



ASSOCIATION

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## **Strategic Goals & Focus Areas**

As part of Strategy'22, we have three overall strategic goals and 12 focus areas. Throughout this year's annual review, we have linked our initiatives and projects to these focus areas at the bottom of each page.

### **Strategic Goal 1 Partnerships**

#### **Focus Areas**

#### 1. Technology Partnerships

Technology partnerships to enhance engagement between staff, volunteers and members including a new CRM to increase effectiveness.

#### 2. Governments & Stakeholders

Consolidating our partnerships with Commonwealth and State Governments and industry allies (member organisations, universities and community groups) on programs, information and activities.

#### 3. Sustainable Development Goals

Facilitate partnerships to deliver projects on the Sustainable Development Goals in Australia, SE Asia, and the Pacific.

#### 4. Asia-Pacific

Strengthen our partnerships across the Asia-Pacific Region for trade and promotion of Australian water expertise.

### Strategic Goal 2 **Extending our Reach**

#### **Focus Areas**

#### 5. Community Engagement

Develop a two-way conversation with the community to enhance water literacy and positive community engagement through our digital platforms, publications, Branches, Specialist Networks, events, and other activities.

#### 6. Model to Extend Reach

Review our model of membership, Branch, and Specialists Networks to enable the extension of our reach.

#### 7. Urban. Remote & Rural

Understand the needs of our urban, remote and rural members to better engage with them through our digital platforms, events and other activities.

Engage with other industry sectors with a strong connection with water through our Branches, Specialist Networks, events, and other activities.

### **Strategic Goal 3 Diversity & Inclusion**

#### **Focus Areas**

#### 9. Indigenous Water

Develop activities to improve understanding of our indigenous water culture including the facilitation of an Association Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan.

#### 10. Innovation

Promote the innovations in management, projects, and outcomes achieved by our members and by leveraging our Specialist Networks.

#### 11. Channeling Change

Broaden our Channeling Change Program to incorporate a new range of activities to promote diversity and inclusion.

### 12. Young Water Professionals

Review and enhance our YWP activities to encourage greater involvement of YWPs from across the water sector.

# Understanding the impact of the bushfires

In early February 2020, the Australian Water Association, the UNSW Global Water Institute, the NSW Water Directorate and the Water Services Association of Australia conducted a survey of water utilities and regional councils affected by the ongoing drought, the 'Black Summer' fires, and the more recent floods to understand the impacts and issues, lessons learned and recommendations for the future.



Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Urban, Remote & Rural

# Virtual Bushfire Recovery Hackathon (VIC)

Towards the end of the financial year, the Victorian Branch organised a virtual Bushfire Recovery Hackathon which brought together 80 of the water industry's brightest minds to help tackle bushfire recovery challenges. Together with local water authorities, catchment management authorities, local government, DELWP, Bushfire Recovery Victoria, Aboriginal Corporations, and other industry associations, teams developed practical and implementable solutions to those most affected.



Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Urban, Remote & Rural | Indigenous Water

# Supporting the water industry through COVID-19

In March 2020, AWA was invited to join the Utilities Work Stream, an industry advisory group reporting to the COVID-19 Coordination Commission, AWA's representation brought the views of the water industry to the Commission, who then advised National Cabinet.

Surveys and virtual forums provided an opportunity for members to share their experiences and identify gaps. The feedback from the virtual forums and surveys led to the development of a submission to the Government on how the water sector can contribute to economic recovery following the pandemic.

During the peak of the pandemic, our membership team called members to understand how they were being affected and what the Association could do to support them. These personal calls had a very positive response and led to the development of many initiatives and resources.

Online

practical guide

for the water

industry

Personal calls made to individual members and corporate

members

**Feedback** survev

**COVID-related** articles written and published on **Water Source** 

Water industry feedback on COVID-19 **impacts** shared 

virtual forums

held for

members

economic activities by the water sector following the pandemic

**Recommendations** 

developed

for increasing

**ANZBP** factsheet on biosolids and COVID-19 developed



Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Urban, Remote & Rural

# **Knowledge-sharing across the Asia-Pacific through Telewater**

In May 2020, AWA partnered with the Australian Water Partnership on a web-based initiative called the Australian Telewater Network. Telewater aims to share Australian water utility approaches and lessons in managing COVID-19 risks with water utilities across the Indo-Pacific region.

AWA partnered with the Cambodian Water Supply Association, the Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the Water Association of Indonesia to support utility response and recovery approaches to COVID-19.

> organisations involved in COVID-19 Australian water utility project support group

webinars delivered water operators



**Telewater** 

webpage created

page views in three months



Bahasa and

Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Asia Pacific



# **Australian & New Zealand Biosolids Partnership**

The Australian & New Zealand Biosolids Partnership (ANZBP) is a member-based collaboration of utilities, consultants, academics and government bodies committed to the sustainable management of biosolids. Over the last year, the ANZBP has worked on some exciting initiatives and projects.



### **Factsheets**

biosolids and COVID-19. and biosolids and

### 10-year

consolidation report on biosolids production and use data

### **Community Attitudes to Biosolids Survey Project**

### **Two-stage** survey

across Australia and New Zealand to understand community and stakeholder attitudes towards biosolids

### 37 in-depth interviews

conducted in first phase

### **1,225 survey** responses

collected in second phase

### **Positive** opinion:

Reusing safe, approved biosolids is a great way to reduce waste that otherwise ends up in landfill

Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Community Engagement | Urban, Remote & Rural | Other Industry Sectors

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# **International Program**

The purpose of AWA's International Program is to ensure that the expertise and experience of our members and the wider Australian water sector are profiled and positioned to play a key role internationally.



6 water utilities involved in Rural Water Utility Improvement Program

1 technology demonstration providing 10,000L of drinking water per day to 800 school children and teachers

22 organisations, 56 delegates, 2 workshops and 3 seminars delivered at Vietwater'19

20 Vietnamese YWPs connected with AWA's YWP Network



12 organisations, 34 delegates, 2 workshops and 3 seminars delivered at Cambodia Water Conference and Exhibition

100 attendees at Water Utility Improvement Program workshop

**100** Cambodian YWPs connected with AWA's YWP Network

Commenced Australian water technology pilot

1 Australian utility and 3 Cambodian private water operators involved in Water Utility Improvement Program



9 exhibitors, 40+ delegates, 2 workshops and 3 seminars delivered at Indonesia Water and Wastewater **Exhibition & Forum** 

20 Indonesian YWPs connected with AWA's YWP Network

100 attendees at Gender Equality and Social Inclusion workshop

**6** utilities involved in Water Utility Improvement Program providing improved services to over 3 million customers

Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Sustainable Development Goals | Asia-Pacific | Young Water Professionals

### **Ozwater'20 Online**

COVID-19 restrictions saw the cancellation of many face-to-face events including Ozwater'20, Australia's largest water conference & exhibition. In just six weeks and with a strong 'thirst for action', the Association transformed the in-person conference and exhibition into a completely digital experience.

A new website was developed, the program was launched in early May, and conference sessions took place every Tuesday and Thursday in June. Our Sydney office was transformed into a live studio where several keynotes and the Australian Water Awards shows were hosted.

The online format opened opportunities for many water professionals to attend, from regional areas and the rest of the world.



**19** countries represented

63 exhibitors

**162** presentations

**214** presenters

8 keynote sessions, including first Indigenous keynote Dr Anne Poelina

2 Australian Water Award ceremonies

1 YWP-hosted Happy Hour

11,568 lobby visits

**8,456** presentation views

9,419 files downloaded

Dedicated COVID-19 stream in partnership with AWP

33 Water Source articles published



#### **Most Viewed Presentation:**

Adaptive Planning for an Uncertain Future Caitlin Launt. Icon Water

#### **Most Attended Session:**

Water Planning, Management & Resilience Frameworks

#### **Best Paper & Presentation Award:**

Elsie Mann, Alexander Iannella & Christine Rootsey for 'Agile Thinking in 24/7 Operations'

#### **Key partners:**

Jomablue, our Australian technology partner who built the bespoke online platform

Sally Prosser, our professional online presentation trainer

Adelaide Convention Centre and Brisbane Convention Centre who hosted three of our live keynote sessions

**Aurecon**, who delivered a sentiment analysis

#### **Principal sponsors:**







#### **Charity partner:**



Focus areas: Technology Partnerships | Government and Stakeholders | Model to Extend Reach | Urban, Remote & Rural | Indigenous Water | Channeling Change

### **National Water Week**

Making a splash every third week of October, National Water Week is our greatest way to reach the wider community and teach them about water literacy. The theme for 2019 - It's Time to Change the World - spread the message about the Sustainable Development Goals and how the community can be heroes for change.



Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Sustainable Development Goals | Community Engagement | Model to Extend Reach

## **Newcastle Sub-Committee (NSW)**

The Newcastle Sub-Committee of the NSW Branch was formed as a result of the very successful NSW State Conference held in 2018. It was recognised that there was an opportunity to grow the membership and the Association's presence in regional NSW.



Focus areas: Model to Extend Reach | Urban, Remote & Rural | Other Industry Sectors

# **Specialist Networks**

The Association has 14 specialist networks. Each network provides a platform for members to share knowledge and expertise linked to a particular area of water management with the wider membership base. Over the last year, some have produced some great content and ways to communicate with our members.



Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Sustainable Development Goals | Community Engagement | Model to Extend Reach | Innovation

# **National, State & Territory Events Program**

Featuring a combination of face-to-face and digital events, the events program prioritised opening access to a wider audience, especially outside capital cities.

From April to June, all events shifted online due to COVID-19. The Association responded by offering Ozwater'20 online and delivering 13 other virtual events in that time, including a virtual site inspection of the Adelaide Desalination Plant.



Focus areas: Government and Stakeholders | Model to Extend Reach | Urban, Remote & Rural | Channeling Change | Young Water Professionals

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# **Digital channels**

Our digital channels have enabled us to extend our reach. We've seen huge spikes in our social media followings, a growing number of newsletter subscribers, more podcast downloads and video views, and more visitors to Water Source.

# water source.

263,192



#### Top 3 most popular stories

Recycled water creates an oasis in the outback (26,022 page views)

Court finds Kleenex 'flushable' wipes not misleading (9,528 page views)

Australian safety culture focusing on all the wrong things (7,654 page views)





# **source**

11,112 newsletter recipients



364 subscribers (up from 236)



4,545 followers (up from 3,780)



208 followers (new channel)



14,813

Company followers

14,002 Group followers

(up from 7,777) (up from 12,827)



5,926 **AWA** followers

2,695 Ozwater followers

(up from 5,600) (up from 2,563)

Focus areas: Technology Partnerships | Community Engagement | Model to Extend Reach

# **Talking Water (NT)**

AWA, in partnership with the Water Services Association of Australia, funded the first film in a series called Talking Water, featuring stories from Indigenous communities about past and present relationships with water, along with a vision for the future.

The goal of the series is to capture and promote Indigenous water knowledge across Australia. The first film was driven by our 2019 NT Water Professional of the Year Eric Vanweydeveld.



Focus areas: Governments & Stakeholders | Urban, Remote & Rural | Indigenous Water | Channeling Change



# Women of Water Network (QLD)

The Queensland Branch's Women of Water network is an entry point to women's empowerment in the water industry. Women have vast experience in the water sector and the crucial role they play in effective and efficient water management is increasingly acknowledged and supported by evidence.



Focus area: Channeling Change

# **Young Water Professionals**

The Young Water Professional Program aims to attract, engage and empower Australia's young water professionals and emerging leaders. This is achieved through the sharing of knowledge and experience to develop early career water professionals across the country.

The Association has been developing an international YWP networking group to build stronger ties between Indo-Pacific Young Water Professionals and grow professional friendships where YWPs can openly share knowledge and learnings.

delegates at Australia-**New Zealand Young Water Professional** Conference

YWP events

mentoring pairs across the country

international YWP workshops in Vietnam, Cambodia and Indonesia

participating in

contributions to **Water Source** 



Focus areas: Asia-Pacific | Young Water Professionals

### **Member Service Awards**

Peter Moore PSM was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award, which recognises and honours Australian Water Association members who, through long and meritorious service, have made a positive contribution to the Australian water industry.

Peter has worked in the WA water industry for more than 40 years and is widely regarded as one of the most knowledgeable water industry executives in Australia. He has been at the forefront of transforming water industry management and water supply planning that took Western Australia from a state impacted by climate change and reduced rainfall into a new era of growth. His contribution and support of these innovative schemes has led to the Water Corporation being recognised internationally as one of the world's leading water utilities and a pioneer in securing alternative water supplies.

Peter became a member of the Australian Water Association in 1972 and has played a key role in the development of the Association as we know it today including as the Association's National President between 2015 to 2017



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### **Australian Water Awards**

Our annual Australian Water Awards aim to recognise and promote the outstanding achievements and contributions our members make to the water industry and wider community. Below are the winners.

award submissions received (up 40% from last year)



#### **Individual Award Winners**



#### Water Professional of the Year **Darvl Ross**

Acting Director, Road and Water Infrastructure, Logan City Council

#### Young Water Professional of the Year Dr Paul Satur

Researcher, Monash Water Sensitive Cities, Monash Sustainable Development Institute and Our Future Cities

**Best Water e-Journal Paper (in honour of Guy Parker) Progressing Reconciliation through Indigenous** Partnerships within Australian Water Utilities Michael Thomas. David McKinnis and Shu Brown. Barwon Water

#### **Student Water Prize**

Amber Smith and Anthony Cox, University of Adelaide



#### **Organisational Award Winners**



#### **Research Innovation Award**

**Innovative Sensor Suites and Intelligent Robotics for Condition Assessment of Concrete Sewers** University of Technology Sydney and Sydney Water

### **Program Innovation Award**

Flows for the Future

Department for Environment and Water

#### Infrastructure Project Innovation Award Yarra Valley Water Waste to Energy Project Yarra Valley Water

Water Industry Safety Excellence Award Ventia's Mechanical and Electrical Contract to Yarra Valley Water Ventia



### **Stockholm Junior Water Prize 2019**



In August 2019, Macinley Butson won the Stockholm Junior Water Prize, making her the first Australian in history to win the prestigious global science award for high-school students.



### **Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize 2020**



Crack for the Future: The Use of Eggshell Waste as a Bio-Adsorbant of Phosphates for Water and Soil Quality

Emma Serisier, Bishop Druitt College, NSW

Focus areas: Governments & Stakeholders | Model to Extend Reach | Urban, Remote & Rural | Innovation | Channeling Change | Young Water Professionals



### **Publications**

Our print and digital publications are channels to showcase what our members are doing across the industry. Current magazine has featured stories on regional communities, Indigenous issues, mental health and wellbeing, industry safety, mentoring and the next generation of water professionals. The Water e-Journal continues to publish case studies and research on a variety of water issues.



papers published Volume 4, Issue 3 Volume 5, Issue 2

2019 Best Water e-Journal 'Progressing Reconciliation through Indigenous Partnerships within Australian Water Utilities' Read it here





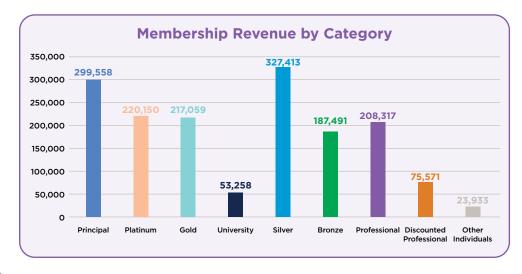
Focus areas: Asia-Pacific | Urban, Remote & Rural | Indigenous Water | Innovation | Channeling Change | Young Water Professionals

# Membership overview and new members

Our membership at the end of the 2019 financial year was 5,126 which includes 542 corporate members and 4,584 individual members. Total membership went down by 58 members, but we welcomed 174 new individual members and 75 new corporate members. Membership retention was 90%.









# **Principal members**

The Association would like to thank all of our members for their ongoing support. In particular, we thank our principal members who provide the highest level of membership support to the Association.











Challenging today. Reinventing tomorrow.

























## Financial performance overview

The Association has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and suffered a substantial loss of more than (\$1M) in the year ended 30 June 2020. This was due to COVID-19 government restrictions prohibiting our largest event and exhibition Ozwater'20 proceeding in May. The Association transformed this event and exhibition into a digital format in a matter of weeks and also reviewed and cut back on other budgeted expenditure to minimise the impact on our financial position. However, as the loss of this single event (which typically provides approximately 40% of our total revenue) occurred in the last quarter of the financial year, the impact was significant.

Financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2020:







Our 5-year financial performance summary detailed below:

\$'000	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Revenue	\$7,195	\$7,696	\$8,050	\$8,507	\$5,317
Operating Expenses	\$7,513	\$7,461	\$7,418	\$7,792	\$6,332
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	\$(318)	\$235	\$632	\$715	\$(1,015)

Our Balance Sheet remained strong with net assets worth \$3,752K (total assets of \$6,898K less total liabilities of \$3,146K). This was largely due to a stable capital structure, and income generating assets. This should ensure the sustainable financial health of the Association in the longer term.

The Association's move to digital events and a focus on member engagement (through representation opportunities such as the COVID Commission) has enabled the Association to sustain its membership base. Through diversification of revenue and managing costs, the Association is focussing on business sustainability by continuing our digital transformation and member engagement in the year ahead.





The Association wishes to thank all of our committed volunteers and staff for their contribution in what has been a very challenging year.

## AUSTRALIAN WATER

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