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President Cynthia Lim addressing Members at the 2006 Weekend Seminar. Read more on Page 3 & 7



Neil Palmer(L), Neil Crossing (R) with - Sally Duffet winner of the Best Paper Overall at the S.A operators conference. Page 6.



May 2006 Edition

Water Industry Training Package Review Update May 2006

The first round of national consultations conducted to support the redevelopment and enhancement of the Water Industry Training Package has demonstrated high levels of industry support for the project.

The existing units within the Water Industry Training Package NWP01 form a strong base from which to work. However, there is a need for further enhancement of these existing units to reflect the real and necessary work functions within the industry.

In addition to updating and enhancing existing units of competency, the project team are in the process of developing new units of competency to address some of the identified gaps in the existing Training Package in areas such as trade waste, hydrography, disinfection, fluoridation, meter reading, responding to emergencies and working effectively in the Water Industry to name just a few.

The first drafts of the enhanced 'existing' units and 'new' units along with a draft of the proposed Qualification Framework for the Training Package will be available for industry comment and feedback by mid May 2006. This process will, however, be ongoing as new and enhanced units will be loaded in batches as they are completed. For the success of this project, the development team will be relying on industry feedback and comment. This feedback is not restricted to Training Managers and Human Resource Managers but to all operational people in the Water Industry eg: Operators, Technical Officers, Specialist Officers, Engineers – basically anyone who works in or for the Water Industry.

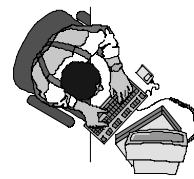
To view the draft material, you are encouraged to regularly visit either the dedicated NWP01 website ([website link](#)) or the Government Skills Australia website ([GSA web link](#)) so that you can check on the most recent units that are available for feedback. From these websites, you will be able to easily view all draft material as it becomes available and download a feedback form which you can either email or fax back to the project team. For industry stakeholders who have registered with ALGT as a member of one or more of the Projects Specialist Industry Advisory Groups, advice and links to this material will be forwarded automatically as the material is developed.

For further details or to register as an Industry Advisory Group member, contact Joan Whelan at ALGT on Ph: 03 9349 3911 or email.joan@algt.com.au



Who are these Members and what are they holding see page 7

President's Profile



A fantastic weekend seminar was enjoyed by over forty Members at Angelsea in late February this year. A couple of articles appear later in this edition, however the highlights for me were the many Members joining us for the first time and totally enjoying themselves. Of course there was the great company of Members who come back year after year, to network and learn more about the water industry. Next year we will be travelling to the other end of Victoria and gathering in Wodonga. Is it too early to start twisting your arms to consider coming next year? I encourage you all to think about it.

By the time you read this edition of the Operator we will probably be home from our first overseas trip and regaling all our travel stories. Myself and a bunch of WIOA Members have had the opportunity to visit New Zealand's water and wastewater treatment plants and to attend the NZ Operators Workshop. We hope this is the first of many such exciting adventures that WIOA can arrange for our Members.

The Queensland workshop and trade exhibition is coming along nicely with over 70 exhibitors already locked in. The workshop technical program has been set although there is still room for more poster papers. Get in touch with EO George ASAP to enter. I am sure the papers will be very interesting and the new format of the workshop should be a welcome and exciting addition for Queensland Operators and the water industry. If you get a chance to visit Rockhampton on the 4-6 July do come along and stop in at the trade exhibition – trade visitors can enter free of charge.

Our Kwatye Prize winner has just returned from his epic journey across many oceans and vast lands. Eddy Ostarcevic met with a host of people involved in various membrane technologies around the world. He was particularly impressed by one organisation and even more impressed to find out the top jobs were held by Australians. I will leave it to our winner to divulge more details. Eddy did not miss any of his flights – 19 in total but has certainly returned requiring plenty of rest and sleep. 'Well done!' Eddy for completing your trip. We can't wait to see what information you have gathered.

As the colder weather now sets in and the jumpers, scarves and beanies find their way out of the cupboards I hope you enjoy this edition of the Operator and remember if you have a story about any part of your role in the water industry, please share it with us. Don't forget to regularly visit our website at www.wioa.org.au for all the new info and goss.

Cynthia Lim
WIOA President

KWATYE PRIZE REMINDER

Applications for the 2006 Kwatye Prize, generously sponsored by Environment & Process Technologies (division of Biolab) are currently being received. The closing date for submissions is **21 July 2006**. For more information, follow the link from the home page of the WIOA website

2006 WEEKEND SEMINAR & AGM

The annual WIOA weekend seminar was held in Anglesca and kicked off as usual with the AGM. No major surprises, with the Pres and EO giving us a rundown on the past year of Association activities and a healthy bank balance was reported.

The AGM was followed by a number of excellent and informative presentations from our invited companies. The first was by Ian Bicknell from G-Tech Separation who discussed how to fine-tune our solids dewatering plants. Next up was Noel Stewart from MJK Automation showing us a range of control systems including a lot of new technology. Sharon Heyme from Heraeus Amber took us through how ultra violet disinfection systems work and to finish off the day, Peter Norder from Nordical Diving put on a very graphic presentation of what they see whilst working in various water storages around the country. A few of us need to lift to our game a bit !!

Some took advantage of the little bit of free time immediately before the dinner to walk along the beach or to just relax around the resort.

After a few pre-dinner drinks and nibbles, we all sat down to enjoy the dinner, which as usual turned into a fairly raucous affair. The latest recipient of the 'IDIOTS' award was announced – Academy Award style. The awardee, Ken Herbert, was introduced by Neil Healey and then performed his initiation task of getting a whole boiled egg into a milk bottle without using his hands. Ken accomplished this with all the aplomb to which we are accustomed and was rightfully declared an IDIOT by all and sundry. Well done Ken, and your award is well deserved for all the support you have given to operators and our Association over a number of years.



Ken Herbert being presented with his IDIOTS pin by Neil Healey

A bit of fun was had with the first-timers or 'virgins' (read about it on page 7). It may come as a surprise to some but the Saturday night festivities kicked on till the early hours of the morning.

We tip our hat to Tony Hourigan who gently persuaded a number of people to dip into their pockets and came up with an amazing amount of sponsorship for the evening. Our sincere

thanks are extended to Environmental Group Limited, Aildos, Acromet, ITT Flygt, Heraeus Amber, Nordical Diving, Environmental and Process Technologies, Australian Pollution Engineering, DMI Australia, MJK Automation and Integra Water Treatment who all made generous contributions.

Sunday morning – started off with a brain teaser sponsored by Aildos with a cash prize won by Manfred Glomboski and Neil Healey. The first formal presentation of the morning was by Steve Wilson giving an update on the Water Training Package review project. This was followed by Stephen Powell from Integra who spoke about water treatment processes and consulting. To the finish off the weekend, Ron Bergmeier from Australian Pollution Engineering ably assisted by the EO with a heap of photos enthralled us all with his vast knowledge of biosolids management.

The organising committee of the weekend seminar would like to thank our presenters, sponsors and the Surf Coast Spa Resort for their participation which all combined to make the weekend very successful.

The location for the 2007 Weekend Seminar & AGM has been finalised. It will be held on the 24th & 25th of March at the Lake Hume Resort in Albury. Put this date in your diary now and we look forward to you all joining us.

Peter Tolsher - Seminar Chair



Cynthia, Margarita and Bernd enjoying pre-dinner drinks



Owen and Tony from Aildos work out the winners of the Sunday am Brain Teaser

Partnership a success for Gippsland-Based Water Authorities

Water industry professionals from across the Gippsland region have celebrated the achievements of 169 graduates who successfully completed a nationally accredited program in water industry operations. Graduates who had completed the program received their qualifications on Wednesday 5 April 2006.

A joint effort between Gippsland region water authorities saw the appointment of The University of Ballarat and Goulburn-Murray Water as training providers, and VECCI as the New Apprenticeship Centre. The aim was to deliver a structured approach to training for employees in the local water industry, whilst recognising the current knowledge and skills of professionals in a range of disciplines.

The program was established in 2004 by Gippsland Water, East Gippsland Water, South Gippsland Water, Westernport Water and Southern Rural Water, coming together as the Water Authorities of Gippsland Group (WAGG). Participants undertook a range of core subjects, including customer relations, environmental procedures, and occupational health and safety, as well as electives relevant to their area of work.

Morwell's "Watarah Restaurant" was the venue for a presentation ceremony attended by water authority representatives and The University of Ballarat Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Head of Vocational and Further Education Terry Lloyd. Mr Lloyd presented the graduates with their certificates of achievement at the event.

Gippsland Water Chief Executive Officer John Mitchell said he was proud of the participant's achievements and of what the WAGG initiative had achieved since its inception.

"The implementation of this nationally accredited program has enabled local water authorities to provide highly effective and targeted development programs for staff," Mr. Mitchell said. "WAGGs partnership with its training providers gives water industry professionals in Gippsland the ability to attend locally based training courses, reducing the travel and cost barriers that previously existed."

The success of the project – believed to be the largest of its kind in the Australian water industry – has been reflected in the strong staff involvement shown over the past two years.

The table below shows the number of participants who completed their qualification. Most WAGG authorities have also started their workers who have joined them over the past year on a similar program, this time with Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) as the training provider.

Authority	Certificate 3 Completed
Gippsland Water	49
East Gippsland Water	29
South Gippsland Water	17
Westernport Water	12
Southern Rural Water	53

WAGG is looking to build on the success delivered during the first two years of the project by continuing to provide new training and development opportunities for local water industry professionals.

Pictured below with Mr Terry Lloyd are some of the graduates who received their qualification.



Coming Events

- *Old Water Industry Workshop* – 4 to 6 July 2006
- *Operational Skill - Rockhampton* 21 July 2006
- *"Kwatyie prize" Application close* 5 to 7 Sep 2006
- *Victorian Water Industry Engineers and Operators Conference - Bendigo*

Water Management In Focus

Tour Through



In early March AWMA hosted a two-day information session highlighting projects they have been involved with around Northern Victoria and Southern NSW. The topic was 'Water Management In Focus'. The aim of the event was to demonstrate systems and instigate discussions on industry changes and the associated advantages and disadvantages in certain applications. Throughout the event we were able to see the changes in design, technology and application advances, which have occurred dramatically within the industry over a short period of time.



Brett Kelly at the AWMA Cohuna facility demonstrating a piece of equipment

Day one: The event started with breakfast at Cohuna, the base and location of AWMA's manufacturing facility. There were approximately 30 attendees from all areas of the water industry, including suppliers and customers. AWMA planned a trip leaving from Cohuna to Koondrook, Deniliquin, Moama, Rochester, Tatura and back to Cohuna again. It didn't seem possible to cover such a large area and still have time to smell the roses but AWMA managed it beautifully. The first stop was a look at one of AWMA's first regulators at Koondrook weir. We then moved onto Deniliquin where we visited a rice grower using 300-400ML/day. Then onto Woondrook road regulator just outside of Deniliquin where AWMA are installing remote monitoring and control sites for Murray Irrigation.



Control gates at Deniliquin

During the bus ride Brett Kelly a Director of AWMA and Anthony Burrell, Commercial Works Manager, discussed the business which is only five years old and various projects they have worked on in that time.

Two special speakers were also called upon to practice their balance on a moving bus while delivering power point presentations. The presenters, Steven O'Brien from URS and David Carré from cb&m design solutions discussed their partnership approach with AWMA and how they have successfully delivered projects and grown their businesses.

The last trip of the day was to Chris Hunters farm just outside of Tatura. Chris is a dairy farmer that is using the Aquator automated irrigation system to achieve 'precision surface irrigation'. Stephen Courts-Smith from AWMA explained the project from inception till the present day and made comparisons between traditional labour intensive methods to the automated system. In Chris's very passionate words his farming work has gone 'from infurating to exhilarating!'

The day did not end with the last visit and all attendees were taken to Treetops, a scout camp turned into a rustic enchanting dinner location. All attendees were able to network and enjoy the frogs and surroundings. Two more speakers, Denis Santamaria of Water for Rivers and Gwyn Hatton of Barwon Water were invited to discuss their interests in AWMA.

Day two: Breakfast at the Cohuna weir and off take.



Cohuna Weir – Can you spot what's on the antenna!

Geordie McKInlay of Goulburn Murray Water and David Carré of cb&m discussed this prominent project in the centre of Cohuna.

Then back to the AWMA offices for a tour of the manufacturing facility and further discussions on applications and designs.

I must thank and congratulate all the staff of AWMA for putting on such an informative and well-run tour.

Contributed by Cynthia Lim

The 2006 AWA SA Operators Conference was held at the Adelaide Convention Centre on April 4th, and although attendee numbers were down on last year, the conference setup and presentation improved a great deal. The exhibitors displayed their products and services as professionally as ever and we would like to thank all companies involved for the time and effort put in to make the exhibition such an impressive sight.

The papers submitted were of a high standard and provided all delegates with plenty of food for thought. Guest paper presenter Chris Speight kicked off proceedings with his paper on "ADWG Compliance in Regional Victoria". Chris had also presented his paper at the 2005 WIOA conference and it was great to see some across the border communication.

Peter Woodrow of United Water International was awarded the WIOA prize for Best Paper by an Operator for his detailed and informative presentation on his turbidity meter trial. Peter will now have the opportunity to present his paper at a future interstate WIOA conference.

The Best Paper Overall was won by Sally Duffett of SA Water for her paper titled "Robe: Chlorination to Chloramination" which was both informative and entertaining.

The Hydromet Prize for Best Poster paper was awarded to Imants Dirichsons from United Utilities. Congratulations to all the winners and to all those who took part.



Imants Dirichsons (r) winner of the Hydromet Prize for Best Operator Poster Paper

The AWA SA Operators would like to thank WIOA and George Wall for their assistance and sponsorship. George has been helping behind the scenes as well as promoting WIOA in SA.

Where do we go from here? The committee intends to improve on the numbers and the advertising of the event with some major contacts made during the conference which will lead to greater advertising and hopefully sponsorship. The 2007 conference will be in the same format but with a greater degree of focus on the Field Operator and getting them to write and present papers. The committee has learnt a lot from the 2006 conference and has a lot of work to do in the future, but we are committed to improving the event each year.

Talking with some of the attendees was encouraging for they spoke highly of the conference and offered some well thought out suggestions on what they would like to see in 2007, all suggestions will be taken onboard.

Phil de Groot

Profile of a Member

Name: David Greaves.

Position/Job Title: Team Leader – Orway Water Treatment Operations.

Employer and Location: Barwon Water – Geelong, Victoria.

How long have you been employed in the water industry? 18 years.

How long have you been a WIOA Member? 4 years.

What benefits are there being a WIOA Member?

Firstly I would say that the contacts you can make, not only with other Water Authorities/employees, but also suppliers are the major benefit. This can be done through the newsletter, but more importantly at the yearly conference (including paper presentations). Secondly, I think the future benefits that will be available within the WIOA by having a full time employee and expanding its scope to other states and countries can only enhance the above networks of people and companies with which to deal.

How/why did you become an operator?

From the first day I started in the water industry, I have always been in an operational area whether that be Maintenance, Water, or Sewerage. The role I am in now I see as a natural progression of my past roles, and a desire to try and improve by changing roles when given the opportunity.

Can you tell me a bit about your plant?

I currently look after a team of five people, and we are responsible for 7 Water Treatment Plants and 1 Disinfection site. We also have some responsibility for the distribution tanks and raw water pump stations where these are linked to our WTP's. The WTP sizes range from 0.2 ML/day to 30 ML/day and are located in Alvie, Aireys Inlet, Apollo Bay, Birregurra, Colac, Forrest, Gellibrand and Lorne. The processes we look after include Micro filtration, Sed/Clarification, MIEIX, and DAF. Anyone who has done training at the Water industry Training Centre in DAFF will generally have visited one or more of our Plants.

What does your job involve?

My role requires me to not only look after the overall running of my area, but also being hands on in running the plants and performing an On call role in the area. I am responsible for the recurrent and capital expenditure, meeting the aims of all of Barwon Water's systems including Quality, Environment, Safety, and HACCP. Most importantly as a team we must ensure that our WTP's produce the best possible water quality for our consumers with all the problems that older WTP's and raw water sources throw at you (don't mention manganese). The other important task is to always look at ways of improving how we go about our tasks and roles and look for ongoing improvements with the resources we have available.

(Continued page 7)

What are the major challenges you face in your role?

I think like most organizations these days, one of the biggest challenges is performing your job to the highest level with limited personnel. The key is to try and work smarter versus taking short cuts but this does not always happen on a conscious level, and I think it takes a lot of work to get it right. The other challenges we face, like most Authorities, are water shortages. Another major challenge I think we face is customer expectation and perception. The better we make the water the better the community expect it to be, and generally makes the community less tolerant when it isn't.

What do you think you'll be doing in 5 years time?

I wish I had my crystal ball with me today. I suppose at 36 I have entered that next phase of my life where I now have a family, which has two very active boys under 4 years old. In the next 5 years I will be looking for that balance between work and family. I am also the type of person that needs challenges and fresh goals, and would like to increase my supervision/management responsibility. Having said this I hope I will be somewhere that offers me the above, or offers me the best opportunity to achieve the above.



David Greaves forms Barwon Water

A Classy Spa Resort, 24 hours, & a Dozen Virgins!

The WIOA weekend seminar and AGM wasn't quite what I had expected. It was much better! I missed out last year so this year I made sure I kept the weekend open and booked in early. We arrived in Anglessea at around midday on the Saturday where we checked in and met our room mate for the night. Early on I knew we were in for a good weekend when we found Tony and Owen from Allidos looking for their rooms. (Remember the bar at the September conference?) I thought to myself, with these two characters around, anything could happen!

First up on the program a light lunch then a move right into the formalities, the Annual General Meeting which passed very quickly. Nominations here, seconds there, and that was that, over in a flash. When things are running so smoothly within WIOA, I guess there is no need to procrastinate.

With the new/same executive in place we moved on with some presentations. As usual they were well put together and very interesting. They were given under somewhat less pressure, a

smaller group than at any major conference and a more relaxed atmosphere opened it up for a bit more discussion amongst the group.

The afternoon passed quickly and prior to dinner we had some free time. Some had a nanna nap, others went to explore. We all made our way back to dinner for a quiet drink and a good meal.

Next up was the naming of this years IDIOT. Make sure you know what the IDIOT stands for, you'll need it for the seedy quiz Sunday morning! A quick science experiment by our new IDIOT didn't quite go to plan and we were fearful of the smoke alarms going off, now that would have been a story.

Then came the announcement of the virgins, and I was a little nervous at first. For those of you who hadn't guessed already the virgins are the weekend seminars first timers. We were all introduced and gathered for a photo and some fun. I won't spoil the surprise for next year, only to say that we will make sure we have the words ready next time. We got up there on stage and we didn't really know what we were doing. The pain was only temporary though as we explored our limits (we got to our limit very quickly!). Soon enough we were having a ball, it was a little messy at first but before we knew it had started, it was all over. We were left a little sweaty and a few had to go outside for a quick smoke afterwards. An experience not to be forgotten!

One of the virgins, Ian Bicknell from G-Tech managed to find Noddy, the adopted mascot of the virgins for the night. There is a challenge for next years virgins, find a better mascot for the virgins photo than Noddy. Good luck!

At this point in the evening, people started to mingle more freely and some new acquaintances were made. Some of the experienced campaigners had no trouble getting through the night, while some of the virgins however may have overdone it slightly. The bar aside, the night was fantastic, friends were made, jokes were told, and everyone enjoyed just plain relaxing for a change.

The next morning saw most people struggle in for breakfast at about 8.30am. There were a few stories from the night before and then we got back into the conference area where the coffee flowed freely. The seedy quiz started things off. Allidos put up some nice prize money, but the quiz was a little tough for the train at that hour of the morning. A few more presentations followed to round out the event. Again, if you are thinking of having a go at giving a presentation, have a go at the weekend seminar; it is much more relaxed than the annual conference. By midday the presentations were over and all that was left was a quick lunch and it was time to hit the road home.

I think I would speak for all the virgins when I say thanks to the WIOA committee and all the trades who contributed. We were welcomed to the WIOA family with open arms, I'm sure we will all be back next year. If the weekend is that good every year, WIOA will surely have to up the numbers past 50 in the future. I haven't gone into great detail, because as we all know, what happens at the weekend seminar stays at the weekend seminar. For those of you who have never attended, you don't know what you're missing, get yourself to the next one and loose your virginity all over again!!!

Michael Goulding – United Water

WIOA New Zealand Tour

On 12 May, 11 very excited WIOA Members flew off to NZ for a "once in a lifetime" tour of water and wastewater facilities on the north island. Incorporated into the tour was time to attend the NZ Operators Conference in Palmerston North – (is there a Palmerston South??).

It is worth noting that a couple of very committed WIOA Members saw the event as too good to miss and paid for themselves to attend. Well done Neil and Bob!

Although we will produce a full report for the next edition of Operator, we must thank our hosts in NZ. Graeme Sawyer and crew at Water Industry Training with some help from Dave Neru sorted out all the sponsors, buses, accommodation and the tour itinerary. Gil Miers from Watercare Services acted as our "tour guide" for the whole trip and made sure we got to each location on time even if we couldn't pronounce the place names. It was a real pleasure to have Gil with us – hope he can say the same in return as, being outnumbered 11 to 1, he got a hard time every now and then!. A big thank you to all the operators for showing us over their facilities and for giving us the "warts and all" tour. There was plenty of questions and discussion at every site we visited. Finally, thanks to Stu Craib and all the other NZ operators for making us so welcome at the conference.

For some on the tour it was their first trip overseas and it was a real pleasure to travel in such a beautiful (and green!) country.

We have discussed the possibility of a similar tour taking place every second year with our NZ counterparts and they seem keen on the idea as well. Don't miss the opportunity to go next time round – the trip was fantastic and you will see and learn heaps of new stuff - guaranteed!



The NZ tourists (minus Peter Jackson) at Palmerston North

New Members

Welcome to the following people and companies who have recently joined our Association as a Member or Corporate Supporter:

New individual Members include Chris Sinnott, Colin Hatley, Darren Paton, Haydn Everett, Ian Ross, John Scally, Kyle Nester, Leon Saunders, Pat Meade, Pat Nevill, Peter Tangy, Robert de Jong, Stephen Kerr, Barry Hay, Raymond Ryland, Craig Atwell, Graeme Broadley, Heath Cameron, Justin Dwyer, Ralph McElhinney, Shane Ward, Mark Samblebe, Brooke Anderson, Barry Ward, Witold Stasiak, Malcolm Taylor, Phil Pearmain, Sriti Inuku, Peter Kollosche.

New Corporate Supporters include Water Training Australia, DMI Australia, Opus International Consultants (NZ), Hamilton Island Enterprises, Ultraviolet Technology of Australia, City West Water, Inctec Pivot, Hydramet Australia.

NEXT EDITION

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Any articles, news snippets, information on improved work practices, etc as contributions to your magazine

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