



# Operator

October 2022 The Water Industry Operators Association of Australia Magazine

BEST OPERATORS IN  
VICTORIA, QUEENSLAND  
AND TASMANIA  
RECOGNISED

ALL THE AWARD  
WINNERS FROM  
VICTORIA AND  
QUEENSLAND  
RECOGNISED

EXPERIENCES OF A  
NEW OPERATOR



BEST PAPER BY AN  
OPERATOR IN  
VICTORIA WAS  
JOHN DE BOER





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## From the MD's Desk - George Wall

Since the last issue of Operator in May 2022, we have been able to successfully stage both the Victorian and Queensland conferences. The attendance and support provided by members, volunteers, sponsors and exhibitors at both events was fantastic, given that several organisations were still impacted by the pandemic and ongoing staff shortages.

The WIOA financial position has now stabilised and after running with reduced staff numbers since March 2022, being able to stage events again has provided us the confidence to commence rebuilding our staff team. A number of vacant positions have been advertised recently and we look forward to introducing our new look team to Members in the coming months. We would like to acknowledge and thank Wannon Water for providing us access to Anthony Evans in a part time seconded role for the past 5 months. This has allowed us to work our way through a particularly busy period for the Association.

Being able to hold events again provided us the opportunity to appropriately recognise the substantial contributions that some of our Members have made to the Association over many years. Anthony Evans was announced as the ninth Life Member of WIOA, and Neville Whittaker became the 42nd IDIOTS member at the Bendigo conference in June. More information on them, along with all the other operations staff recognised at the Victorian and Queensland conferences appears later in this edition.

All the state based Advisory Committees have continued to meet regularly. Although it has been unfortunate that we have had to cancel proposed events in some States recently, it is fair to say that the appetite for staging face to face events is growing. An excellent and informative Interest Day was held in Tasmania in August and there are more days ready to go in NSW and Queensland in November. We hope that things will continue to improve in 2023 and that we will be able to return to providing face to face development



opportunities and sharing information with our Members.

Finally, the Ixom Best Tasting Tap Water competitions have continued in 2022 with the South Australian and Western Australian competitions being the last to be undertaken. We look forward to staging the Best Tasting Tap Water in Australia grand final at the PrimeEx Field Days in Casino, NSW in November. Good luck to all the entrants.

Until next time.

George Wall

**WIOA Managing Director**

## October 2022

**Cover** Cover Anthony Evans from Wannon Water was awarded Life Membership of WIOA at the Victorian conference in June. Anthony became the ninth member to receive this award in our 50 year history.

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## Member Profile - Leah Jones

### Treatment Plant Operator

**Position** Treatment Plant Operator

**Employer** Urban Utilities

**Pets** 2 mini fox terriers

**Favourite food** Mums homemade macaroni and cheese and chocolate of course.

**Least favourite food** Kidney.

**Favourite TV show** I don't have any "one" favourite; I love the Nordic crime shows on SBS.

**Worst TV show** Big Brother.

**Favourite Movie** Millennium.

**Favourite Musical artist/s** Johnny Cash.

**Ambition** Win lotto but I hardly ever buy a ticket.

**Hobbies** Gardening, growing native trees and camping.

**Best Trait** Reliability and Compassion.

**Worst Trait** Greedy when there is chocolate in the fridge – can't help myself.

**Who do you admire?** Peter Andrews

**Favourite saying** Rome wasn't built in a day.

**Four people you would invite to dinner**

Pauline Hanson, Novak Djokovic, Bob Katter, Jean Reno

**How long have you been a WIOA member?** About 6 years. I have participated in conferences and charity events.

**Your involvement with WIOA, what contributions are you hoping to be able to make?** I hope to continue going to the conferences in the future as there are always interesting and knowledgeable people there. You always come home from the conference feeling that you have learnt something new and met some really nice people.

**How long have you worked in the water industry and what attracted you to it?** This is my tenth year working in the industry. I came to work in the industry by accident. I was told I would be working in a lab. When I started my first day it was working at Goodna STP. When I asked the operators about the lab bit, they said "that's what they tell everyone". After the initial yuk factor wore off, I realised it really is a great job. I can remember how amazed I was by how clean the final effluent was. That was in 2012.

**What do you enjoy most about your job?** No two days are the same. Working on challenging problems and imparting my knowledge and experience to fellow operators. It's a hugely varied role which involves



technical expertise, lab work, admin work and sometimes a lot of hosing. It really is an amazing and interesting career.

**What are the major challenges in your current role?** Working alone due to Covid. It gets lonely sometimes.

**Thoughts on the water industry at the moment** There needs to be more encouragement for young people and females to enter the industry, in particular, school leavers.

**How do you relax?** Curl up on the lounge and watch a movie with a cup of tea or by getting out in nature.

**Where do you live and what's the best thing about it?** I live in Ipswich. The best thing is my local area which has lots of trees and parks and everything you need is handy.

## The Lighter Side





# Life Membership for Anthony

At the Victorian Conference in Bendigo, WIOA presented our highest individual award to Anthony Evans. In receiving the award, Anthony became the ninth Life Member in the Association's 49 year history.



*Anthony being presented his badge by George Wall*

A brief outline of Anthony's involvement with AWWOA, WIOA and the Water Industry follows.

Anthony commenced employment in the water industry in 1984 with the Warrnambool Shire to look after the Koroit and later the Purnim water supplies. When South West Water was created in 1994, he continued on as a contractor. In 1998 he joined South West Water's water quality team and trained up to run both the Warrnambool WTP & WWTP. He has seen numerous mergers and amalgamations from the Council through to Wannon Water.

- 1998 Joined WIOA as a member
- 2003-2006 Elected to the Committee. Has now completed 20 consecutive years as a Committee Member between 2003 and 2022 including 3 years as a Board Member
- 2007 & 2008 Elected as Vice President
- 2009 & 2010 Elected as President
- 2010-2012 Board Member WIOA Ltd
- 2011-2016 Elected as a Committee member after finishing his term as President
- 2017-2022 Inaugural and ongoing Chair of the WIOA Victorian Advisory Committee
- 2022 Seconded to a WIOA staff position for five months with the support of Wannon Water

## Achievements & Awards

- 2002 Awarded the Hepburn and Actizyme Prizes for Best Paper at the Geelong conference. Paper on biosolids management using the Deskin Quick Dry Filter Bed
- 2006 Kwatye Award – Project to review water losses from within water treatment plants
- 2012 Inducted as an IDIOTS member

## Service to WIOA & the Water Industry

2002 & 2005 Authored articles in WIOA's WaterWorks magazine

2003-2013 Papers room manager at the Victorian conference

2009, 2010, 2015 & 2018 Represented WIOA and assisted with staging and managing the operators tour group to NZ

2014-2019 Bus driver and chaperone for the Kiwi contingent on their tour of Australian plants.

Regular and very professional MC at the Awards Dinner at the Victorian conference

Encouraged many of his colleagues to contribute papers and posters for the conference

Anthony was one of the main drivers for Wannon Water joining the Operator Certification pilot in 2012. Anthony has been instrumental in Wannon Water's continued participation in registration, mainly through staging refresher courses for the registered operators.



*A happy group of Life Members in Bendigo*

He was appointed to the Water Industry Reference Committee managed by Australian Industry Standards as one of two water industry experts in February 2020.

In his time as a Board and Committee member, Anthony's input is always constructive, valuable and he is never afraid of speaking up. His comments are always focused on ways to provide the best outcomes for our members and WIOA in general.

Anthony has a fun loving personality with a quick wit and a wicked sense of humour. Anthony has been an amazing and fearless advocate for WIOA behind the scenes and has never been backward in promoting the good work of the association wherever and whenever he can.

Through his enthusiasm, long term commitment, energy, personal qualities and friendly nurturing nature, Anthony epitomises the values our organisation aims to display.

George Wall – **WIOA Managing Director**



# VIC Conference Wrap Up 2022

 1220  
ATTENDEES

 170  
EXPO SITES

The 83rd Victorian Water Industry Operations Conference and Exhibition hosted more than 1200 people from across the water industry at the Bendigo Exhibition Centre on the 22nd & 23rd June 2022. After being postponed from February due to the Omicron outbreak, there were still concerns right up to the start of the event over the lingering impacts of the cold and flu season and COVID. The huge roll up is testament to the strategic importance of this event to the Victorian water sector.

Jeff Rigby from Greater Western Water representing this year's conference Hosts in Greater Western Water, East Gippsland Water, Central Highlands Water and Southern Rural Water delivered a very insightful welcome to the assembled delegates. Jeff talked about the positives that the Water Corporations receive through the development of their operational staff from supporting them to attend events such as this.

Elisa Bourke from the Intelligent Water Network provided the Opening Address and talked about the significant benefits being delivered to the water industry through innovation and collaboration on the various projects being undertaken under the IWN banner. Elisa showed video from several projects currently under way and described how undertaking specialised trials can help deliver better outcomes for the water industry.

Dr David Rayner from Thermo Fisher Scientific then delivered the Keynote Address providing a well-received insight into monitoring SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater and the use of real time PCR testing.

The Kwatye Award was presented at the Wednesday Meet the Exhibitors dinner to Nerilee Kerslake and the team from Albury City Council for the Wagirra Trail Wonga Wetlands Loop project.

The Wednesday dinner speaker, Rob Edwards really got people thinking about what is important in their life and encouraged everyone to put a bit more effort into looking after ourselves better with some very simple tips.

At the Awards Dinner held on Thursday evening, Tom Stiles from Central Highlands Water won the 2022 Victorian Operator of the Year award. The Young Operator of the Year was Tom Bennett from Barwon Water and Matthew Boyle from Wannon Water was awarded the Network Operator of the year.

Others recognised at the Dinner included John de Boer from Melbourne Water who won the Award for the Best Paper by an Operator while the Best Poster Award was presented to Steven Kugele from Central Highlands Water.



*Rob Edwards gets everyone up and active*

The Hepburn Prize for the Best Paper Overall at the conference was awarded to Tasha Eagle from Parchem Construction Products/Fosroc.

The event included a comprehensive exhibition with a slightly smaller expo than normal with the floor plan made to fit additional space requirements as a result of COVID. It included 145 companies in the 170 sites who exhibited the latest in equipment, services, and process technologies available to the water industry.

We were excited to be joined this year for the first time by a contingent of overseas operators. No, not from USA, from Tasmania! The TasWater operators got into the spirit of the event and participated fully.

The team from Remtron were awarded the Ron Bergmeier Award for the Best Exhibition Site.

The conference again hosted the Ixom Best Tasting Tap Water in Victoria with the entry from Melbourne Water being judged the winner.

The Victorian water Main Tapping Competition was held with a great roll up of spectators to support the contestants on both days. The Goulburn Valley Water team of Bailey Anderson & Billy Wall took out the top prize with the fastest time. Coliban Water, Reece Civil and Viadux supported the competition with \$1,000 donated to Royal Children's Hospital Foundation on behalf of the competition winners.

COVID again caused havoc during the year with face-to-face seminars and charity fundraising events out of the question. With a drone as the prize in the raffle, everyone dug deep for charity raising \$2,500 with all proceeds going to WaterAid.



# VIC Conference Award Winners



**Victorian Operator of the Year**  
**Tom Stiles**  
Central Highlands Water



**Young Operator of the Year**  
**Tom Bennett**  
Barwon Water



**Networks Operator of the Year**  
**Matthew Boyle**  
Wannon Water



**Hepburn Prize for Best Paper Overall**  
**Tasha Eagle**  
Parchem Construction Products/  
Fosroc



**Best Paper by an Operator**  
**1 John De Boer**  
Melbourne Water  
**2 Grant Waite**  
North East Water  
**3 Darren Sharman**  
Goulburn Valley Water



**Best Poster by an Operator**  
**Steven Kugele**  
Central Highlands Water



**Main Tapping Competition**  
**Bailey Anderson and Billy Wall**  
Goulburn Valley Water



**Best Tasting Tap Water in Victoria**  
**Melbourne Water**



**Best Exhibition Site**  
**Ron Bergmeier Award**  
Remtron



## Neville joins the IDIOTS

In 2004, WIOA developed a special service award designed to congratulate members and recognise their commitment to the vision and philosophies of WIOA and their active promotion of the Association

In WIOA circles, it is actually an honour to be called an IDIOT – it means you have been Inducted as a Delegate of the Inextricably Obstructed Tap Society. The award has its own symbol – the twisted tap and all IDIOTS need to wear the tap at all WIOA events, otherwise they will be required to pay a fine which goes to charity.

This year the IDIOTS Society welcomes the 42nd IDIOTS member in Neville Whittaker from Goulburn Valley Water.

- Neville has been a WIOA Member since 1994 (and certainly longer as our records only go back to this date)
- For those that can remember back that far, AWWOA had coordinators based on the telephone Area Codes. Nev looked after the activities in the 058 area for many years.
- He was a regular at the conferences and you could never miss that he was there. His laugh could (and still can) be heard well above the loudest of noises at any event.
- Quite a few years ago, Nev had a subtle dig about WIOA being all about treatment and there was a lack of Networks stuff, particularly in the conference program. Our response back then was “well, what are you going to do about it”. Nev took on this challenge with his usual gusto and helped make sure the Networks people contributed.
- He has provided support/encouragement to employees at GV Water in presenting posters and/or papers at conferences. He even presented a paper himself one year in his own colourful way.
- Nev has been a believer in promoting best practice and raising the bar in the networks operations field. He was one of the inaugural Committee members that helped WIOA establish and run the Network Operator Development Program. He is still doing his share of heavy lifting on the Committee even though he has officially retired from full time work with GV Water.
- He practiced what he preached and helped create the “best practice” video showing how to undertake a safe water focussed repair process for water mains. This is now used widely around Australia.



*Neville Whittaker from Goulburn Valley Water*

- He has stepped up this year as well to help coordinate the NODP program given that WIOA is a bit stretched staff wise.
- More recently he has taken on the role as commentator for the water main tapping competition and has brought an added level of excitement with his independent comments directed at all and sundry, but especially at anyone from Wannon Water or North East Water, or Gippsland Water or well, maybe anywhere except GV Water.
- Never short of a laugh or a story, some true and others not so true, he can entertain with the best of them. But that is what we love about Nev – what you see (and hear) is what you get.

Like all IDIOTS before him, Nev had to undertake a bit of challenge to demonstrate that he is worthy of the award. Nev was known to have been a reasonably good footballer back in the day. Its not unusual for him to bail up the NODP participants at dinner with some stories from that bygone era.

For his challenge, we decided to get him to demonstrate how good a footballer he really was.

The help of a number of current IDIOTS was enlisted and a shooting gallery style handball competition was arranged where Nev needed to handball the footy and hit one of the moving IDIOTS. After a few false starts he finally managed to get a handball on target.

Neville has made a fantastic contribution to WIOA over more than 30 years and on behalf of all Members, we thank you for what you have done, and still do, for WIOA.



## Tom Is Victoria's Best

Tom Stiles from Central Highlands Water (CHW) was announced as the winner of the 2022 Victorian Operator of the Year at the Bendigo conference in June. Tom has been an employee of CHW for almost 12 years. During that time he has proven himself to be an exemplary employee who shows great dedication to the role of Water Treatment Operator and the ongoing production of safe drinking water.

He works in an open and honest manner without fuss and is always willing to take on new ideas or trial new technology. Tom's integrity and attention to detail makes him a fantastic asset to CHW, and provides our business with a great level of comfort knowing that Tom is looking after their water treatment plants.

Tom's knowledge and management of Central Highlands Water's 7 Water Treatment Plants is exceptional, in particular his knowledge of the Electro Dialysis Reversal process. Tom's ability and drive to learn this new process in a short space of time, allowed for a smooth transition from an outsourced plant to one that is now managed in house.

During Tom's time at CHW he has shown great leadership in the OHS space, by leading by example, being nominated by one of the General Managers for a Safety Award for his use of a new lone worker safety application.

Tom is a very quiet person by nature, and does not seek out recognition, so it is with great pleasure that Central Highlands Water nominated Tom for this prestigious



*Tom Stiles with his Victorian Operator of the Year Award*

award as a token of gratitude to all that he does not only for the Water Treatment Team, but for the wider business of Central Highlands Water. Tom is a very worthy winner.

For winning the award, Tom receives a plaque to keep and as new award sponsor, VicWater provides an all expenses paid opportunity to join the WIOA delegation on their tour to New Zealand in May next year. The trip is valued at over \$2,500.

## Look-alike

This has to be the one of the closest look-alike's we have seen and published of a WIOA member.

Greg Whorlow is the Service Leader Water and Wastewater at the Albury City Council and you would swear is an identical twin, or maybe even the same person as professional comedian and a playwright Dan Lee from Broome.

Apart from looking like Greg Whorlow, Dan Lee is mainly recognized as the husband of Australian singer-songwriter, Missy Higgins.



*Greg Whorlow*



*Dan Lee*

## Tom is Vic's Young Gun

Tom Bennett from Barwon Water was announced as the winner of the IWA 2022 Victorian Young Operator of the Year Award at the Victorian conference.

Tom commenced with Barwon Water as a trainee in 2019. He secured a short term position on completion of his traineeship, and was appointed to a full time position as a Network Operator in 2021.

In his short stint in the industry he has worked with 14 different team mates across three different workgroups. Tom has been able to build great relationships with his team mates, resulting in a team where they all work cohesively to achieve goals.

He has excelled in his water industry training and has not only completed a Certificate III in water operations, he has also taken the opportunity to complete university studies outside of work hours on units such as Hydraulics and Hydrology.

Safety is always first and foremost for Tom. He works in ways that leave his workplace a safer and better place every day. His team can always count on him to make a difference. Last year alone he identified 23 high risk hazards – all of which have been actioned, resulting in significant safety improvement.

He enjoys learning new concepts and applying those concepts into the workplace. He uses a continual improvement mind-set and aims to continually grow himself into a better operator. He demonstrated initiative by creating a business case for implementing an 'Internet of Things' system throughout their channel to improve the knowledge and data of water heights, possible future blockages, and use of data based approaches to identify works such as channel cleaning, or bottlenecks.



*Tom Bennett at work with Barwon Water*

Barwon Water was keen to nominate Tom for this award to provide an opportunity for him to further increase his learning and development by giving him the chance to learn from others. There is no doubt that he will seek out and bring many more new ideas and concepts back to Barwon Water.

In his nomination it was quoted that Tom loves working in the water industry, and enjoys the challenges and excitement that comes with his job. He is truly grateful to Barwon Water, who have put so much time and energy into supporting him to become the operator he is.

All these reasons and many more, make Tom a very worthy winner of the 2022 Young Victorian Operator of the Year.

For winning the award, Tom receives a Perpetual trophy, a plaque to keep and the best bit – IWA Victoria provides an all expenses paid opportunity to join the WIOA delegation on their tour to New Zealand in May next year (assuming the borders are still open to NZ). The trip is valued at over \$2,500.

## Business Event Grant

After two years of disruption to our events through COVID, WIOA was fortunate to receive a Victorian State Government grant through Business Events Victoria for the 2022 Bendigo conference. Administered through the Melbourne Convention Bureau, the funding was designed to help kick start business events such as conferences, and to promote regional Victoria as a business destination.

The grant was used to offset some of the additional costs in staging the event in the midst of COVID including hand sanitiser stations and new software to allow contact tracing if required. The funding support was greatly appreciated by WIOA.





## Victorian Networks Operator of the Year

Congratulations to Matthew Boyle from Wannon Water who was announced as the 2022 winner of the Victorian Network Operator of The Year Award, sponsored by Water Training Australia, at the Bendigo Conference.

This award is presented to one of the participants in the WIOA Victorian Network Operator Development Program that is conducted throughout the year. The aim of the award is to provide encouragement to all NODP participants to be engaged fully in the Program and to recognise the achievement of the most outstanding participant.

There were a number of exceptional candidates in this group and any one of the participants could easily have been worthy winners. After considering activities such as completion of the projects, the presentation to other participants, the level of engagement, interaction and participation in the sessions, demonstrated growth in both technical and leadership fields, and appropriate feedback from his employer, Matthew was the stand out for the judges.

For winning the award, Matthew receives the Perpetual trophy, a plaque to keep and the best bit – Water Training Australia has provided a grant of \$3000 to be used for an appropriate professional development opportunity of his choice.



*Matthew delivering his acceptance speech at the awards dinner*

## NODP 2020 Graduation

The fourth staging of the Network Operator Development Program was completed in 2022 and the participants joined the other guests at the Presidents Dinner at the Bendigo conference for the graduation ceremony.

This group has done it tough. They actually started the program in February 2020 and with the onset of the pandemic, they had a stop start experience all the way through, until they finally completed the seventh session in February 2022. One of the sessions was moved to an online format in mid 2020 and one thing this group have

taught the organising Committee is that the program doesn't work online! The real benefit is the face to face interaction between the participants themselves and all the presenters and committee people.

WIOA would like to sincerely thank the organising Committee of Neville Whittaker, Mike Rankin, Mick Mahoney, Andrew Povey, Dean Barnett, Grant Powell, Jamie Rossato and Michael Wink for all the effort they put into delivering this program along with everyone who has presented to the operators at any of the sessions.



*NODP 2022 Graduates and Committee members*

## Brown Card SA

The Queensland Water Directorate (**qldwater**) and Water Skills partnership developed the Brown Card training course to educate the importance of, and requirements for, maintaining public health, minimising environmental harm and general workplace health and safety when working in, on or near sewerage and recycled water assets.

The Office of the Technical Regulator (OTR) in South Australia (SA) has recently reviewed the Brown Card in conjunction with other SA state government departments to modify the training to include SA regulatory requirements.

The training is supported by the South Australian Government and will be available at no charge to water industry employees and contractors working with wastewater and recycled water in SA.

The training which takes approximately 90 minutes to complete consists of information slides and a short quiz. Once the training is complete a "Brown Card" certificate of completion will be issued to the participating person, which is valid for three years. The Brown Card SA is a non-accredited course but a valuable learning resource for sewerage and recycled water workplace health and safety 101.


The Brown Card SA training is hosted by **qldwater** on the water training website ( [www.watertaining.com.au](http://www.watertaining.com.au)).



*A wastewater lagoon in regional SA*

New users can select the Brown Card SA course on the home page and will then be prompted to create a new account. Once your new account set up is complete you will be emailed an account confirmation link, which will direct you to enrol in the Brown Card SA training. You will then be ready to commence the Brown Card SA training course through your water training website account.

The Brown Card training is now available across three different jurisdictions in Queensland, New South Wales, and South Australia.

For any enquiries regarding the Brown Card SA training please contact the Water and Sewerage Infrastructure team at the OTR  (08) 8226 5500

 [DEM.OTRWSInfrastructure@sa.gov.au](mailto:DEM.OTRWSInfrastructure@sa.gov.au)

## New Operator Exchange Program



WIOA and WSAA are developing a nationwide, Water Industry Operator Exchange Program. The aim is to provide selected operators with an opportunity for development outside their direct employer, by spending time with another Utility, with other operators and at a different plant.

The exchange is not a reciprocal exchange but rather an operator from one Utility will visit and be hosted by another Utility.

WIOA will be seeking expressions of interest from Utilities wanting to participate, asking for nominations of WTP's and WWTP's they think may be of interest to operators from another Utility. A booking system will be established to match operators up with plants to allow the exchange to occur.

The aim of the exchange is not just a site visit. The intention is for the exchange operator to undertake as much of the normal operational tasks for the site under the guidance of the host plant operator who naturally will maintain responsibility for the site.

At the conclusion of the exchange, the visiting operator is required to prepare a report to be delivered to his or her fellow operators, supervisors and managers on their experiences and any ideas they would like to introduce into their own plants, or suggest to their Utility for improved operations.

Stay tuned. We aim to start exchanges in the first quarter of 2023 and we will be seeking to get commitment from your Utility later this year. So why not talk to your Manager now and register your interest to participate.



## Experience of a Newby

My name is Rebekah (Bekk) Kasidiaris and I am employed by Gippsland Water. I'm often asked why I joined the water industry, so I would like to share my experience over the past two years at Gippsland Water.

Prior to Gippsland Water, I spent six years working as a dairy farmer. During this time, I was only working a few days a week milking cows and I knew it was time to start looking for a full time job.

A three month temporary position as a Field Services MSO (Multi Skilled Operator) at Gippsland Water became available. I applied and was successful and this position was then extended for a further three months. During this time a permanent, full-time position became available within the team, which I successfully applied for, and my career commenced.

In my role as an MSO, we are responsible for the maintenance of all things on the water reticulation system, cracked mains, water service lines, stop taps, water meters. Occasionally we are required to work on the sewer reticulation systems, but this is generally carried out by Gippsland Water contractors.



*Rebekah participating in the main tapping competition*

Training is a massive part of our role and to be successful in this position you must have your Medium Rigid License, B Class Asbestos Removal, Excavator Ticket, Spotters Ticket, Trenching & Shoring, First Aid, Traffic



*Rebekah Kasidiaris from Gippsland Water*

Management and Control, Confined Space, Working at Heights, Forklift & Construction Induction Card.

Gippsland Water have supported me with the training as part of my role as an MSO including Certificate 3 in Water Industry Operations which I am currently undertaking. This training has made me explore other departments within the Corporation that I wouldn't have before doing this training, and my knowledge has definitely grown as a result.

What do I like about my role? As an MSO, every day is different. No two jobs are the same and you get a real sense of accomplishment when you successfully complete a difficult task. I enjoy working on outdoor jobs and the weather certainly plays a big part in the day to day tasks, however it can be really challenging at times.

A female working in a male dominant role, was definitely daunting when I first started. But once I settled, I soon realised that I was treated exactly the same as any other employee. All the boys have been extremely supportive and have helped me every step of the way.

At this stage I'm happy in my MSO role at Gippsland Water. In saying this, I would like to temporarily venture out to gain more experience within the business, such as the dispatch side of things to see what that job description involves and develop my knowledge and experience.

I would definitely recommend this role to other females. You get to do a variety of tasks and you learn a heap of new skills. You work in with the Technical Group and get to work on the bigger projects and everyone is extremely supportive.

*Editors note: Rebekah certainly continues to push the boundaries and it was awesome that she competed in the Victorian main tapping competition in Bendigo.*

## NSW Charity Donation

Tamworth Regional Council nominated Dolly Parton's Imagination Library as the recipient of the charity donation from the NSW Conference raffle. Tamworth Regional Council's General Manager Mr Paul Bennett, is shown presenting a cheque for \$1,500 to Shiralee Franks, Council's Library Coordinator.



*NSW Conference Charity donation*

# Searching for the Best Tap Water

The **Ixom Best Tasting Tap Water** competitions continued throughout 2022 with the winners in several States recently decided.

The WIOA conference in Bendigo in June was the setting for the Victorian competition with the heats and grand final staged. Congratulations to Central Highlands Water, Goulburn Valley Water and Melbourne Water for supplying the samples that made it through to the final.



*Victorian judging under way*

In the end there can only be one winner and this year it was the team from Melbourne Water for the sample from the Cresswell WTP in Healesville that came out on top. John de Boer accepted the trophy on behalf of Melbourne Water and paid credit to the team of operators at Melbourne Water who do such a fantastic job.



*The Melbourne Water operators celebrating the win*

Moving to the Sunshine State, the 9th staging of the Water of Origin competition saw the winners from the NSW/ACT and Queensland competitions pitted against one another for State based bragging rights. Representing NSW/ACT was the team from Shoalhaven Water with the sample from their Bamarang Water Treatment Plant. They were up against the team from Mackay Regional Council with the sample from the Marian Water Treatment Plant.



*Water of Origin judging under way*

The judges had a very tough time of determining the winner, but in the end the sample from Mackay Regional Council was given the gong as best. The Queenslanders now lead the Water of Origin competition 6 to 3 in the head to head challenge.



*The Mackay Operators lapping up the award*

It was then off to Tasmania where the competition was staged in conjunction with an Interest Day at the Xylem depot in Spreyton. The attendees were used to judge the heats and they chose the samples from Rocky Creek, National Park and Ferntree to go through to the grand final. Coincidentally, all these samples were from supplies in the greater Hobart area.



*The heats underway in Tassie*

The grand final judging went right down to the wire with three such high quality samples to choose from. The judges settled on the sample from Ferntree as the winner.



*The Tassie grand final judges*

The South Australian and Western Australian competitions were conducted in October with the winners to join the other State winners to decide the winner of the Ixom Best Tasting Tap Water in Australia competition. The national final will be held in November at the Primex Field Days in Casino NSW. Good luck to all the competitors.



# Kwatye Award Winner 2022



Nerilee Kerslake, Shane Charles, Keanau Wighton and Toby Ardler from Albury City Council were announced at the Bendigo conference as the winner of the 2022 Kwatye Award for their project titled “**Wagirra Trail Wonga Wetlands Loop**”

Wonga Wetlands was developed in the 1990’s as a pioneering method for using treated wastewater from Albury City to improve and enhance the natural environment. The wastewater is delivered to a series of lagoons adjacent to the Murray River and is set up to replicate the pre-regulated wetting and drying regime of the riverine wetlands.



*Nerilee & Greg Wood from TRILITY*

Since that time Wonga Wetlands, with its lagoons and walking trails has become a mecca for bird watchers, nature lovers, schools and those seeking a tranquil place to reconnect with nature.

The Wagirra Trail project at Wonga Wetlands is a three-year project to design and construct approximately 12 kilometres of shared path along the Murray River that loops around Wonga Wetlands. Wagirra in Wiradjuri language translates to ‘step on the ground’ and Wonga translates to ‘black cormorant’.

The Wagirra Team - who sit as a part of the larger Natural Areas Team at Albury City Council consists of six local Aboriginal people who are trained or are training in Conservation and Land Management or Civil Construction. The team have been responsible for the construction and ongoing maintenance of the trail, have

undertaken cultural heritage investigations and have also run guided tours of the site.

A Wiradjuri camp has been built at Wonga Wetlands in conjunction with local elders to replicate a traditional campsite. This forms a part of the Wonga experience for visitors.

Once the Trail is open to the public (anticipated by July 2022) the Wagirra Team will be engaged to develop a suite of interpretative material and artwork that will be installed as signs across the broader Wonga site.

The Natural Areas Team and Wagirra staff are currently working with the Tourism Team and the broader Aboriginal Community to investigate cultural tourism opportunities at Wonga to showcase Aboriginal culture across the broader Albury area.

Wonga Wetlands and the Wagirra Trail will allow for the blending of knowledge regarding treating and managing wastewater with Traditional Owner knowledge of the land. Whilst Wonga has traditionally only been used by those walking the lagoons and wetlands, the new trail will open the experience to a broader audience through activating the outer perimeter of the site.

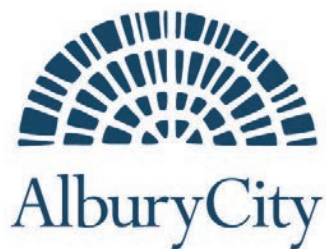


*Kwatye artwork*

This will ensure passive and active areas, as well as dedicated wastewater management areas are kept separated.

As winner of the Kwatye award, the opportunity to donate the \$2,000 prize to the charity or program of their choice will be provided to Nerilee and team on behalf of sponsor, TRILITY. An overview of the Wonga Wetlands layout is included as the centre spread for this edition of Operator.





## BIRDS EYE VIEW - Facilities Members Operate Wonga Wetlands

Wonga Wetlands has a vast history, from the original inhabitants the Wiradjuri people to the early European settlers. The region is alive with stunning biodiversity including multiple species of reptiles, amphibians, invertbrates, mammals and fish, not to mention the 176 recorded bird species.





## Wiradjuri Campsite 1

The Indigenous campsite has been established by the local Wiradjuri people. Here you can see examples of an Indigenous cooking area, sleeping area, tool making and rock art areas as well as a ceremonial dancing circle.



1

## Wiradjuri Indigenous Campsite

2

## Hardwood Plantations

Hardwood Plantation irrigated with reclaimed water.

3

## Lagoon

One of Wonga's 7 lagoons. The reclaimed water enters via the cascade and water levels in the lagoons are regulated by weirs.

4

## Walking Track

One of Wonga's many walking tracks, with 6 bird hides for public viewing.

5

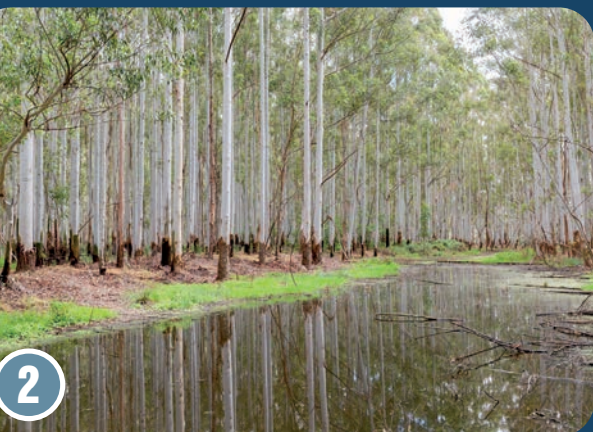
## Wonga Visitor Education Centre



4

1

5



2



3



# Tasmania's Best Operators

At the Interest Day held in Spreyton in August, the winners of the Tasmanian Operator of the Year and Young Operator of the Year were announced.

Congratulations to Shannon Spencer who was announced as Operator of the Year by Paul Sweet, TasWater Operations Centre Manager.



*Tasmanian Operator of the Year Shannon Spencer*

Shannon has accumulated 23 years of service and is a Senior Operator as part of the Urban Networks team at Rocherlea. He is an outstanding operator who is willing to take on any task that is given to him, delivering the highest quality of workmanship and he has enormous pride within his job.

He is often found helping other teams out, or coming into work on the weekend at times of need to help the on-call operators out. During his time at TasWater, Shannon has become a trusted sounding board for knowledge with the combined sewer and stormwater system. He is proficient at prioritising work based on the criticality and impact on customers.

Shannon demonstrates a high level of commitment to his training and development. He has the ability to learn new skills and demonstrate the use of these skills in the workplace daily. Shannon prides himself on being able to share his knowledge and teaching the trainees and other staff about potential improvements.

He is a proficient team member and leader; he demonstrates a clear understanding of TasWater's SOP's and safety systems and how these are applied to daily operations. Whether it is confined space entry or high-pressure water jetting, Shannon demonstrates a clear understanding of the systems and how these are used to ensure the safety of everyone on his sites.

Shannon recently completed some advanced leak detection training which now gives him the ability to pin point hard to find leaks. This has reduced TasWater's labour on jobs looking for leaks.

## The 2022 Tasmanian Young Operator of the Year is Jamie Brown

Jamie has been with TasWater for two and half years and is a Water Services Operator as part the Derwent Valley team in the south. Jamie was nominated by his peers for the WIOA award which demonstrates the value that he brings to the team that he is part of.



*Paul Sweet congratulates Jamie Brown*

He works extremely well either by himself or in a team and has adapted well during his time at TasWater. He is considered a strong asset to the team. Jamie is known for being a hard worker, an efficient problem solver and is always looking for new opportunities to develop his skills.

He has learnt all safety procedures correctly and proactively reminds others about pre-starts, JSEAs and shares ideas and suggestions on how tasks can be done safer.

Jamie is undertaking on call work to help enhance his skills within the business. He never says no when asked to help. He believes that delivering quality means taking time to do the job properly, so that it only needs to be done once.

Well done Jamie.



## Towering Artwork in Tatura

Goulburn Valley Water is thrilled that the Tatura water tower mural project unveiled in June 2021, has been named as Community Event of the Year for Greater Shepparton at the 2022 Australia Day Awards! Driven by the vision of the Tatura RSL Sub Branch, it's a project they're so proud to have supported.

The artwork features a portrait of General Sir John Monash, a renowned civil engineer who built many historical water towers in the region – many of which still stand today - and was a military commander in World War I.

A waterfall of poppies features on the other side of the tank in tribute to the region's significant Anzac legacy. It's hoped the artwork will see the tower included on the Silo Art Trail and boost tourism to region.

The Tatura tower was designed by Monash in May 1911 for the Tatura Waterworks Trust (now Goulburn Valley Water), and construction of the 364,000 litre-capacity tower was completed in April 1912.

It's the earliest surviving example of a reinforced concrete tower of this design to be constructed in Victoria. \$45,000 raised through government grants and community fundraising enabled artists Cam Scale and Andrew Davis to complete the mural.

Tatura RSL Sub-Branch Mural Committee Chairman Robert Mathieson said the project had been more than three and a half years in the making. "It honours the history of the region and adds some colour to the town's landscape," Mr Mathieson said. "It adds to the town's vitality and we hope it will draw more people to visit Tatura, and the community has been an important part of bringing the project to life."



Goulburn Valley Water Managing Director Steve Capewell said it was fantastic to partner with communities to create something that will benefit the Tatura community for years to come. "This is the second time we've partnered with our communities to bring a long-held vision to life with art on our water towers and tanks," Dr Capewell said.

"It's a wonderful outcome for the community and an important attraction that will continue to draw people to visit our region and learn more about our history."

Read more about the project on the Goulburn Valley Water website at <https://tinyurl.com/2n65t7jt> or at [www.australiansiloarttrail.com/tatura](http://www.australiansiloarttrail.com/tatura).

## WIOA Tipping Comps 2022



The runaway winner of the **WIOA NRL footy tipping competition** was Kirk Galbraith on 167 points from Tom Nash on 160. There was daylight to the third place getter with Wayne Temby and John Nolan tied on 155.



The winner of the **WIOA AFL footy tipping competition** was decided at the final siren of the last home and away game of the year. Mark Rees was the winner on 139 just one point ahead of a fast finishing Andrew Povey on 138. Tied in third place on 137 were George Wall and Luke W.

## QLD Conference Wrap Up 2022

 **795**  
**ATTENDEES**

 **112**  
**EXPO SITES**

The 45th Queensland Water Industry Operations Conference and Exhibition was staged at the Logan Metro Sports Centre on 22nd & 23rd June. Jointly hosted by Logan Water and Seqwater, a total of 800 attendees converged in Logan for what was an exciting event. The roll up was impressive with almost the same number of attendees as 2018, and this was in spite of the lingering impacts of COVID isolations across the state.

The joint Welcome and Opening Address was delivered by Neil Brennan, CEO of Seqwater. Neil did a great job of shining a light on the substantial changes in the operations area over the last couple of decades and crystal balled what he thought the operator of the future would look like. The changes have been quite marked and no doubt there's more to come. Training, development and learning and implementing new skills are the key to the future if we are to continue to meet customer expectations.

Dave Cameron, CEO, Queensland Water Directorate then delivered the Keynote Address providing a well-received insight into operator skilling and some potential national approaches that could be implemented for the growing list of challenges in this area. The presentation complimented the opening address well and highlighted that operator training and competency is vital if we are to continue to provide safe drinking water and fit for purpose management of wastewater.

The attendees at the Meet the Trade Dinner on Wednesday were captivated and inspired by the presentation from Stephen Bradbury, a local to the Logan area. He is Australia's first ever winter Olympics gold medallist and his story of hard work and resilience to keep going when things are tough provided inspiration to the delegates.

At the Awards Dinner held on Thursday evening, Neil Wilcox from Suez won the 2022 Queensland Operator of the Year award. Neil was a very deserving winner and a long list of achievements over the course of his career were shared with attendees.

Others recognised at the Dinner included Exavier Evile from Urban Utilities who won the Young Operator of the Year Award and Harris Tahau from Redland City Council who was awarded the Civil/All Rounder Operator of the Year.



*Steven Bradbury at the Queensland conference.*

In a double for North Burnett Regional Council, Shaun Johnston was announced as the winner of the Brian Davis award for the Best Paper Overall while his colleague Tim Merrett, won the Award for the Best Paper by an Operator. The duo of Brian Savage and Paul Campbell-Cowie took out the Best Poster Award.

The event included a comprehensive exhibition with 101 companies in the 112 sites who exhibited the latest in equipment, services, and process technologies available to the water industry.

The team from Control Components were awarded the Ron Bergmeier Award for the Best Exhibition Site.

The conference again hosted the Ixom Water of Origin Competition where Mackay Regional Council came away with the win over the NSW/ACT entry from Shoalhaven Water.

WIOA also hosted the Qld Water Main Tapping Competition with a huge amount of support from Logan Water, Gold Coast Water, Reece Civil and Viadux. There was a great roll up of spectators to support the contestants with the competition going right down to the wire. The City of Gold Coast team of Jarryd Casey & Hugh Wilson narrowly took out the prize from the Toowoomba guys.

With a drone as the prize in the raffle, everyone dug deep for raising \$1,500 with all proceeds going to WaterAid.



# QLD Conference Award Winners

**AUSTRALIAN  
WATER**  
ASSOCIATION



**Queensland Operator of the Year**  
**Neil Wilcox**  
Suez



**Young Operator of the Year**  
**Xavier Evile**  
Urban Utilities



**All Rounder/Civil Operator  
of the Year**  
**Harris Tahau**  
Redland City Council



**Brian Davis Award for  
Best Paper Overall**  
**Shaun Johnston**  
North Burnett Regional Council



**Best Paper by an Operator**  
**1 Tim Merrett**  
North Burnett Regional Council  
**2 David Barry**  
Aqualift  
**3 Mark Vairy and Brad Richards**  
Mackay Regional Council



**Best Poster by an Operator**  
**Brian Savage and  
Paul Campbell-Cowie**  
Logan Water



**Ixom Water of Origin  
Queensland**  
Mackay Regional Council



**Best Exhibition Site**  
**Ron Bergmeier Award**  
**Control Components**



**Queensland Main Tapping Competition**  
City of Gold Coast, "The Bellends" –  
Jarryd Casey & Hugh Wilson

## Neil is Queensland's Best

Neil Wilcox was awarded the title of 2022 Queensland Operator of the Year at the WIOA conference in June. Neil has been operating the Noosa wastewater treatment plant for the past 25 years. He commenced working at the plant when it was first constructed in 1997. At the time the plant was one of Australia's most environmentally sensitive treatment plants and a leading-edge plant, using environmentally advanced methods of treatment, chemical free and benchmarked as world's best. The key feature of this plant is the very high quality of treated water produced, satisfying Noosa Council's and the community's environmentally sensitive requirements.

His passion for the environment led him to the water industry and to look after such an important asset located in one of the most beautiful environments located in Noosa. Through his diligence and commitment to safety and best practice, Neil has managed to ensure the plant performance meets the license requirements.

During his time, he has successfully managed several challenges, including ensuring the safe operations of the plant during major storm events. A major event occurred in early 2017, when the plant was impacted by a localised storm that significantly damaged both the electrical power supply and automatic operation of the plant.



*Neil Wilcox hard at work on a bioreactor clean out*

Through his experience, Neil was able to manage the plant via manual operation and working with the plant manager they were able to source generators to site. This was in conjunction with initiating the main power supply reconnection and repair of associated



*Neil with his Queensland Operator of the Year Award*

damaged equipment. This resulted in a reduced environmental impact to the local area.

Neil's conscientiousness and unfailing commitment to mitigating environmental impacts and ensuring the continued operations of the site led to the successful management of such an exceptional storm impact of the site. Neil was able to ensure the operations of the plant until the necessary repairs could be made and prevented a potential catastrophic failure.

Neil is committed to workplace health and safety. He ensures the site is well maintained and ensures the safety of anyone entering the site. It is a driver for Neil to ensure the people around him are safe and healthy. He has continued to share his knowledge and experience with the teams around him and promotes an environment of knowledge sharing. He is a mentor to junior operations staff, leads by example and is always available to share his knowledge and experience with the broader business.

## Qld Operator of the Year (Civil / All Rounder) 2022

The very worthy recipient of the 2022 Queensland Operator of the Year Award (Civil / All Rounder) is Harris Tahau from Redland City Council.

Harris is always full of great ideas, especially when it comes to efficiency and the safety of his team. From developing standalone maintenance crews to deliver manhole and hydrant maintenance to constructing drying beds that saved a 45 minute drive each way to the nearest dumping facility, Harris also leads the way in the delivery of his ideas.



Taking the lead when responding to the wet weather event earlier this year, he developed a plan to respond to all customers that had reported issues of overflow or slow draining fixtures. He made sure to touch base with each customer and ensure they were aware of the high volume of calls and that a crew would be out within 48 hours to look at and diagnose the problem. He was able to communicate effectively and, for houses where overflows had occurred solely due to the network, was able to liaise with customers regarding the installation of a one way valve to give them assurance it would not occur again.

Often left with no or very new Team Leaders to supervise, Harris has frequently taken the lead in meeting on site with customers and developers to discuss work in the pipeline and to resolve any issues.

In response to a rising main break that caused sewerage to flow into a wet land, his onsite experience and management of the break allowed appropriate reporting to the regulator with no further action being taken.



Harris lead the push for positive pressure masks and for more awareness around mental health, and he always puts his hand up to fill gaps in the on-call roster. He is also active in teaching new and emerging leaders how and what to do as a level one response officer. Well done Harris!

Harris wins a professional development opportunity to the value of \$1500 courtesy of Qldwater, the award sponsor.

## Exavier is QLD Young Gun

Exavier Evile was announced as the 2022 Queensland Young Operator of the Year at the WIOA Logan conference. Exavier has been employed by Urban Utilities for just under two years but he has demonstrated great talent for the job.

He was enrolled in the Certificate III in Wastewater Treatment and completed the 11 units in just under one year.

His curiosity to learn and implement new things and his drive for improvement have allowed him to make a significant impact in his short time at Urban Utilities.

Exavier was observed as being an Operator that was quick to understand the process, achieving the confidence and capability to enter the On-Call Duty roster within 4 months of stating his role at Urban Utilities.

He implemented and designed whiteboards to enable him to gain further knowledge and develop his skills in the industry. He then began reviewing site SOP's and his whiteboard to enable and assist others, by sharing



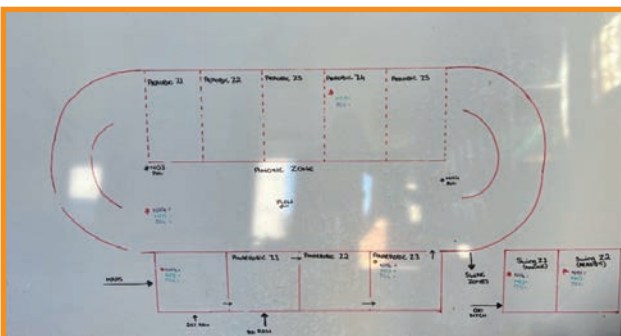
*Exavier Evile Queensland Young Operator of the Year*

his knowledge gained. In reviewing the site SOP's many were updated to reflect work as done, as Exavier noted that they had not been updated after recent project works.

Exavier carried out competency testing and was deemed competent by all Senior Operators, seeing him promoted from Assistant Treatment Plant Operator to Treatment Plant Operator within 11 months of joining the Water Industry. Exavier had no prior Water Industry knowledge before to starting with Urban Utilities in December 2020.

Exavier has taken on numerous projects including optimising the dewatering system at the Goodna STP including the operation of the belt filter press and digester which has delivered reduction in power usage, improved nutrient removal, reduced chemical use and reduced transport costs for biosolids.

Exavier now has the opportunity to join the WIOA tour to New Zealand in 2023 courtesy of sponsorship through the Queensland Branch of the Australian Water Association.



*Exavier's Whiteboard diagram*

# Main Tapping Champs Decided

The main tapping competitions in both Victoria and Queensland were completed at the respective WIOA conferences.

Winning the title as the best Water Main Tapping team is not only a great achievement for the winning team, it also highlights the skill and commitment of the operators to the services they provide to their customers on an ongoing basis.

As defending champion from 2019, the Wannon Water crew were pretty confident of going back to back at the Victorian conference. With the usual banter and trash talk flying between tapping comp MC Neville Whittaker and the assembled observers, there were some quite competitive times posted on the first day. It looked a strong possibility that the trophy may be going back to Wannon.

The second day included a team from TasWater who took the lead after the first heat. After a few nervous moments for Neville, the Goulburn Valley Water team of Bailey Anderson and Billy Wall took out the title in the last heat of the day with a very handy time of just over 2 minutes.



*Victorian winning team of Bailey Anderson and Billy Wall.*

It was also great to see Rebekah Kasidiaris teaming up with Peter Vanderlinder from Gippsland Water to have a go.

Thanks to Coliban Water, Reece Civil and Viadux for setting up the rig and supplying all the materials for the competition.

At the WIOA Queensland conference, we received tremendous support from staff at Logan Water, the City of Gold Coast along with Reece Civil and Viadux who supplied the water tank, pump and all the materials for the competition.

Ben Pennell from City of Gold Coast did a fantastic job as MC for the event and there was a large number of interested onlookers watching on for both days of the competition.

The Gold Coast teams have totally dominated this event for the past few years but the Toowoomba boys were quietly confident of being able to pull off an upset win and were ready to take over the mantle of top tappers.

After a closely fought battle, a Gold Coast team was the winner again with a very good time of 1 minute 40 seconds. Well done to Jarryd Casey and Hugh Wilson who narrowly defeated the gallant Toowoomba team of Neil Thomas and Sam Burke.



*All the competitors from the Queensland tapping comp heats*

There was an additional chance for State based bragging rights in the first ever Tapping of Origin competition where the Shoalhaven Water team took on the Logan City Council team. Just like the taste test on the Wednesday, Queensland came out on top with a win to the Logan City Council crew.



There are a range of strategies you can try to manage your anxiety. What works is different for everyone, and it can take time to find the strategies that work best for you. But remember, if your anxiety is proving difficult to manage seek support from a professional.

## 10 strategies to try

1. **Slow breathing.** When you're anxious, your breathing becomes faster and shallower. Try deliberately slowing down your breathing. Count to three as you breathe in slowly – then count to three as you breathe out slowly.
2. **Progressive muscle relaxation.** Find a quiet location. Close your eyes and slowly tense and then relax each of your muscle groups from your toes to your head. Hold the tension for three seconds and then release quickly. This can help reduce the feelings of muscle tension that often comes with anxiety.
3. **Stay in the present moment.** Anxiety can make your thoughts live in a terrible future that hasn't happened yet. Try to bring yourself back to where you are. Practising meditation can help.
4. **Healthy lifestyle.** Keeping active, eating well, going out into nature, spending time with family and friends, reducing stress and doing the activities you enjoy are all effective in reducing anxiety and improving your wellbeing.
5. **Take small acts of bravery.** Avoiding what makes you anxious provides some relief in the short term, but can make you more anxious in the long term. Try approaching something that makes you anxious – even in a small way. The way through anxiety is by learning that what you fear isn't likely to happen – and if it does, you'll be able to cope with it.
6. **Challenge your self-talk.** How you think affects how you feel. Anxiety can make you overestimate the danger in a situation and underestimate your ability to handle it. Try to think of different interpretations to a situation that's making you anxious, rather than jumping to the worst-case scenario. Look at the facts for and against your thought being true.

7. **Plan worry time.** It's hard to stop worrying entirely so set aside some time to indulge your worries. Even 10 minutes each evening to write them down or go over them in your head can help stop your worries from taking over at other times.
8. **Get to know your anxiety.** Keep a diary of when it's at it's best – and worst. Find the patterns and plan your week – or day – to proactively manage your anxiety.
9. **Learn from others.** Talking with others who also experience anxiety – or are going through something similar – can help you feel less alone. Visit our Online Forums to connect with others.
10. **Be kind to yourself.** Remember that you are not your anxiety. You are not weak. You are not inferior. You have a mental health condition. It's called anxiety.

 <https://tinyurl.com/4ajawabv>

## The Lighter Side



## UV disinfection now installed at North East towns

Two North East Tasmanian towns have recently had works undertaken to provide additional water quality safeguards.

Both the Bridport and Scottsdale Water Treatment Plants now have ultraviolet (UV) disinfection treatment facilities on site which will add an additional layer of treatment.

TasWater's Capital Delivery Office (CDO) Senior Project Manager Dheeraj Rajan said the construction of these facilities was now complete. "We are now testing and ensuring the new disinfection process is working as it should," he said.



*Bracknell Water Treatment Plant UV Building*

The project features a containerised plant being installed at each location, in addition to several metres of pipework, pumps and a tank. The piping feeds the water to the new UV disinfection facility to be treated before it leaves the plant and is piped to customers.

UV disinfection does not affect the taste, colour or odour of the water, but adds an additional layer of protection, further reducing the risk of harmful microbes entering the water supply. "It will further safeguard the quality of water at these small water treatment plants," Mr Rajan said.

TRILITY is the main contractor carrying out the works.

"This additional disinfection process means that water will pass through a UV light as it leaves the treatment plant," Mr Rajan said.

TasWater's priority is to provide water that is safe to drink, and UV treatment helps ensure this and meet modern drinking water standards. Two other Tasmanian towns, Bracknell and Westbury, have also received new UV disinfection treatment facilities which have recently been brought online. Deloraine, Longford, St Helens, Glen Huon and Smithton are the next towns set to receive this additional UV treatment later this year.

 <https://tinyurl.com/4y4ptmp3>

## Smart Meters in SA



District Council of Elliston (Council) is proud to be the first Council in South Australia to install Smart Water Meters to an entire township and to have developed an in-house Risk Management Plan compliant with the Safe Drinking Water Act 2011 which authorises Council to provide drinking water to the public in Port Kenny via a newly installed reverse osmosis plant.

Port Kenny is a small rural town on the Eyre Peninsula previously serviced by a non-potable water supply from a bore located four kilometres from the town. The water supply is managed by the Council.

The quality of the water has been gradually deteriorating, adversely affecting businesses and residents in the town so Council resolved to install a reverse osmosis plant to treat the bore water and provide a potable supply to the township.

The plant, manufactured by Membrane Systems Pty Ltd is solar powered and efficiently treats the bore water to drinking water standard. Council installed smart meters to the properties which allows continuous electronic reading, storage, display and transfer of water consumption data through Wifi smart technology and

allows monitoring of the infrastructure for any leaks or other issues in real time.

The meters will improve customer services with more accurate data and information on usage available online.

SA Water in conjunction with Taggle Systems are the project partners to develop the smart metering project.

Reducing unnecessary water loss and lower water consumption will make a significant contribution toward the Council's water security. Providing the tools to manage and reduce water consumption and fix leaks promptly will allow for significant savings of both water and expenses.

As the Port Kenny Township was previously serviced with non-potable water, development in the town was restricted. Now however, with potable water community growth is more feasible while still reducing impact on the environment and water requirements.

The target audience is the rate payers, both local residents and businesses in town. The project will assist Council in managing water supplies to meet growing demands while also reducing Council's electricity and water treatment costs.



# Unitywater response to ‘biggest incident in utility’s history’



Unitywater has reflected on the “biggest incident in its history” where a rain bomb wreaked havoc and caused flooding throughout South East Queensland in late February 2022.

Executive Manager Customer Delivery Rhett Duncan said there was one incident after another and multiple teams came together to respond and ensure water and sewerage services kept flowing for its customers.

“I couldn’t be prouder of our people in the way they responded to a large number of issues across our water and sewerage networks,” he said.

## Water outage for 2,000 customers

Mr Duncan said a power outage caused the Beachmere water tower pump to go offline.

“Ordinarily, our backup generator would kick in but in this case it didn’t. We then had the task of managing how to get water back on for about 2,000 customers while simultaneously understanding why the generator didn’t start,” he said.

“We had to get one of our electricians across floodwaters by Coastguard boat but it was too dangerous for the boat to dock, so then we explored the option of flying him into our site by helicopter.

“Thanks to our incredible engineers, we located a valve that we could use to supplement our water network and get water back on for our customers while we waited for floodwaters to recede and undertake further investigation works.”

## White Patch water supply completely washes away

The community of White Patch on Bribie Island in Moreton Bay lost an entire 20-metre section of road, as well as its water supply in the deluge.



*White Patch Esplanade washed away*

“Our own teams also provided wonderful support coordinating crews and providing Community Engagement staff to speak to affected property owners. We coordinated bottled water deliveries for residents while the temporary supply was constructed and kept them informed of our progress. Water was connected before any other services, including the road reinstatement and telecommunications.”

## Water Treatment Plants offline in off-grid communities

Two communities in Unitywater’s service area that are not connected to the South East Queensland Water Grid and rely on their own water supplies were cut-off by floodwaters. Both the Seqwater Water Treatment Plants in Dayboro in the Moreton Bay region and Kenilworth on the Sunshine Coast went offline as they were inundated.

“When these water treatment plants go offline, Seqwater carts water to our water reservoirs,” Mr Duncan said.

“Due to these communities being cut-off, trucks couldn’t access the water reservoirs and we asked our customers in Kenilworth to use water wisely to manage the water supply until floodwaters receded. Our levels in our Dayboro reservoirs remained stable.”



*White Patch temporary water supply was completed before other services were reconnected*

## Inundation of the sewerage network

Mr Duncan said the volume of rain experienced over a few days was unprecedented and triggered challenges throughout Unitywater’s service region.

“Our sewerage system was completely inundated by the extreme rainfall,” he said.

“Of course, the stormwater and sewerage systems are separate but in these large weather events, stormwater can enter our sewerage network via incorrectly connected house drains.

“Over one weekend, our Control Room received more than 1,500 emergency calls and we prioritised jobs to assist our customers as soon as we could.”

## CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

### Determining Airborne Contaminants with Personal Air Sampling Pumps



Personal air sampling pumps are used to evaluate a range of hazards such as dust, vapours and gases. They draw air at a known flow rate through a filter medium to determine airborne contaminants that are present in an environment. The amount of contaminant is measured and expressed as a concentration.

#### An air sample requires three basic measurements:

1. The flow of air through the collection medium
2. The sample runtime
3. The amount of contaminant collected.

#### Selecting a Personal Air Sampling Pump with the Correct Sample Media

The most common for collecting air samples is to use a battery-operated pump to draw a volume of air through a collection device (sampler) which is mounted in the breathing zone of the worker. As air passes through the sampler, any contaminants present in the air is captured on the medium (normally a filter paper for solid contaminants and sorbent for gases). The sample requirement is a prominent factor in determining the type of air sampling pump required. Dust sampling applications require a pump with high flow rates (up to 5000ml/min) whereas most gas samples will require a low flow rate between 20 and 500ml per minute.

#### Particulate Air Sampling

To sample particles such as fumes dust, mist and smoke, filter cassettes are the typical sample media. The cassette is prepared and loaded to a holder which secures the cassette and the holder can then be clipped to a worker's breathing zone. The connecting tubing of the cassette holder can be then attached to a calibrated air sampling pump and set to the recommended flow rate.

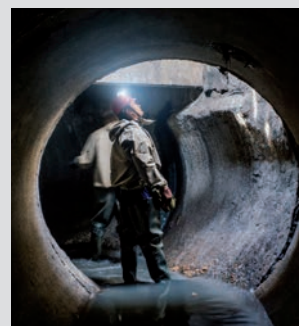
#### Gas and Vapour Air Sampling

Sorbent tubes are widely accepted as the preferred media for sampling gases and vapours. The glass sorbent tubes are prepared and inserted into a holder before being clipped onto an area near the worker's breathing zone. The sample media is connected to a calibrated air sample pump with tubing to complete the sample train. The sample which is trapped by the sorbent tube is then sent to a laboratory for analysis to determine the concentration of the contaminant.

AirMet  <https://tinyurl.com/3t4vamu6>

### Managing odours and corrosion proactively with science-based technology

Methane and Hydrogen Sulfide in sewer networks can lead to hazards and odour nuisance to customers, compromise the safety of field operators and the community and cause corrosion which can be costly to repair.



SeweX is an innovative modelling technology, providing data to help utilities and sewer network operators identify odour, corrosion and safety risks - before they occur.

The technology was developed through advanced research led by the University of Queensland and validated by many major Australian water utilities. Envirosuite has developed SeweX into a Software as a Service (SaaS) product which utilities can use to understand and manage risks more easily.

After the success of several pilot projects, SeweX has now been purchased by water utilities in Australia, the US, France and Spain.

SeweX uses sewer network, hydraulic and wastewater quality data to model and predict where methane and hydrogen sulfide generation will occur and recommend a strategy to prevent it from happening.

#### SeweX can help:

- Make evidence-based decisions faster
- Identify unknown odour and corrosion risks before they occur
- Find the root cause of your issue and recommend a solution, through an accurate analysis of your networks
- Improve O&M planning by prioritising resources and managing assets proactively
- Reduce OPEX and CAPEX
- Increase the safety of your staff and the community
- Improve customer satisfaction by reducing odours and disruptions in the community
- Better environmental outcomes by reducing carbon emissions

 <https://envirosuite.com/platforms/water/sewex>



## CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

### Emerson Joins Research Hub

Emerson, a global leader in technology and software solutions, has joined the Australian Research Council's (ARC) Research Hub for Resilient and Intelligent Infrastructure Systems (RIIS) as an Industry Partner, working with the Centre for Spatial Data Infrastructures and Land Administration (CSDILA) at the University of Melbourne and the University of New South Wales.

Emerson will donate \$2 million in cash, in-kind equipment, software, engineering and training support over the next five years as the RIIS Research Hub engages with industry, government, and the community to develop and implement science-based policy and integrated practical solutions to the current and future challenges facing Australia's urban, resource and energy infrastructure.

"We welcome Emerson as an Industry Partner," said Professor Abbas Rajabifard, director of CSDILA and deputy director of the RIIS Hub. "The Melbourne University CSDILA team looks forward to working closely with them to deliver transformational technologies to address Australia's critical infrastructure needs."

The public-private venture will integrate advances in sensor technology, connectivity, data analytics, machine learning, robotics, smart materials and reliable models to deliver resilient and adaptive infrastructure systems in sectors essential to Australia's prosperity including mining, gas, water and energy.

"Emerson is proud to be a partner to the ARC's research hub. The hub aligns with Emerson's purpose to drive innovation that makes the world healthier, safer, smarter and more sustainable. We look forward to collaboration opportunities with all the partners, sharing our expertise and technology and advanced software solutions that will support Australia's critical infrastructure remain resilient as we transition into a more sustainable future," said Boris Gabin, Vice President and General Manager for Emerson's Automation Solutions business in Australia and New Zealand.

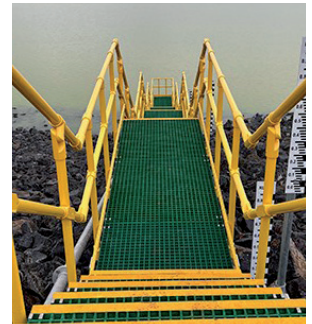


Professor Abbas Rajabifard (left), director of the Centre for Spatial Data Infrastructures and Land Administration (CSDILA) and Vice President and General Manager for Emerson's Automation Solutions business in Australia and New Zealand, Boris Gabin.

### Recycled Water Dam Access Stairway

As one of three water corporations that service Melbourne's metro region, Greater Western Water has undertaken a project for a new recycled water supply system for farmers in Melbourne's west. Known as the Western Irrigation Network (WIN), an important milestone that was completed was a recycled water storage dam at the Melton Recycled Water Plant. By 2023, the water stored at this dam will irrigate thousands of hectares of farmland, supporting agricultural production in the Parwan-Balling region. This project future-proofs water supplies across communities experiencing strong population growth and warmer, drier climate conditions.

Treadwell was engaged by Max Bright & Sons to fabricate and supply the access staircase for this dam.



#### Project Challenges

1. Structure would be submerged based on fluctuations in water levels – the material had to be corrosion-resistant and rot-proof.
2. Structure had to be safe for user when wet or dry.
3. Being in an exposed water environment, the material had to be electrically non-conductive for user safety.

#### Project solutions

1. Treadwell's FRP products are available in a range of resin systems, and can also be customised to the application. Using the correct resin system optimises corrosion-resistance.
2. Treadwell's FRP products are termite- and rot-proof.
3. EX-Series® GratEX® FRP Square Mesh grating and stair treads were used for the steps and landings. These have a grit anti-slip surface, with the added security of a solid leading edge on the stair treads.
4. RailEX® FRP Handrails have a unique finish that eliminates the risk of being exposed to fibreglass shards.
5. ArchitEX™ open channel profiles were utilised in this structure to eliminate the risk of stagnant water within the structure.
6. Treadwell FRP is naturally electrically non-conductive.



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## CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

### Floating Wastewater Evaporators

Even in our drought ravaged country, torrential rainfall may not be welcome. That's certainly the case for a large regional area in Western Australia. The local council built a wastewater pond that is so enormous, it's reportedly visible from space. The purpose of the pond is to collect water to prevent minor flooding when those enormous rainfalls hit. But it's not a dam. The local council needed a way to dispose of all that water.



The equipment already in place did not quite achieve the evaporation rates, efficiency and reliability the council engineering team were after. Hence, they were looking for another solution. After some initial research, the WA council engineers contacted Tecpro Australia and asked for advice. They got it by the "bucket load", so to speak.

Tecpro's technical team suggested the E46 Floating Evaporator from EMIControls. This Evaporator uses specially designed and patented nozzles to draw air into the water stream to produce water droplets which evaporate more readily. The unique design of the nozzles also minimises drift of potentially contaminated water droplets outside the perimeter of the wastewater pond.

The E46 Floating Evaporator is modular so multiple units can be used in the same pond to achieve more rapid evaporation. Amazingly, each Evaporator is removing approx. 100 m<sup>3</sup>/day.

When it comes to operation, each E46 system can be regulated from its own control panel or multiple evaporators can be run from one single control panel. The council decided to use individual controls for each Evaporator to safeguard the system and ensure it was always operational.

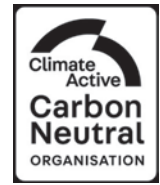
Everything you need to assemble the E46 Evaporator comes in a single crate. Best of all, it requires minimal tools and no technical expertise to assemble. In fact, it should only take an hour or two to assemble and have each Evaporator operational.

The E46 Floating Evaporators are ideal to use in wastewater ponds, as they did in WA, as well as in desalination plants, mining operations and decontamination applications. In Australia and New Zealand, these Floating Evaporators are available exclusively from Tecpro Australia.

For more information contact the Tecpro team by

 02 9634 3370  [www.tecpro.com.au](http://www.tecpro.com.au)

### Australia's First Carbon Neutral Water-Tech Organisation



As part of their commitment to positive climate action, the Hydroflux Group has achieved Climate Active Certification as a Carbon Neutral Organisation – an Australian first for a Water-Tech Organisation.

For their clients this means they are engaging with a carbon neutral organisation without increasing their carbon footprint and they are supporting positive and verified action on climate change.

Hydroflux intends to remain at the forefront of research in the water industry with a particular focus on reducing emissions.

Their commitment to addressing climate change extends beyond reducing emissions and being carbon neutral. They also believe in supporting their people and clients in their understanding of the impacts of climate change, and the risks it presents on both a personal and business level as well as the opportunities within their grasp.

#### About Climate Active

Climate Active is Australia's initiative for climate action. It was established to grow awareness of a carbon neutral certification and to promote positive action on climate change. Its vision is to counter climate change with emissions reductions and offsets. As a partnership between Australian Government (administered by the Commonwealth Government, Dept of Industry, Science, Energy and Resource) it is the most credible way to prove a carbon neutral claim.

#### About Hydroflux

The Hydroflux Group consist of eleven specialist companies which aim to deliver the highest level of engineering and scientific knowhow to the emerging issues of sustainability, climate adaption and environmental protection with a specific focus on water and wastewater.

The Group employees over 100 staff and operates throughout Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands with office locations in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Auckland, Suva and Portsmouth.

#### Hydroflux Pty Ltd



02 9089 8833



[info@hydroflux.com.au](mailto:info@hydroflux.com.au)



## CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

### Detecting sewer blockages using trees as sensors

Veolia, and UK-based Digital Content Analysis Technology (D-CAT), have developed **SkyCam Blockages**, a satellite image analysis solution to proactively monitor and prevent blockages in Australia's underground sewer networks.

The sophisticated satellite technology works by using image analysis to track the growth of vegetation surrounding underground water networks.

When trees begin to grow abnormally fast, the algorithm alerts Veolia of a likely broken underground sewer network pipe, where sewage access could be aiding trees' growth.

of cleaning programs and reduce the number of blockages in sewer networks. This would lead in turn to an improved customer experience and reduced impact on the environment.

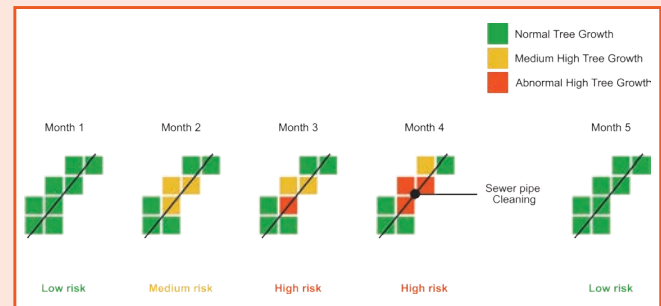


Figure 2 – An algorithm has been developed which can relate the rate of tree growth detected through satellite images to the level of risk of sewer blockages.

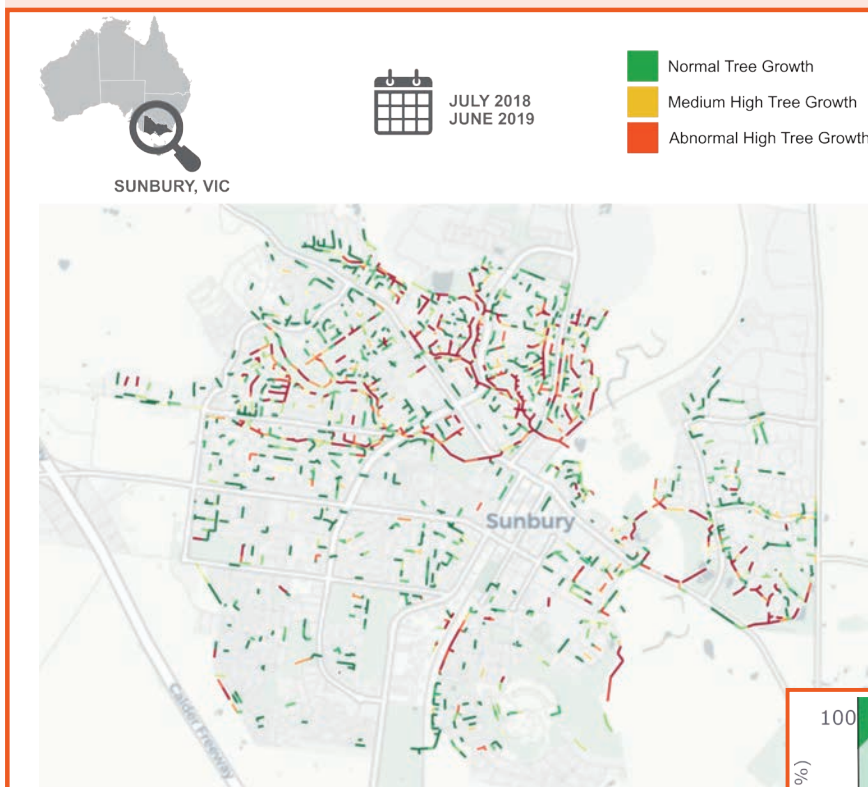


Figure 1 – Example of the field test of SkyCam Blockages. The technology can identify trees adjacent to sewer lines and track their growth over time.

Veolia is then able to swiftly investigate and repair any broken underground pipes, eliminating the likely scenario of root blockages occurring if left unattended.

The technology has been deployed for field testing and has been shown to be effective at detecting blockages.

Using this technology to prioritise sewer pipe cleaning could therefore significantly increase the efficiency

This technology is based on inexpensive satellite images and is therefore significantly cheaper than sensor-based technologies to detect blockages. Hence **SkyCam Blockages** shows great potential to help water utilities to reduce blockages at a low cost.

Many thanks to Greater Western Water for hosting the **SkyCam Blockages** field trial (see Figures 1 to 3) on their Sunbury sewer network.

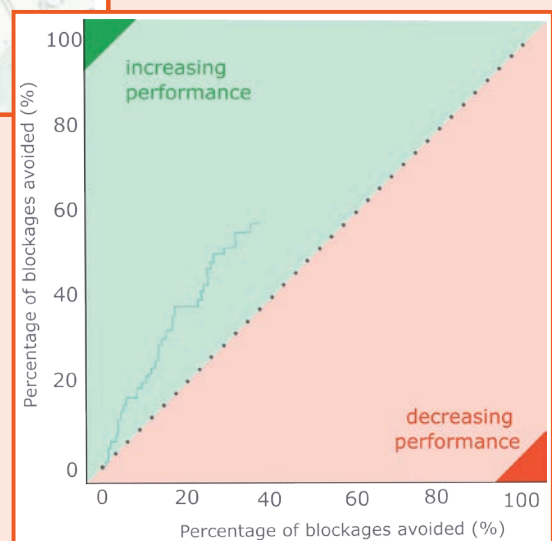


Figure 3 – Result of the field test. Cleaning 5% of the highest risk sewer lines avoided 17% of blockages.

## New Members

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

### New Individual Members

Matthew Greskie, Daniel Goonan, Murray Anderson, Jan Pingol, Ashley Reidy, James Portlock, Gavin Overy, Abby Cheong, Khoi Tran, Johann Cramer, Carlo Pelicano, Michael Leslie, Kelli Robertson, Ben Carnell, Joshua Menzies, Rodney Jones, Dylan Mifsid, Maximilian Curtis, Anthony Gibbs, Tony Trindall, Bryce Vale, Exavier Evile, Mathew Liston, Mark Evans, David Smith, Neil Wilcox, Michael O'Connell, Helmut Dresselhaus, Rod Morton, Justin Arthur, Paul Stainsby, Chris McLaughlin, Stuart de Swardt, William Say, Tim Hardcastle, Greg Reedman, Shaun Fry, Ellayne Wiles, Toni Griffis, Anna Lummis, Brett Gumbleton, Shaun Mortyne, Lucas Martin-Edgar, Timothy Munro, Geoffrey Exon, Richard Taylor, Reece Cusack & Nicholas Palmer.

### New Utility Corporate Members

Nil.

### New Corporate Members

Salesforce, Aqualine Coatings, Spanset Australia, Apline Infrastructure Management, Ionode, ECA Australasia, Strongcast, Fitzroy River Water, Unit Process Group, Aquip Systems, Envirosuite, Professional Pump Services & Irrigation, JAC Pumps, Brook Crompton Australia, Water Pumping Institute, Hidrostal Australia, Pipe Management Australia, WestWater, Finn Biogas, Centralian Controls, A.C Hargreaves, Nuflow Technologies, Brauer Industries, Irrigation Australia, ZEIT, Mueller Water Products, Link Resources Training, Weidmuller, Great Northern Plumbing Services, Coogee, Wilo Australia, Gardner Denver Industries & Valvemax.

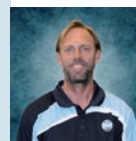
## WIOA Coming Events

<b>12 November</b>	Ixom Best Tasting Tap Water in Australia grand final, Casino NSW
<b>15 November</b>	Qld Recycled Water Interest Day, Luggage Point Advanced WTP
<b>22 November</b>	Victorian Network Operator Development Program, applications close
<b>30 November</b>	NSW Network Operations Interest Day, Albury

## WIOA Conference & Exhibitions in 2023

<b>1 &amp; 2 March</b>	3rd WIOA South Australian Conference & Expo, Murray Bridge
<b>29 &amp; 30 March</b>	84th WIOA VIC Water Industry Operations Conference & Exhibition, Bendigo
<b>19 &amp; 20 July</b>	46th WIOA QLD Water Industry Operations Conference & Exhibition, Sunshine Coast
<b>1 &amp; 2 November</b>	15th WIOA NSW Water Industry Operations Conference & Exhibition, Canberra

## WIOA Committee



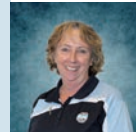
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**Mark Samblebe**  
0400 126 141



**Vice President**  
**Sally Shepherd**  
0409 800 534



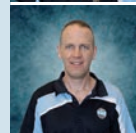
**Secretary**  
**George Wall**  
0407 846 001



**Jill Busch**  
0417 399 198



**Heidi Josipovic**  
0429 701 237



**Ryan McGowan**  
0440 055 508



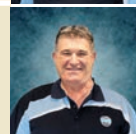
**Elise O'Keefe**  
0438 346 852



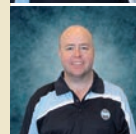
**Grant Waite**  
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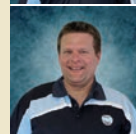
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**George Bellizia**  
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**SA Advisory Committee**  
**Robran Cock**  
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