treatment plant. There is certainly no minimum standard for the production of *safe* drinking water (The ADWG are guidelines not regulations and do not appear to have been widely adopted or used).
- There is no recognition of the need for both training *and* experience and the progressive acquisition of functional knowledge in the appointment and matching of operators to treatment plants. In many cases, water businesses with a vacancy appoint whomever they think best for the job regardless of their level of training or competency. Human society in many areas recognises the progression of responsibility and expectations. A recently qualified pilot with a qualification to fly a single engine Cessna does not fly a jumbo jet – why shouldn't this be extended to the water industry?. There are similar deficiencies in the area of distribution system and wastewater treatment plant management as well.
- There is no recognition of the need for ongoing formal refresher training for technical skills. This begs the question of the duration of competency. In the face of changing technology, and changing expectations, water supply operations teams must ensure currency of knowledge and skills. This principal is well established in our society from first aid training, life saving and airline pilots to name just a few professions with responsibility for some aspect of consumer safety.

- Modern businesses including water utilities are experiencing rapid rates of staff turnover. This has been exacerbated recently in the technical areas with technical staff being tempted by the high salaries offered by the mining and other industries. Finding suitably qualified replacements is often very difficult leading to the tendency to train “on the job”. This is not compatible with the production of safe drinking water 100% of the time. The rate of remuneration for water industry operators in most cases is not commensurate with their level of responsibility, training, skills or expertise which is also adding to the staff turnover problem.

## Training

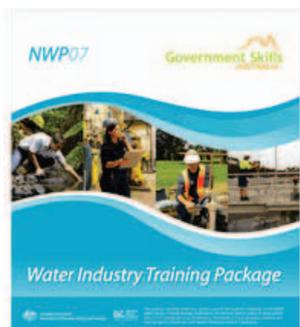
Education and training are the cornerstones of maintaining a modern society. Training needs to be matched to the specific disciplines and to provide continuity into the future. The water industry faces limitations for both current and future operations.



In Australia at present:

- The mediocre performance a number of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) has raised a number of issues:
  - o RTOs with the Water Industry Training Package are audited against a set of nationally agreed standards the - Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) using training recognition consultants. The role of these auditors is to confirm that RTO's are complying with the requirements of the AQTF including Standards 7 and 8 covering the competence of RTO staff and RTO assessments. Competency assessment under the AQTF requires assessors with the necessary knowledge and experience to assess the skills, or assessment to be undertaken in conjunction with an industry expert.
  - o Anecdotally it appears that the audit process does not effectively determine if the RTO employs trainers who have demonstrable knowledge, skills and expertise in the areas of the water industry they train in. There is a need for the audit to be conducted in conjunction with an industry expert, designed to assess individuals who have completed training with the RTO to determine that they have met the assessment criteria of the Training Package.
  - o Accounts abound of staff from RTO's turning up at water businesses to assess competencies or run courses with limited knowledge or experience in the subject in question. Often they have to first obtain the necessary knowledge from operations staff within the utility.

- Accounts abound of staff from water utilities undertaking a Recognition of Prior Learning or Recognition of Current Competence process with some RTO's where provided the staff member can answer some relatively simple questions, they are ticked off as competent for units as high as Certificate III level. This is often based on time in the job alone.
- Un-nesting of units within the Water Package, particularly at Certificate II and III levels (removal of the need to demonstrate all the knowledge required at lower levels before embarking on a higher level qualification) is also likely to be problematic for two reasons.
  - o Un-nesting should require RTO's to modify their existing training programs to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills to complete the more specialised training at the higher levels by building in the lower level competencies into each training unit, but there are no guarantees that every RTO will do this. This is particularly relevant to technically oriented training which requires a clear progression of the acquisition of knowledge. These changes at a time when the complexity of the industry and the expectations of public and regulators require increased operational skills, are a cause for major concern.
  - o The number of units required to complete a Certificate II & III has reduced from 22 under NWP 01 to 19 under NWP 07 but can be as few as 11 units if direct entry to Certificate III is approved. Under NWP 07, individual RTO's can decide at what level a trainee can enter, and therefore how many units they must complete to achieve a qualification. There is no doubt that in efforts to save training dollars, some water businesses will "strongly encourage" RTO's to do only the minimum amount of training to achieve a Certificate.
- Competency assessment criteria are often generic rather than specific and open to a wide range of interpretation according to the experience and motivation of the assessor.
- The lack of "streamed qualifications" within the training package means there is scope for individuals to achieve any Certificate level without necessarily combining an appropriate group of units. For example it is possible for a Water Treatment Plant operator to achieve certificate III qualification without having completed any of the key units such as filtration or disinfection or coagulation/flocculation. To successfully employ or train a person appropriate for a job role now requires the Human Resources staff within water authorities to have a high level of understanding of the content of units within the Water Training package and the type of processes the person would be expected to operate. In many authorities, HR staff do not have this expertise. The inclusion of tightly controlled "streamed qualifications" which identify areas of expertise and which specify units to be completed could help eliminate some of this confusion.



- A Level III certification does not necessarily qualify an individual to operate a treatment plant.
- The completion of Certificate III should be the minimum aim for all staff who operate a water or wastewater treatment plant. Importantly though, employers need to recognise that the completion of the Certificate should not be the trigger that ends all technical training.
- Although it is being addressed by Government Skills Australia at present, the Certificate IV units in NWP 07 predominately concentrate on front line management. The range of units does not provide adequate scope for persons wishing to complete a technically focussed qualification suitable for high level plant operation or to provide technical specialist support staff to help optimise and trouble shoot plants.

## Reporting

The provision of safe drinking water is of such importance to modern society that reporting of performance for external scrutiny is essential. Such expectations are well established in the financial sector. Pathogens are the major risk in the provision of safe water to consumers, reporting requirements need to reflect this knowledge.



In Australia at present:

- There is no requirement to report meaningful safe drinking water measures to regulators on the production of safe drinking water. Recording a value of zero (0) E coli is no longer suitable as a stand alone indicator. At a minimum reporting of individual filter performance and disinfection performance is required.

## Plant Registration or Classification

Treatment effort needs to be proportional to the risk and to the sensitivity of a community receiving the water. Systems drawing water from high risk catchments with a high probability of pathogen contamination and/or with a large community with highly sensitive industry, health or tourist requirements require a higher level of plant capability and higher operational skills. The plant risk classification therefore needs to be matched with a treatment plant suitable to mitigate the risk. The operator skills set required must then meet the complexity and sophistication of the plant itself.

In Australia at present:

- There is no requirement for classification or registration of treatment plants.
- There is no formal recognition of the need for plants capability and operational skills to match the overall risk profile.

This type of system already exists in countries such as the USA, Canada and New Zealand. Sadly, Australia is lagging well behind in this regard.

## What We Need!

A national program for the production of safe drinking water is required. This program needs to recognise the need for, and integrate, a classification and registration system for treatment plants, minimum standards of operation and required levels of operation according to the classification level of the plant and formal requirements for appropriate reporting.

More specifically:

- Treatment plant risk and sensitivity profiles need to be assessed and a plant classification established.
- Treatment plant competency needs to be assessed and registered.
- Minimum levels of operator qualifications and experience needs to be linked to the risk/sensitivity assessment of the plant. A high risk/high sensitivity plant would require a higher operational skills and experience set than a lower risk/lower sensitivity plant.
- A career path with entry from school, university or TAFE needs to be further developed and promoted in conjunction with GSA and the water industry.
- Training courses need to be expanded and controlled to ensure that the skills sets identified above can be achieved by entry from multiple levels (e.g. school leavers, water industry employees, university graduates.)
- Specific training course curricula need to be established.
- Competencies need to be specific rather than generic.
- A higher level technical specialist strand (possibly within the developing Certificate IV or Diploma level) needs to be developed to provide the higher level skills sets necessary for the operation of high risk/high sensitivity plants and the provision of specialist technical support within the industry. The stream would also provide a high level technical career path within the operations sector of the water industry.
- Reporting is required against the two key barriers for the control of pathogens in conventional water treatment, media filtration and disinfection. Chlorine disinfection (practiced at the vast majority of Australian plants) is only effective against bacteria and most viruses. Media filtration is the only barrier to protozoan pathogens. Reporting needs to be able to demonstrate that these barriers are consistently applied.
- E coli is no longer suitable as a stand alone indicator. At a minimum reporting of individual filter performance and disinfection performance is required.

We realise there are a significant and diverse range of ideas and issues raised within this article. We contend that unless the water industry Nationally recognises these issues, understands the potential risks of ongoing inaction and works proactively to address them, the time bomb that is a major water quality incident with potentially serious health implications and possibly even deaths is imminent. Is it going to be your part of the country where it occurs? We hope not.

We would welcome any comments, ideas, suggestions or feedback on how we can further progress our goal to improve the performance of all operational aspects of the Australian water industry.

**Peter Mosse and George Wall**

# YEAR IN PHOTOS



**6.** July – The ‘Operator Museum’ is set up at the WIOA offices. **7.** August – Steve Posselt visits Shepparton and interviews George Wall for his documentary about paddling up the Goulburn River. **8.** September – Ross Young, Executive Director of Water Services Association of Australia, delivering the opening address at the 72<sup>nd</sup> Victorian Water Industry Engineers & Operators Conference, Bendigo **9.** Wannon Water Managing Director Grant Green (R) and, Anthony Evans, WIOA President (L), presented a cheque for \$1,500 to The South West Community Foundation Director, Bill Quinlan, part of the proceeds from the 2008 WIOA Charity golf day.



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