



Water Industry Operators Association of Australia



2020
ANNUAL REVIEW
& Members Information

communicate encourage protect network engage

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2020 Numbers

0 Face to Face
Conferences



0.2 % Increase
in Membership



124 Certified
Operators



1,252 Virtual Water
Registrations

NEW

1,414 Attendees
at WIOA Events



4,296 WIOA
Members



11,205 Virtual Water
Booth Visits

NEW

70,628 Website
Hits



Life Members



2018 John Harris



2017 Peter Tolsher



2014 Russell Mack



2007 Barry Waddell



2004 George Wall



1998 Ron Bergmeier



1994 Stan Franz



1986 Ray Holloway*

*deceased

IDIOTS Award

(Inducted as Delegates of the Inextricably Obstructed Tap Society)

2020

Adrian Rijnbeek

2014

Peter Mosse

2008

Owen Braybrook
Ian Bicknell

2019

Bill Collie
Darren Lord

2013

Jill Busch
John Day

2007

Peter Jackson
Cynthia Lim
Stephen Wilson

2018

Colin Haynes
Shane Bandiera
Ryan McGowan

2012

Anthony Evans
Tim Sells

2006

Ken Herbert
Pat Davis
John Harris

2017

David Sheehan
Ian Cuthbertson

2011

John Paulger
Graham Thomson

2010

David Barry
Peter Tolsher

2005

Mal Farnham
Neil Healey
Russell Mack

2016

Marcus Boyd
Lindsay Walsh
Kathy Northcott

2009

Leigh Strange
John Park
Brian Davis

2015

John Granzen

2004

Barry Waddell
Ron Bergmeier
George Wall
Richard Greenhough
Tony Hourigan

Chair & President Reports



Chair Report

“What a year”. I bet this is not the first time we have heard that comment. Like it was for many businesses, 2020 was WIOA’s biggest challenge yet.

As Chair of the Board, I have been so impressed with the staff and the Board in regard to our capabilities in timing and decision making processes. During the early stages of COVID-19, decisions and announcements from Government were happening on a daily basis. This created a difficult challenge for the Board and management team to understand what each announcement meant and then build that into our strategies and functions.

However, through the professional and dedicated support of George and Craig working collaboratively with the Board, we were able to meet the challenge. The decision to invest in the new concept of “Virtual Conferencing”, an area we had not ventured into before, was very successful. It not only allowed us to continue to service our members, it also provided us with some much needed additional income following the cancellation of our other conferences. The great support we received from our dedicated Corporate Members by sponsoring and exhibiting made it the success it was. It also has given WIOA another experience and method of approach to communicate with our member base.

The Government’s decision in providing JobKeeper and other assistance enabled WIOA to maintain all our staff and continue to provide services to Members throughout the year. All our staff are to be congratulated for their commitment and for being so flexible under the new employment conditions, including working from home. A special thank you is extended to Ann, Sherryn and Abbey in particular, who spent much of the year in stand down mode.

A major and important operational strategy that WIOA has historically pursued is the accumulation of cash reserves. This forward thinking helped us to ride out the COVID-19 impacts. Our challenges going forward will be to gradually rebuild our reserves to provide future financial security along with creating some new income generating initiatives to diversify our income streams.

WIOA has survived 2020 without running a conference and has experienced cancelled seminars and workshops. We know that 2021 will also challenge us as we move to delivering our services and events in a new COVID (safe) normal format. I have confidence that with the knowledge gained in living and working through the uncertainty of a global pandemic, the Board, Committee and staff, together with our volunteers will ensure that our organisation continues to provide a positive impact on our sector of the water industry well into the future.

Thank you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Martin'.

Jim Martin

President Report

COVID-19 has been a major disruptor for WIOA in 2020 with all of our face to face conferences and events cancelled. The really pleasing outcome for WIOA as a member service organisation is that our overall Membership numbers actually grew. We finished the year with 4,296 members, an increase of 0.2% on the previous year. This shows the real value that the water industry places on having our operational people engaged and provided with development opportunities.

The WIOA AGM will be held online again to ensure all our members throughout Australia have the opportunity to attend and help guide WIOA’s future direction. Last year we had a record attendance at our online AGM, and it was wonderful to see our members getting involved and supporting our staff, Committee and Directors.

The state based Advisory Committees had all met in early 2020 and planned an extensive line up of events and engagement opportunities in their respective States. Unfortunately, all but a couple of events that were completed by early March needed to be cancelled. Although due for renewal in late 2020, the WIOA General Committee decided to extend the tenure of the members of each Advisory Committees members by another year. Our state based advisory committees are crucial in assisting the WIOA staff to organise events, and provide a voice to our members in each state so we can tailor our services. Thank you to all our state based Advisory Committee volunteers and we look forward to working with you again in 2021.

The Virtual Water conference platform was used to present several awards recognising the outstanding efforts and achievements of our members. Congratulations, to everyone who was presented an award, you are all very deserving winners. In closing, I would like to recognise the latest IDIOTS member in Adrian Rijnbeek for his great contribution to WIOA over many years.

Thank you everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heidi Josipovic'.

Heidi Josipovic

“ Like it was for many businesses, 2020 was WIOA’s biggest challenge yet. ”



Managing Director Review

The 2020 year kicked off with a huge program of events and engagement opportunities already planned. It all came to an abrupt halt in late March when the full impacts of COVID-19 became known. We held out hope that it would only be a temporary set back and that things would improve later in the year. Unfortunately, this wasn't the case and all our face to face events after March were cancelled. It was inconceivable in March 2020 that the pandemic would still be having an impact on our operations well into 2021.

Budgeting and planning a strategy to keep the organisation viable took on a whole new meaning. We created budget scenarios based on "what if's". What if the Victorian conference could run in November, what if the NSW or Queensland events could be moved to later in the year, what if we had no events at all! We moved to monthly Board meetings to keep on top of the answers to these questions and to keep the Board up to speed with the constant policy changes and developments. We actively sought new opportunities to generate income and cut our expenditure to essential items only.

In March, we farewelled Dale Osborne from the staff team and welcomed Abbey Kaine into a full time Administration Officer role on conclusion of her traineeship. Staging our very large conferences relies on a small but experienced staff team. Retaining all our staff is important as it means we have the capacity to ramp up our activities seamlessly once larger events like conferences can be delivered, hopefully in mid-2021. The efforts of the staff during the pandemic has been outstanding, not only to create and deliver new opportunities, but also for sticking with WIOA through all the uncertainty. The pandemic impacted the administration team significantly as after May, we ran out of work to keep them all fully employed.

They graciously agreed to move into stand down mode and work one week in three, whilst tapping into the JobKeeper subsidy and their own leave.

Following the forced cancellation of our State based conferences, we were approached by several Corporate Members seeking an avenue to continue to engage with our Members. The concept of a virtual conference not only met this opportunity, it provided some desperately needed income. I would like to congratulate Craig for his hard work and meetings, some in the middle of the night, to investigate all the available options. The platform chosen and implemented was outstanding.

Justifying the move to a brand new conference format in a difficult financial environment must not have been easy for our Corporate Members. The vision and support of the Virtual Water sponsors in Acrodyne-Limitorque, Alternative Lining Technologies Australia, Bergmeier Environmental, Endress + Hauser Australia, Hydroflux, Intelligent Water Network, Ixom, McBarns Innovative Solutions, Piping & Automation Systems, Southern Divers, Thermo Fisher Scientific Australia and Yokogawa is acknowledged and greatly appreciated. We also had the support of VicWater, **qldwater**, the Victorian Department of Health & Human Services, Coliban Water and the NSW Water Directorate who sponsored some of the guest presenters.

The Advisory Committee members stepped up and helped WIOA fill the technical program within Virtual Water. Locating over 100 presenters and topics, then coordinating their involvement and in some cases, recording their presentations was a huge job. The result is that we have nearly 24 hours of outstanding technical content in the On Demand section of Virtual Water, available to Members to watch in their own time. It remains live on the platform until April 2021 so please take the time to log in and have a look.





We ran three WIOA Talks webinars in the early part of the year, with Virtual Water taking over this role from July onwards. We will look to reinstating a series of webinars again in 2021 utilising presentations from our members.

With the strong support of IXOM, the Virtual Water platform also became the home of the Taste Tests and there was excellent support by the various water service providers sending in their samples for judging. The WIOA staff replaced the normal event attendees as judges and we congratulate every organisation who participated, including all the winners from each State. The platform also became home for the announcement of our numerous awards and once again, congratulations to all the very deserving winners.

With funding support from the Australian Services Union, WIOA staff completed the massive task of creating a new database and access portal to manage the operator Certification process. The system was tested with the assistance of a couple of water utilities and it is now fully operational. The system is now much more user friendly and we look forward to working with more organisations and individuals in the coming months.

We continued our development of technical resources to assist the water industry. With the assistance of several authors and reviewers, the latest title in our Practical Guide series - the Practical Guide to the Operation and Optimisation of Microfiltration and Ultrafiltration Membrane Processes is all but complete, and will be ready for purchase and distribution in early 2021.

An online Introduction to Water as well as an Introduction to Wastewater training course was completed under contract to Power & Water in the Northern Territory. This training may be relevant to people in other parts of Australia as well and we intend to look at the options to allow broader access to this content.

As a member service organisation, effective communication is vital. We have regularly communicated with members to share industry news and developments using our website, social media, and our suite of publications including Words, Operator and WaterWorks. Thank you to everyone who has contributed something to one of these publications.

Collaboration with other water industry bodies is vital to avoid duplication of effort and to allow the sharing of resources and information. Our collaboration with a range of water industry organisations has remained strong and we are presently in discussions with other bodies to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to formalise our relationships.

In a year where it seems that not much happened, we trust that this snapshot of our activities will show that through the efforts of our dedicated staff, along with the assistance of the Committee, Directors, Advisory Committees and our valued volunteer members, helpers and supporters, and despite the circumstances, we have been able to deliver an enormous amount for our members and the industry in general.

We trust that you will enjoy reading the rest of the annual review as it contains much more detail on all our activities. Thank you to everyone who has supported or contributed to WIOA in 2020, and we look forward to making 2021 another outstanding year.

George Wall



Financial Information

2020 Consolidated Financial Information

Summary of WIOA Financial Position

INCOME and EXPENDITURE for period 1 January to 31 December 2020

INCOME (excluding GST)	2020	2019
Conference & Events income	\$ 557,421.48	\$ 1,577,158.73
Publications	\$ 34,133.46	\$ 33,956.94
Individual Membership	\$ 80,196.29	\$ 68,149.97
Corporate Membership	\$ 95,392.59	\$ 104,526.52
Services & Other Income	\$ 29,412.86	\$ 120,136.38
Petty Cash (opening balance)	\$ 2,082.80	\$ 438.40
Government Support Subsidies	\$ 300,296.03	\$ 0.00
Interest	\$ 3,578.53	\$ 8,264.65
Total Income	\$ 1,102,514.04	\$ 1,912,631.59

EXPENDITURE (excluding GST)	2020	2019
Office & Administration Expenses	\$ 143,600.21	\$ 360,682.36
Employment Expenses	\$ 639,296.58	\$ 662,467.41
Property Services	\$ 6,236.44	\$ 13,848.11
Vehicles Maintenance & Operations	\$ 9,946.59	\$ 20,619.78
Events Expenditure	\$ 136,442.54	\$ 738,963.22
ICT Certification Project	\$ 0.00	\$ 85,130.23
NSW & Qld fee refunds	\$ 441,766.30	\$ 0.00
Closing Petty Cash Balance	\$ 250.15	\$ 2,082.80
Total Operating Expenditure	\$ 1,377,538.81	\$ 1,883,793.91

Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ (275,024.77)	\$ 28,937.68
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Asset Purchases	\$ 4,114.81	\$ 52,175.03
GST to ATO on purchases	\$ 4,718.94	\$ 0.00
Total Expenditure	\$ 1,386,372.56	\$ 1,935,968.94

Net Trading Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ (283,858.52)	\$ (23,337.35)
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FUNDS HELD	2020	2019
Balance beginning of Year	\$ 748,111.82	\$ 771,449.17
Net Trading Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ (283,858.52)	\$ (23,337.35)
Balance at end of Year	\$ 464,253.30	\$ 748,111.82

The consolidated financial position presented here is a summary for the information of members and water industry stakeholders. It has not been subject to a full audit, but fairly represents the position of the Association in relation to consolidated annual turnover and cash reserves held in bank accounts.

The WIOA approach to all our operations is to provide maximum value to our members and stakeholders at the most affordable price. The annual operating budget is set with this concept in mind, and modest surpluses over a number of years have been accumulated for a "rainy day". In 2020, that rainy day arrived courtesy of the COVID-19 pandemic. Having access to the accumulated cash reserves, the subsidy support from the Federal and State Government and the creation of some new services and events has allowed WIOA to continue to operate throughout this difficult period.

The cancellation of all four conferences in 2020 has had a huge impact on both income and expenditure. Income was more than \$1.2M below 2019 levels when the refunds of the NSW and Qld conference sponsors, delegates and exhibitor fees paid in 2020 is considered. Income from publications, membership and other services were similar to 2019 levels.

Operating Expenditure reduced by approx. 50% in 2019, when the refund of the NSW & Qld conference fees are considered. Employment expenses reduced by 3.5% following the resignation of the Project Officer, along with employment of an additional Administration Officer. There were no wage rises for existing staff and the Admin Team were placed on JobKeeper stand down from May 2020. All staff have accessed accumulated leave during 2020 and the level of provisions for leave has been reduced by more than \$20,000.

The Office and Administration expenses were significantly lower with practically no travel, accommodation, postage or printing expenses due to event cancellations. Property Services and Vehicles costs were also lower than 2019, with staff working from home and very little travel being undertaken. We had a significantly reduced power bill following the installation of solar panels at the office in 2019. Expenditure on new assets of just over \$4,000.00 was made including some new computing and office equipment.

It should be noted that there is a staff provisions liability (Annual Leave, RDO's and Long Service Leave) of approximately \$155,000 that is not reflected in the Consolidated Financial Information presented here. It is anticipated that the level of provisions will be further reduced during the first half of 2021.

In summary, WIOA had a \$283,858 operational deficit in 2020 as indicated by a reduction in cash at bank. The need for adequate cash reserves is particularly important when considering how reliant the Association is on income from our conferences and events. In these volatile financial times, cash reserves commensurate with the growth of the organisation and our risk profile are required to continue to ensure our long term viability.

At the end of 2020, the Association has \$129,067 in operating cash accounts, \$311,707 held in term deposits, and fixed assets in the form of building, plant and equipment valued at around \$430,000 after depreciation. Despite the difficulties of 2020, the Association is in a reasonable financial position and has adequate funds to continue to provide member services at appropriate levels. Presuming that conferences and events can be staged successfully in 2021, this financial position will enable WIOA to develop and deliver our range of operationally focussed events and services throughout 2021.

Membership



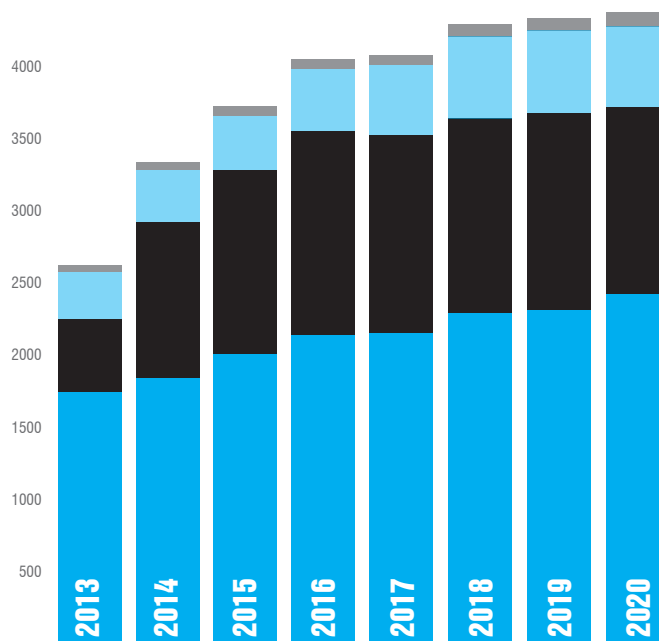
Membership Statistics & Distribution

In 2020, Individual membership of the association increased by 66 (3.6%) to a total of 2443 members, Utility Corporate Members increased by 2 to 76 organisations and Corporate Member numbers reduced by 31 to 377. COVID-19 had an impact on Corporate Membership numbers with several companies putting their Membership on hold from March 2020 whilst they sorted out the impact of the pandemic on their business. We hope to see Corporate Member numbers increase in 2021, assuming that WIOA will be able to resume offering our Conferences and other engagement opportunities.

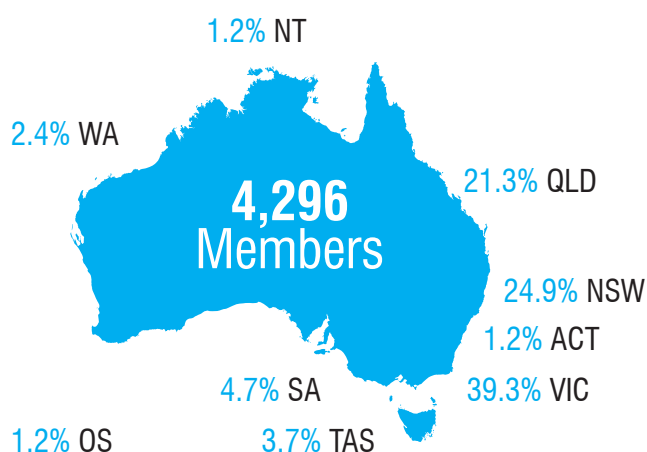
The Associate Corporate member numbers reduced by 29 (2.7%) to 1400. As Associate Corporate members receive limited benefits, there is an opportunity for them to become Individual members in the future, allowing them to access the full benefits of membership.

The overall result is that the Association's total membership at the end of 2020 is 4296, a 0.2% increase across all categories. That membership was able to be increased slightly in 2020 indicates that there is a growing exposure and acceptance of why the association exists and what it does.

We trust that all existing members will continue to spread the word about the benefits of membership to others in the operational side of the water industry. This will assist us to promote and grow WIOA as the leading association working for operational employees.



Membership Categories



WIOA Structure

WIOA Incorporated General Committee

The Association has a General Committee comprising both elected and appointed Members. The primary role of the Committee is to represent all members by determining and then communicating their views and needs to the rest of the Committee and to the Board of WIOA Ltd.

At the WIOA Incorporated Annual General Meeting held online on Tuesday 21 April 2020, Heidi Josipovic from Albury City Council was elected President and George Wall was elected Secretary/Treasurer. Holding the Annual General Meeting online, allowed a record number of 58 Members to participate.

On-line elections were conducted for both Vice President and General Committee positions. Mark Samblebe from MBS Water was elected Vice President and Ryan McGowan from Goulburn Valley Water, Simon Page from Cairns Regional Council, Grant Waite from North East Water and Elise O'Keefe from Goulburn Valley Water were re-elected. Kathy Northcott from Veolia was elected as a committee member for the first time.

The efforts and contributions of outgoing Committee members Lindsay Walsh and Sally Taylor were formally acknowledged with both indicating they will continue to support WIOA and the NSW Advisory Committee.

The Chairs of each of the five State based Advisory Committees are automatically appointed to the General Committee. Anthony Evans, Victoria; Alan Butler, NSW; Colin Haynes, Queensland; Stephen Westgate, Tasmania; and Robran Cock, South Australia were all announced as Committee members.



President
Heidi Josipovic
Albury City Council



Vice President
Mark Samblebe
MBS Water



Secretary/Treasurer
George Wall
WIOA



NSW
Alan Butler
Port Macquarie
Hastings Council



Queensland
Colin Haynes
Unitywater



South Australia
Robran Cock
Ametqua



Tasmania
Steven Westgate
TasWater



Victoria
Anthony Evans
Wannon Water



Ryan McGowan
Goulburn Valley Water



Kathy Northcott
Water RA / Veolia



Elise O'Keefe
Goulburn Valley Water



Simon Page
Cairns Regional Council



Grant Waite
North East Water



WIOA Limited Board of Directors

The operations of WIOA is governed by a Board of Directors who oversee the business functions including governance, policy and procedures and managing the organisation's finances and risk appetite. The General Committee and the Board work together to confirm and deliver on the strategic direction of the Association.

The Annual General Meeting of WIOA Limited was conducted on Wednesday 18 March 2020. Retiring Directors Russell Mack and Adrian Rijnbeek both addressed the meeting to say thanks and express their gratitude to the WIOA Board for the support and opportunities provided during their terms on the Board. Their outstanding contribution to the association was acknowledged by all. John Harris and Ryan McGowan were both appointed to the Board. Jim Martin was re-elected as Chair of the Board and John Harris was elected as the Deputy Chair.

Staff

Day to day operations of the Association are managed by the WIOA staff team, led by Managing Director George Wall.

In March, Dale Osborne resigned from the Project Officer position to take up a team leader role with Goulburn Valley Water. Abbey Kaine completed her Business Administration Traineeship and was appointed to the full time role of Administration Officer in March.

All the WIOA staff have worked collaboratively and diligently in a period where COVID caused significant disruptions to the organisation's annual events program and work loads. The administration team in particular have been extremely flexible in their approach and have helped deliver the range of member services on behalf of the Association.



Chair
Jim Martin



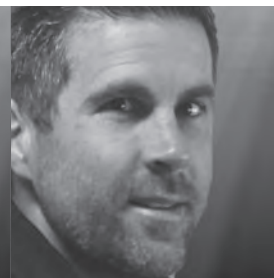
Deputy Chair
John Harris



Managing Director
George Wall



Chief Operations Officer
Craig Mathisen



Project Officer
Dale Osborne



Managing Director
George Wall



Director
Jillian Busch



Administration
Sherryn Wall



Administration
Ann Austin



Administration
Marilyn Wall



Director
Ryan McGowan



Director
Heidi Josipovic



Administration
Abbey Kaine



20 Year Members

WIOA recognises any Individual or Corporate members who have maintained their membership for 20 or more consecutive years, presenting them with a special Membership lapel pin or certificate for Corporates.



This year there are another 12 Individual Members and 12 Corporate Members who have qualified for the 20 year recognition pin. The recipients of the pin in 2020 are: Jill Busch, Margarita Carroll, Peter Gebbie, Brendan Holt, Simon McCracken, Sandy McGregor, Ravi Raveendran, Peter Roberts, Dale Rogers, Wayne Shaw, Ivan Wild and Rodney Wubben. The eligible Corporate Members are Central Highlands Water, GWM Water, Coliban Water, Wannon Water, Fluidquip Australia, Iwaki Pumps Australia, Jonoco, ProMinent Fluid Controls, Regal Beloit Australia, Servelec Technologies and Xylem Water Solutions.

We congratulate them for maintaining their membership and hope they wear the pin with pride.

WIOA Website & Social Media

The WIOA website is critical for the association to be able provide current information to our members and stakeholders. The site over recent years and has become much more user and device friendly.

The WIOA website was maintained throughout 2020 and several new enhancements made to content. The websites have become the base for all news and information regarding all of WIOA activities and events.

The WIOA websites (wioa.org.au and wioaconferences.org.au) received a total of 70,628 entrances in 2020 which included an increased number of users accessing content through mobile or tablet devices.

The implementation of the online conference and exhibition platform (virtualwater.com.au) added to the online offerings to members, given many were working from home due to the pandemic.

Our presence in social media channels continued in 2020 with WIOA communicating with members via Twitter, Facebook, Linked In and on the WIOA YouTube channel. WIOA is investigating additional ways to make our online presence more effective for members and to provide content that is valued by our members and the broader water industry.



WIOA Talks (webinars) provide members from all over the country the opportunity to get together online to hear the latest updates and share knowledge and experiences - and all from the comfort of their own desk!

WIOA
TALKS

In 2020, 3 webinars were delivered, and 195 individuals participated in the opportunity for collaboration with other water industry organisations across Australia. The information presented was sourced from industry experts, many of whom are WIOA members, all with the intention of providing access to the latest information to Members.

The WIOA Talks schedule was replaced by the WIOA Virtual Water platform in July.

2020 WIOA Talks

February **Innovation for Industry**
March **Certification**
May **Energy**

WIOA Talks provide members another way to access information using an immersive online meeting experience. The WIOA Talks program was suspended for 2020 once Virtual Water commenced. WIOA will continue to provide access to high quality information online again in 2021. If you have suggestions for future webinar topics or have information you would like to present at a future webinar, please contact the WIOA office.

AFL & NRL Tipping Competitions

Members were invited to demonstrate their prowess over the AFL and NRL seasons by entering the WIOA footy tipping competitions.

Lee Marshall from Central Highlands Water in Victoria won the WIOA AFL footy tipping competition clearly with 116 correct selections finishing 43rd in the national AFL footy tipping competition. Up until 10 August, Lee was leading the national competition where 196,351 people had entered for a chance to win the \$20,000 winner's purse. Second position in the WIOA AFL competition saw Manfred Glombowski and Brett Shillig tie on 106.

In the WIOA NRL footy tipping competition, James Blannin from Stevco Seals and WIOA MD George Wall were both tied on 126 winners going into the Grand Final. With both James and George being Melbourne Storm supporters, it looked like they would still be tied, with James winning due to his lower points margin from throughout the year. In a bold move to snatch outright victory, George rolled the dice and tipped the Panthers to upset the Storm in the Grand Final. The result is history, Storm won and our congratulations are extended to James for his win.

Advisory Committees



State based WIOA Advisory Committees are vital to provide members the opportunity to actively participate in the direction of WIOA in their state and to become more engaged with their association.

Advisory Committees in NSW, Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria work on options to determine and deliver appropriate services to WIOA Members. The events conducted by the Advisory Committees provide a great networking opportunity for members and allow attendees to meet other operators and increase their knowledge and skills.

Advisory Committees focus on issues and actions relating to the provision of services, events, training and opportunities to recognise achievements in the operational sector of the water industry. They assist the Association to undertake a range of functions such as:

- Identifying the types, range and scope of services and events considered appropriate for water industry operational staff
- Assisting with the organisation, promotion and staging of events
- Providing information for inclusion in WIOA publications
- Encourage participation and knowledge sharing with water industry related personnel employed in the private sector.
- Informing WIOA of training issues or needs specific to operational staff.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 significantly disrupted activities in each State in 2020, with only a few face to face opportunities able to be completed before health based gathering restrictions were initiated. Additionally, nominations for membership of each of the Advisory Committees were due to be received in late 2020. With the ongoing impact of COVID-19, this process was delayed until late 2021 with the existing members offered the opportunity to stay on for another year.

Advisory Committee Chairs

NSW

Tasmania

Queensland

South Australia Victoria



Alan Butler
Port Macquarie Hastings

Alan Butler from Port Macquarie Hastings Council was elected Chairperson of the WIOA NSW Advisory Committee for 2020. The New South Wales Advisory Committee members assisted with the Recycling Water Interest day that was held in Parkes in February 2020.

The NSW Advisory Committee assisted in the conduct of Live Day 3 of Virtual Water where several members shared their experiences to a national audience. The NSW Operator of the Year and the Ixom 2020 Best Tasting Tap Water in NSW/ACT awards were also presented on this day.



Stephen Westgate
TasWater

Stephen Westgate from TasWater was elected the Chairperson of the Tasmanian WIOA Advisory Committee.

Members of the Tasmanian Advisory Committee helped stage the Ixom 2020 Best Tasting Tap Water in Tasmania Competition and engaged with employees from across TasWater in the judging of the heats. The top 3 samples were then forwarded to WIOA for judging.

The Tasmanian Advisory Committee assisted in the conduct of Live Day 6 of Virtual Water where several members shared their experiences to a national audience. The Tasmanian Operator of the Year and Young Operator of the Year awards were also presented on this day.

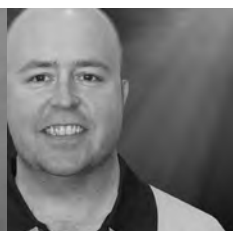


Colin Haynes
Unitywater

Colin Haynes from Unity Water was elected Chairperson of the WIOA Queensland Advisory Committee.

WIOA's annual Charity Bowls Day held in Yandina in March 2020 was well supported by Queensland Advisory Committee members.

The Queensland Advisory Committee assisted in the conduct of Live Day 4 of Virtual Water where several members shared their operational experiences. The Queensland Operator of the Year, Queensland Civil/All Rounder Operator of the Year and Young Operator of the Year awards were also presented on this day.



Robran Cock
Ametqua

Robran Cock was elected the Chairperson of the South Australian WIOA Advisory Committee.

The South Australian Advisory Committee assisted in the conduct of Live Day 5 of Virtual Water with a number of excellent presentations provided. The Ixom 2020 Best Tasting Tap Water in South Australian awards was conducted on this day with SA Water's Woolpunda Water Treatment plant coming out on top for a second time.



Anthony Evans
Wannon Water

Anthony Evans from Wannon Water was elected as Chairperson of the WIOA Victorian Advisory Committee.

The Victorian Advisory Committee members assisted with the Recycling Water Interest day that was held in Melbourne including a tour of the MCG recycling facilities in March 2020.

The Victorian Advisory Committee assisted in the conduct of Live Day 9 of Virtual Water where several members provided excellent operationally based presentations. The Ixom 2020 Best Tasting Tap Water in Victoria competition, Victorian Operator of the Year and Victorian Young Operator of the Year awards were also presented on this day.

One of the Association's primary purposes is to collect and disseminate knowledge and information for the betterment of Members and industry stakeholders. To achieve an appropriate outcome, we have actively pursued opportunities to participate in activities for, and on behalf of, our members.

We have consistently advocated for the introduction of operational risk improvement strategies such as operator certification. We have represented member views and made a positive contribution to a range of industry Committees and working groups. We have developed and implemented a suite of technical training resource materials and seminars to fill identified skill and knowledge gaps, and we have developed collaborative affiliations with numerous water industry organisations.

Advocacy

WIOA maintains a strong advocacy role on issues relating to the operational side of the water industry. We take an active approach in promoting industry awareness and understanding of water and wastewater operational issues as they relate to management of public health and the environment.

Representation

Due to the diverse nature and skills of our staff and members, we receive many requests to provide expertise to a wide range of projects on behalf of the industry. WIOA staff or members participate on several state and national committees, present at conferences, seminars and workshops, and support and inform research and policy development wherever appropriate.

During 2020, WIOA staff or members have represented the Association either by participating on committees and working groups, or by providing information and advice to a range of industry stakeholders.

Rod Curtis from Western Water represents WIOA on the Standards Australia Committee on Sludge recovery, recycling, treatment and disposal (WS-039).

Darren Sharman from Goulburn Valley Water represents WIOA on the Standards Australia Committee on Service Activities - Water Supply and Wastewater Systems (WS-041). The main project being undertaken by this group at present relates to creation of a Standard for flushable products.

WIOA staff or members have represented the Association on the following committees:

- Australian Industry Standards - Water Industry Reference Committee
- Australian Industry Standards - Technical Advisory Committee for the review of the National Water Training Package
- Water Industry Operator Certification Taskforce - Member
- Certifying Body for Water Treatment Operators nationally
- Certifying Body for Wastewater and Recycled Water Treatment Operators nationally
- Australian Standards Committee WS - 039 for Sludge recovery, recycling, treatment and disposal
- Australian Standards Committee WS - 041 for Service Activities - Water Supply and Wastewater Systems
- Institute of Water Administration (Victoria) Board

AIS Water Industry Reference Committee

Australian Industry Standards (AIS) is a government funded organisation that develops skills standards across a range of Australian industries.

Working under the direction of the Water Industry Reference Committee (IRC) that represents the water sector, Australian Industry Standards provides industry engagement, quality assurance, and project management to produce and maintain the National Water Training Package (NWP) and other support services. The Water Training Package provides the only nationally recognised Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications for occupations in the water industry.

Industry References Committees (IRCs):

- Provide a forum for industry engagement.
- Direct the review, development and implementation of training package content relevant to the industry sectors they cover.
- Act as a conduit for industry feedback to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) and governments on industry trends.

WIOA Managing Director George Wall continued in the role of Chair with current WIOA Victorian Advisory Committee Chair Anthony Evans from Wannon Water also on the IRC as an industry expert.

WIOA's involvement in this high-level committee ensures that the issues of operational employees and the ever-evolving nature of technology and process development are appropriately considered as the training package evolves.

The formal review of the Certificate IV qualification and Units of Competence was completed in 2020 with WIOA represented on the Technical Advisory Committee for several streams within the Package.

Water Industry Operator Certification Taskforce

The Water Industry Operator Certification Taskforce (WIOCT) which comprises CEO-level representation from the water industry and related education and government sectors, including WIOA, continued in the role of national Certification Framework owner.

Dave Cameron from **qldwater** is the current Chair and **qldwater** provides the secretariat services for WIOCT.

Although there were no recommendations for amendments to the content of the Framework from the Certifying Body or any other source, there will be amendments required when the new unit codes have been provided for the revised Certificate II, III & IV in Water Industry Operations.

Affiliations and Collaboration

WIOA maintains affiliations with other stakeholders and peak bodies that service the Australian water sector.

These affiliations have been established and maintained in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort of limited resources.

WIOA has worked in a collegiate and collaborative manner with a range of water industry organisations on a number of operationally focussed projects and initiatives in 2020. Stakeholders include:

- Australian Industry Standards (AIS)
- Australian Water Association (AWA)
- Backflow Prevention Association of Australia (BPAA)
- Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)
- Choose Tap Coalition
- Institute of Water Administration (Vic)
- Intelligent Water Network (IWN)
- Local Government Shires Associations (LGSA)
- NSW Water Directorate
- Public Utilities Board - Singapore
- Pump Industry Association
- Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*)
- Various Regions of Councils (ROC)
- Standards Australia
- University of Melbourne
- Various Government Departments responsible for water or wastewater regulation
- Victorian Water Industry Association (VicWater)
- Water Industry Operations Group (New Zealand)
- Water Industry Operator Certification Taskforce (WIOCT)
- Water New Zealand
- Water Research Australia (WaterRA)
- Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA)

WIOA Partners IWN

WIOA has developed a new strategic partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Intelligent Water Network (IWN), formalised during 2020. This is a commitment to collaborate and share information around new and innovative technology solutions, communication platforms and virtual and/or public forums.

The IWN has been working with WIOA for many years regularly sharing information and showcasing new processes or technology solutions with the front-line operations staff. The IWN partnered with WIOA in staging two days for their members on the Virtual Water platform.

Collaborating with organisations such as IWN is an important part in the collection and sharing of information with operational people in the water industry. Communicating the results of the various IWN research and technology trials can help the operational side of the water industry to increase efficiency, productivity and improve customer service outcomes.



One Day Technical Seminars

WIOA has developed a series of Technical Seminars, many of which expand on the information contained in the Practical Guide books. The seminars are a collection of “operationally” focused workshops that are offered right around the country, based on demand. Each Seminar features a program that is relevant and targeted specifically at water industry operations and/or maintenance staff from all parts of the Australian water industry.

The most popular seminar is the One Day Interactive Seminar on Water Quality Awareness and Distribution System Management. The seminar content covers a variety of water quality issues related to the management and operation of distribution systems. It places particular emphasis on the importance of keeping pathogens out of the distribution network and helps identify where and how pathogens can enter a system. A number of case studies where issues have occurred which have impacted public health are discussed and explained.

The Distribution seminar has been staged on a total of 53 separate occasions to more than 2,100 participants since it was first run in 2004. This seminar is staged based on demand and is limited to a maximum of 40 participants at each.

Other topics in the One Day Seminar Series include:

- Water Quality Awareness and Distribution System Management
- Media Filter Assessment and Optimisation
- Optimising Chemical Dosing, Coagulation, Flocculation and Clarification
- Membrane Operations, Maintenance and Troubleshooting
- Operation & Validation of UV Disinfection Systems for Water, Wastewater & Recycled Water
- Optimisation of Water Treatment Processes for Algae and Organics Control
- Water Quality Risk Management and HBTs

Some of the seminars can be customised to fit either a full day or a half day format, or to incorporate site-based, local or region-specific aspects of the topics covered.

Network Operator Development Program

The 2020 Victorian Network Operator Development Program commenced in February with a group of 14 Operators from around Victoria (including one from Albury in NSW).

After completing the first two sessions, the group were gradually coming out of their shell and starting to engage with one another. All this came to an abrupt halt at the end of March courtesy of COVID-19 and lockdowns.

Session 3 was held online in July and at the end of the day, the participants were asked whether they would like to continue online or wait until we could get back to face-to-face sessions. It was decided to suspend the program and reinstate it when we can get back to face-to-face sessions. A major outcome of the program is the engagement with and learning from the committee and presenters and building a network of peers that could be called on in the future. These outcomes were not able to be achieved using the online format. We are hoping to resume the program, face-to-face in May 2021.

Water Interest Days

Due to the pandemic only two Interest Days were staged in 2020, both concentrating on recycling on February 6 in Parkes and on March 3 in Melbourne.

We look forward to conducting future interest days with the support of the state based WIOA Advisory Committees to expose operations staff to new or updated plants, processes, innovations or technology.

The days normally incorporate some presentations by operations staff on a theme related to each particular day, a facility tour and a networking lunch. WIOA offers the opportunity to Corporate Members to sponsor the day, usually by funding the cost of the lunch for delegates, and in turn are offered the opportunity to do a presentation on their product, service or technology as part of the days program.



Victorian Recycling Interest Day

The WIOA Victorian Advisory Committee held a recycling interest day on 3 March in Melbourne. One of the highlights of the day was a tour of the Melbourne Cricket Club's recycled water treatment plant and recycled food facility.

The day kicked off with industry presentations discussing current and future recycling opportunities.

- Kathy Northcott from WaterRA presented on the rewards and challenges of potable reuse. Her insights into the power of language were particularly interesting. How someone who wouldn't touch "treated wastewater" would be happy to drink "purified water".
- Anthony Evans spoke about Wannon Water's reuse schemes, including providing recycled water to the Mortlake Power Plant, and the treatment process required to produce Class A recycled water for Iluka Mineral Sands.
- Ron Bergmeier asked us "where is the sludge?" His presentation was informative and entertaining, using his experience in the industry to provide advice for getting the best results when managing biosolids and de-sludging lagoons.
- Amber Robinson introduced us to the Class A wastewater recycling scheme that Downer manages for the MCC.

During summer, recycled water is used on Yarra Park and over winter it is used for toilet flushing and wash-down water inside the stadium, reducing the MCC's potable water demand by half. The tiny wastewater treatment plant supplies up to 600 kL/day of recycled water, all while hidden underground right in front of the MCG.

Compostable goods are broken down on site and used as fertiliser on the Yarra Park lawns, and other waste is sorted into 26 different streams to be recycled.

All attendees were impressed at how compact the plant was, with no noise or odour complaints despite the thousands of people who walk by every weekend.



Parkes Recycling Interest Day

WIOA and Parkes Shire Council facilitated an Interest Day which provided a great opportunity to gain a better understanding of the different projects and opportunities in the recycled water space.

Our industry's initiative of implementing recycled water projects provides an opportunity to better utilise an often-undervalued resource, and with changing climate patterns, can provide a reliable supply of water for several different purposes.

Throughout the Interest Day, attendees heard from several presenters who provided further insight on a broad range of strategies to implement recycled water projects. This included presentations from:

- John Hawkins from Albury City Council, who discussed the environmental and community benefits from a scheme that uses both agricultural reuse, and release, an approach which had made significant environmental benefits to restoring the Wonga Wetlands, which in turn had created a prized community asset.
- Greg Cashman from Prominent gave an interesting overview on the fundamentals of pump selection and some valuable troubleshooting tips on incorrect operation.
- David Sheehan from Coliban Water provided a comprehensive overview of the current information on international potable reuse water schemes. These included insights on the key success factors for implementing potable reuse; and
- Clara Laydon from Hunter H2O presented an informative session on the key terms and fundamental elements to sizing agricultural reuse schemes and the implications of different reuse targets.

Parkes Shire Council's Gabriel Oliveira presented on how council applied biosolids to a neighbouring farming area, which provided some unique insights into the practical challenges and successes of the project. Julian Fyfe introduced Parkes' new recycled water treatment plant. The afternoon concluded with a guided tour of the reuse facility.

Attendees shared information on a diverse range of topics, presentations and initiatives, providing a great opportunity to learn from those that are working on Recycled Water projects.

Conferences

Water Industry Operations Conferences & Exhibitions

The 2020 NSW, Queensland, South Australian & Victorian conferences were all cancelled due to COVID-19. In making these decisions, WIOA was totally focussed on the protection of the health, safety and welfare of our families, staff, members and water industry stakeholders.

The ongoing impact of COVID-19 is still being closely monitored and managed by health and government authorities around the country.

WIOA is drawing directly on current advice and information and will look to staging our conferences and exhibitions when it is safe and appropriate to do so. We will be implementing all recommended precautions from the World Health Organisation, Federal and State Health authorities and will encourage all event attendees to follow a strict COVID Safety Plan to ensure our events meet all COVID safety requirements.

Future Events

WIOA conferences and exhibitions provide a forum for water industry operational employees to come together and discuss issues, share experiences, learn about the latest product and technology developments, and network with their peers.

WIOA conferences aim to:

- Distribute the latest operational, technical and research information through platform and poster presentations.
- Update the knowledge and skills of operational staff through interaction with fellow water industry employees.
- Provide the opportunity to view and discuss the latest advances in technical equipment, products and services with suppliers and industry consultants.

WIOA endeavours to develop our members and the wider water industry by providing a relaxed forum for operations staff to present technical papers to their peers. In doing so, confidence is raised, new skills are learnt and the opportunity to discuss real operational issues with their peers can result in the formation of valuable networks. Award winning presenters from WIOA state conferences and New Zealand, are invited to deliver their papers again at other conferences to share knowledge.

The conferences also have the largest state-based water industry exhibitions held annually in regional areas, which provide the opportunity to discover and research new technology, equipment, services and ideas.



VIRTUAL WATER

Virtual Water Conference & Expo

In the absence of opportunities for face to face events, WIOA was innovative in providing a highly interactive 3-D virtual conference and expo platform - Virtual Water.

The platform brought together water industry operational employees, suppliers to the industry and stakeholders from all over the country to hear the latest updates, share knowledge and technical information and experiences from a range of presenters. Virtual Water delivered 23.45 hours of content, video-streamed from within the virtual auditorium.

WIOA hosted 10 "live days" on the platform with the first day occurring on Wednesday 22 July 2020. Live Days included keynote and technical presentations where speakers delivered engaging and informative content and facilitated 2-way conversations through question and answer sessions. The Intelligent Water Network hosted an additional two live days for the benefit of their members.

Virtual Water includes an expo which provided Corporate Members the opportunity to showcase their products and services in a virtual environment. The Virtual Water expo simulates a live conference with exhibitors engaging with the attendees from their virtual expo booths. Exhibitors provide their information to attendees through videos, PDF documents or other brochures as well as by chat, audio, messaging and email functions.

Virtual Water Conference Sponsors



Virtual Water Opens its Doors

Since opening the doors to the Virtual Water platform, 1,252 individuals have registered to access the platform. This is just under the number of people who would traditionally attend the Victorian Conference and Exhibition, our largest event. The number is close to the average combined attendance at our conferences in NSW, Queensland.

During the period that the platform has been operating, the exhibition has received over 11,205 booth visitations, with 1,583 clicks on the content (videos and documents) that our exhibitors have made available.

Over the Live Days, there have been 90 presentations by operations staff from every Australian State, including nine Keynote addresses. A total of 81 of the presenters have given their approval to post a recording of their presentation to the On-Demand section of the auditorium to allow everyone to access and watch in their own time.

In addition to the presentations, we have utilised the platform to recognise the achievements of members with 27 separate awards presented to extremely deserving winners since Live Day 1.

Virtual Water's expo and on-demand content will remain live through to April 2021.

 1,252
REGISTRATIONS

 11,205
BOOTH VISITS

 1,583
CONTENT CLICKS

www.virtualwater.com.au

WIOA Charity Events

WIOA has supported a range of charitable organisations and causes since the first charity donation was made in 1999. Unfortunately, during 2020 only one charity event was possible with the McBerns Queensland Charity Bowls Day conducted in March.

The Grand Final saw two of the day's major supporters McBerns Gold and Seqwater go head to head in the battle for the Queensland Tradies Cup. It all came down to the final bowl that saw the thrilling match going the way of the team of Glenn Patterson, Ross Paulger and Rick Goulding from Seqwater. Thanks to the contribution of all our sponsors and attendees, over \$3,500 was raised for charity. Event sponsors included:



In the absence of the other charity days and conference raffles that have been traditionally conducted, with the support of our sponsors in TRILITY and Southern Divers, WIOA was still able to donate \$6,500 to charity in 2020. Through the Spirit of Australia Awards, Kwatye Award and the Virtual Water Leader Board competitions, the winners were provided the opportunity to nominate a charity of their choice to be the recipient of the donations. This brings the total donated since 1999 to \$141,075.00

In 2020 WIOA donated \$6,500 to the following charities

Donation		Charity Recipient		Source
\$500		Sailability Bayside	Bill Collie Urban Utilities	Spirit of Australia Award Queensland
\$500		BlazeAid	Jill Busch Aqualift Project Delivery	Spirit of Australia Award NSW/ACT
\$500		Cancer Council of Australia	David Dickson North East Water	Spirit of Australia Award Victoria
\$500		SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY	Damien Lavelle TasWater	Spirit of Australia Award Tasmania
\$500		Cancer Council South Australia	Matthew Gulliver TRILITY	Spirit of Australia Award South Australia
\$500		Feed the little children in the Kimberley	Jessica Wilson Water Corporation	Spirit of Australia Award Western Australia
\$500		Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience	Jethro Laidlaw Power & Water	Spirit of Australia Award Northern Territory
\$1,000		Feed the little children in the Kimberley	Jordin Payne & Jessica Wilson Water Corporation	Kwatye Award
\$500		Caloundra Men's Shed	Colin Haynes Unity Water	Virtual Water Leader Board 1
\$500		Rural Aid Australia	Graham Sweetlove Maranoa Regional Council	Virtual Water Leader Board 2
\$500		Daffodil Cottage Cancer Care Centre	Justin Sweetlove Bathurst Regional Council	Virtual Water Leader Board 3
\$500		National Breast Cancer Foundation	Mathew Brill Downer	Virtual Water Leader Board 4

Certification



WIOA Water Industry Operator Certification Scheme

Ensuring that all operations staff are appropriately trained and skilled is one of the primary ways to help reduce risk and protect public safety and the environment. The national operator Certification scheme remains the only formal driver to ensure that the training undertaken by operators is matched to the processes that they operate, along with ensuring that operators are provided the opportunity to develop new skills or refresh their existing competencies.

WIOA has continued to work with regulators, employers and operators in many States and we now have 124 certified operators from Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia.

Following the adoption of the national Framework in 2019 as the sole Certification scheme, WIOA has continued to progressively transfer the operators certified under the Victorian Framework over to the national Scheme. The transition will occur as each of the certified operators are recertified.

National Certification

The Water Industry Operator Certification Taskforce (WIOCT) remains the owner and manager of the national "Water Industry Operator Certification Framework 2018 - Drinking Water, Wastewater, Recycled Water". The Queensland Water Directorate (**qldwater**) continues in the role of voluntary WIOCT secretariat. The Framework and associated certification documents are available from the **qldwater** website.

www.qldwater.com.au/Skills_water_operator_certification

WIOA has worked collaboratively with organisations and water service providers to map their treatment plant processes to determine the specific training and skills requirements for each plant operator. This process was undertaken for both water and wastewater treatment plants and there are several operators currently undertaking gap training to allow them to be certified in the future. We look forward to certifying more operators in 2021 as they complete their training.

WIOA attended a special presentation ceremony where the certification credentials were presented to Operators who had met all the Scheme requirements at the **qldwater** Skills Forum in Brisbane in March. With 124 operators currently certified against either the Victorian or national Frameworks, the attention of the certified operators is now on undertaking recertification activities.

Certification Portal Development

With the input of a funding grant from the Australian Services Union, WIOA completed the development of an Information and Communication Technology (ICT), web based solution, to assist in the administration and overall management of the national certification scheme.

The final solution was tested with the assistance of some water utilities in early 2020.

The ICT solution is linked off the WIOA website and includes:



- The development of an online skills matrix builder for operators. This skills matrix tool matches the treatment plant processes operated to the appropriate Units of Competence in the National Water Package, allowing individual operators and their employers to determine the correct mix of Units of Competence to complete when developing their operator training plans.
- The development of a management system for training completed by Certified Operators providing organisations who have certified operators, and individual operators, with a way to easily manage and keep track of skills gaps and training requirements. It offers guidance and support to training administrators for training budget planning purposes.
- The development of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) management tool for certified operators. This provides certified operators with a way to easily manage and keep track of their CPD activities and points and offers guidance and support to operators for their ongoing learning and development plans to take back to their training administrators for training budget planning purposes.
- The development of the back end database to facilitate the recording of all the data and ensure the integration of all the proposed outcomes above.

The portal is now fully functional and organisations and individuals are invited to contact WIOA to gain access to the portal.

Diversity & Inclusion Group established

WIOA embraces diversity and inclusion and consider it is integral to our culture, our values and the way we do business.



diversity & inclusion

In November 2019, WIOA established a Diversity and Inclusion Group to provide advice, support and assist WIOA to ensure we have an inclusive culture that embraces diversity, celebrates differences, and encourages participation.

WIOA members should feel respected and supported and access and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender, age, cultural norms, values, beliefs, and linked expectations.

Members of the group conducted their first meeting online in February 2020, and throughout 2020 met to discuss initiatives that WIOA could implement.

Outcomes included several presentations on Diversity in the workplace conducted on the Virtual Water platform, a number of articles in WIOA communications and magazines and an examination of conducting a Women of Water event in the future.

Like many things in 2020, activities were hindered by the pandemic.

Operator of the Year



Queensland
Mark Vairy
Mackay Regional Council



Victoria
Dion Bull
Gippsland Water



Tasmania
Ben Halton
TasWater



NSW
Matthew Agnew
Midcoast Water

Young Operator of the Year



Queensland
Benjamin Haddock
Southern Downs
Regional Council



Victoria
Michael Tulloch
Gippsland Water



Tasmania
Luke Chivers
TasWater

All Rounder / Networks Operator of the Year



Queensland
Brett Donald
Mackay Regional Council

Adrian Rijnbeek Joins the IDIOT's

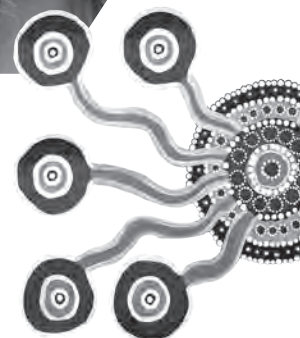
Congratulations to Adrian Rijnbeek from Xylem Water Solutions who became the 40th Member to be Inducted as a Delegate of the Inextricably Obstructed Tap Society. The Award recognises members for their commitment to the vision and philosophies of WIOA and their active promotion of the Association.

Adrian has been a regular MC at conference dinners, taste tests and other events. He has been a great help at conferences and events assisting with the setup, packup and anything else that needs doing and has actively promoted WIOA through his role with Xylem.

Adrian has shared his technical knowledge by helping develop the program and then assisted running the pumps training day as part of the annual Network Operator Development Program. Congratulations Adrian, and your involvement with WIOA is greatly appreciated by all members. In presenting the award, Anthony Evans noted the following about Adrian:

- WIOA member since March 2005
- Committee member from 2012 to 2018
- Board member from 2017 to 2020
- Victorian Young Operator of the Year 2008
- Vice President 2015 & 2016
- President 2017 & 2018





PASS Award

Scott Kitwood

Gippsland Water, Victoria

The winner of the 2020 PASS award was announced on Live Day 1 on the Virtual Water platform. The winner is Scott Kitwood from Gippsland Water. Scott's winning idea saw the development of the Environmental Lagoon Monitoring Attachment (ELMA), a very simple but effective solution to the problem of accessing and then taking consistent water quality measurements in wastewater lagoons.

The idea came about when Scott was sitting at his son's swimming lessons and he thought he could somehow use the noodles in the sampling process. He needed tests to be completed as safely as possible while carrying 2 portables, notepad and bucket over/under electric fences, down wet & slippery rock beaching.

After talking with the other Gippsland Water operators, a prototype was made. The current version is a press fit pool noodle and paint roller which allows the probes to be press fit into the designated holes. It is designed to screw onto the end of the paint roller pole and supports the pole from the bottom so that when the probes are inserted they don't come into contact with the ground both in and out of the water.

With the design being 100% press fit it allows any section to be removed for cleaning or replacement and doesn't require any special tools or training. This design feature also allows the pole to be transported in the back of a ute without damaging the probe tips and allows the probes to be cleaned without having to hold them. Having the floating attachment on the end of the paint roller poll allows it to be extended further into the lagoon (where length of probe cable permits) to get over a patch of algae or other plant matter.

The ELMA has an approximate cost of just under \$10 and has increased safety; readings from lagoons are more consistent and representative of the lagoon as a whole; and time spent on site has been reduced enabling operators to spend more time on system performance optimisation and other operational activities.

The 2020 PASS awards had 11 great ideas submitted for consideration with entries from Victoria, NSW and Queensland. Aqualift Project Delivery provides sponsorship for the winner to join the WIOA team on the annual operational tour of New Zealand.

Kwatye Award

Jordin Payne and Jessica Wilson

Water Corporation, Western Australia

The winner of the 2020 Kwatye Award was announced on 9 September 2020 with the support of new sponsor TRILITY. Our congratulations are extended to Jordin Payne and Jessica Wilson from Water Corporation in Western Australia.

Jordin Payne

Jordin is a proud Nimanburr woman and traditional owner from Broome Western Australia with family ties to Yawuru, Djugun, Nyul Nyul and Bardi families on the Mid Dampier Peninsula. Jordin specialises in engagement with Aboriginal language groups, strategic communications, social license and relationship building.

Jessica Wilson

As Senior Advisor - Customer and Stakeholder North West Region for Water Corporation, Jess delivers communications and stakeholder engagement for the North West Region of Australia. She coordinates the Kimberley Grants Program and plays a significant role in maintaining positive relationships with language groups through the region.

Their project titled Aboriginal Community Services, North West Operations was a first of its kind for Water Corporation that went beyond traditional cultural awareness training into tailored localised water learning.

Participants from the Kimberley and Pilbara regions were guided by cultural elders and traditional owners on Country in three separate sessions to learn about water stories, ways of knowing water, water management and truth telling.

The sessions empowered employees with local cultural water knowledge to allow them to navigate their spaces with respect and appreciation for Aboriginal ways of knowing and their ongoing connection to water and country.

The program looks beyond the initial sessions into genuine collaborative partnerships that reinforce positive relationships and continue the water learning in the towns the operators and trades teams live, work and care for.

As winner of the Kwatye award, Jordin and Jessica were provided the opportunity to donate the \$1,000 prize to the charity or program of their choice. Feed the Little Children was chosen as the recipient of the donation that was provided on behalf of the award sponsor, TRILITY.

**FEED the Little
CHILDREN inc.**



Australians are renowned for coming together to provide help and support for each other during times of need, and we all know that 2020 has been one of the toughest years experienced by us all.

With that in mind, WIOA with the support of award sponsor TRILITY, created a new Spirit of Australia Award to recognise WIOA members who demonstrate the Australian spirit of mateship. The compassion and unconditional kindness of these members who have supported others during these challenging times was acknowledged with one winner awarded in each state.



New South Wales Jill Busch Aqualift Project Delivery

Jill's support and dedication to many water industry areas of interest has continued to see her championing issues including; operator education & mentoring, water quality management, reservoirs impacted by Telcos, diversity and inclusion.



Northern Territory Jethro Laidlaw Power & Water

Jethro identified an opportunity to empower students in remote aboriginal communities and raise awareness of aboriginal cultural values about water throughout the NT, while helping customers and colleagues learn more about the challenge of providing essential services in remote aboriginal communities.



Queensland Bill Collie Urban Utilities

Bill is a caring leader and is supportive of everyone, both at work and at home. Bill is very active in the Urban Utilities wellbeing programs and introduced a free physiotherapy service for all operators and other staff requiring this kind of treatment.



South Australia Matthew Gulliver TRILITY

Matt genuinely has the best interest of his neighbours and community at heart, and always looks to help those in need. After the bushfires, he helped collect and distribute preloved tools to the charity "Tools for blokes" and he donated hay from his property along with signing up to help Blaze Aid by donating his farming skills.



Tasmania Damien Lavelle TasWater

Damien has been a long-time contributor to both the water industry and his local community including as a mentor of young and upcoming operators and through his involvement in local football as a player, coach and committee member.



Victoria David Dickson North East Water

David is a selfless worker who puts the community and his team ahead of himself. This was shown during the fires that devastated the North East of Victoria. During these times David managed to keep the loss of water supply to a minimum, maintaining water quality and keeping his staff safe despite his own new home being under threat of the fire.



Western Australia Jessica Wilson Water Corporation

Jessica worked tirelessly in coming up with an initiative and facilitating its delivery - a one-off, additional round of funding to support those at need. The funding of \$100,000 went towards a range of COVID-19 relief projects including wellbeing support such as community food packs, PPE, health supplies and other support packs.

Publications



Practical Guides

The Practical Guide to the Operation and Optimisation of Microfiltration and Ultrafiltration Membrane Processes authored by Kathy Northcott, Greg Creek and Peter Mosse was completed in December and will be available for sale in early 2021.

The membranes practical guide joins the range of other guides for water and wastewater treatment covering aspects from the catchment to the tap. The books are available to the entire industry and provide real value for an exceptional resource. All practical guides have been produced by water industry experts, with significant practical operational experience in Australia.

Practical Guides to Water Treatment

- Practical Guide to Understanding and Managing Surface Water Catchments
- Practical Guide to the Optimisation of Chemical Dosing, Coagulation, Flocculation and Clarification
- Practical Guide to Operation & Optimisation of Media Filters
- Practical Guide to the Operation and Optimisation of Chlorine and Chloramine Disinfection
- Practical Guide to Operation & Optimisation of Distribution Systems
- Practical Guide to the Operation and Optimisation of Microfiltration and Ultrafiltration Membrane Processes

Practical Guides to Wastewater Treatment

- Practical Guide to the Odour Control in Sewage Transport Systems
- Practical Guide to the Operation and Optimisation of Activated Sludge Wastewater Treatment Plants

WaterWorks Technical Publication

WaterWorks is the technical publication of the Association which is distributed in hard copy to all members in May and November annually. A copy of WaterWorks is also provided to all WIOA conference delegates and exhibitors. The technical articles published have a distinctly operational and practical focus. There is also an opportunity for our Corporate Members to supply a limited amount of advertorial material.

With a large distribution to water industry employees, WaterWorks is a valuable vehicle to publish operationally focussed articles to share vital information across the sector.

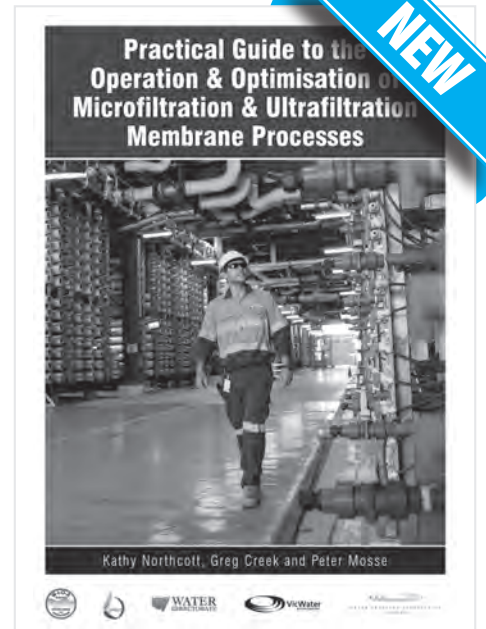
Operator Newsletter

After 60 editions in the current format the quarterly printed Operator newsletter provided to all members was redesigned in August with a fresh new look that now includes advertising opportunities.

Operator includes individual and corporate member news, general interest stories, water industry news and more. Produced in February, May, August and November annually, it is an effective way of keeping the WIOA community in touch with industry developments.

Words

Words is WIOA's monthly electronic newsletter which includes short updates on training, positions vacant and other items of general interest to members, relating to WIOA activities and the operational side of the water industry.



The search for the Best Tasting Tap Water in Australia

With the support of IXOM as our taste test sponsor and in the absence of face to face events, WIOA was excited to be able to host the 2020 Best Tasting Tap Water competitions in conjunction with the Live Days on our Virtual Water platform.

The Ixom water taste test competitions are a fun way for WIOA and the industry to raise awareness of the hard work that our operational staff do behind the scenes to ensure a safe and high quality drinking water supply is available to communities all around Australia.

Using a blind taste test approach, the WIOA staff and some committee members replaced event participants as judges and undertook the difficult task of selecting the winners with the samples judged on colour, clarity, odour and taste.



NSW/ACT

**Port Macquarie Hastings Council
Wauchope WTP**
Source - Hastings River

The Port Macquarie Hastings Council team treats the water from the Hastings River and supplies around 13,000 residents in Wauchope.

The Wauchope WTP was constructed in 2007 to meet the growing demands of the Wauchope Water Supply System. The bulk water prior to the treatment plant consists of raw water conditioning for hardness and pH with Lime & Carbon Dioxide dosing and the addition of Fluorosilicic Acid for dental health.

The Water Treatment Plant is an Ultra Filtration (UF) Submerged Membrane Plant with disinfection prior to the water being sent into the distribution network. The current plant capacity is 7ML/d and is currently undergoing a significant upgrade to increase the capacity to 21ML/d.

Grand Finalists

- Icon Water - Mt Stromlo WTP
- Murray River Council - Mathoura WTP
- Port Macquarie Hastings Council - Wauchope WTP



South Australia

**SA Water
Woolpunda WTP**
Source - Murray River

SA Water's Woolpunda Treatment Plant is situated 170 km north-west of Adelaide and is staffed by a single operator, who monitors performance and performs maintenance tasks to deliver around 700,000 litres of water a day to towns including Wunkar and Mantung.

Woolpunda is one of SA Water's smaller sites both in physical size and supply area, providing water to less than 800 people through more than 240 kilometres of pipe to land located up to 50 km from the plant.

Water is treated with chloramine, a disinfection method particularly suited to long networks with lower numbers of customer connections, meaning the water takes longer to get to properties and a higher water age.

Woolpunda WTP sources and treats raw water from the Murray River.

Grand Finalists

- SA Water - Morgan WTP
- SA Water - Woolpunda WTP
- TRILITY - Berri WTP



Tasmania

**TasWater/TRILITY
Rossarden WTP**
Source - Aberfoyle Creek

Eighteen water treatment plants from every part of Tasmania were put to the test, with the top three making their way into the Grand Final. Ultimately, it was the sample from the Rossarden Water Treatment Plant that was announced as the winner of the prestigious award.

The raw water is sourced from the Aberfoyle Creek off the back of Ben Lomond Mountain and gravitates to the treatment plant via a 3.4 kilometre pipeline.

The Rossarden Water Treatment Plant was built by TasWater as part of the 24 glasses Regional Towns Water Supply Program. It utilises ultra filtration membranes and a Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) filter that removes chemicals and odour from the water which helps contribute to its taste. Once treated, the drinking water is then stored in a new service reservoir ahead of being pumped to Rossarden's residents.

Grand Finalists

- TasWater - Bryn Estyn WTP
- TasWater - Mole Creek WTP
- TasWater/TRILITY - Rossarden WTP



Victoria

Lower Murray Water Mildura WTP

Source - Murray River

The Mildura water supply system consists of two water treatment plants, Mildura 7th Street and Mildura West, which serve a total population of 47,913 in Mildura and surrounding rural residential areas.

The system draws its water from the Murray River from within the Mildura weir pool. The 86.4 ML/day Low Lift Pump Station delivers water directly to an 80 ML/day Treatment Plant.

The treatment plant consists of coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, clarification, filtration, chlorination, pH correction, fluoridation and PAC dosing steps. Treated water is supplied fed to the reticulation system through a series of reservoirs, two of which are trim chlorinated

Grand Finalists

- Gippsland Water - Traralgon WTP
- Lower Murray Water - Mildura WTP
- Westernport Water - Candowie Reservoir



Western Australia

Water Corporation Yalgoo WTP

Source - Bore water

Yalgoo is primarily supplied by 3 bores. The treatment process involves multimedia filter, Electro Dialysis Reversal (EDR) treatment for nitrate removal and an ion-exchange media filter for arsenic removal. Chlorine is dosed for oxidation prior to the multimedia filter to assist in the removal of arsenic. A portion of water bypasses the EDR to reach a desired blend. Water is stored in the Clearwater tank, chlorinated and supplied to the town site.

Electro Dialysis Reversal is a low-pressure technique where ions migrate through ion-conducting membranes due to the passage of DC electric current. Feedwater requirements for EDR are generally less stringent than that for RO, ultrafiltration and nanofiltration as it is not a filtration process. During EDR divalent ions experience a greater force in the electric field of an electrolysis cell and tend to be removed at a higher rate than monovalent ions.

Grand Finalists

- Aqwest - Bunbury WTP
- Busselton Water - Busselton WTP
- Water Corporation - Yalgoo WTP



Queensland

Livingstone Shire Council Woodbury WTP

Source - Water Park Creek

With the taste test competition conducted by **qldwater**, water from a pristine dunal water system at Water Park Creek and treated at Livingstone Shire Council's Woodbury Water Treatment Plant has been selected Queensland's top drop.

Water Park Creek Weir is a small 1.3m high concrete weir located on Water Park Creek. The weir has been the primary source of water for the Capricorn Coast from Yeppoon to Emu Park.

Water is pumped from the weir to Kelly's Storage which is adjacent to the Woodbury Water Treatment Plant which processes the Capricorn Coast water supplies.



Australia's Best Tasting Tap Water

Water from the Rossarden Water Treatment Plant in Tasmania has taken out the top prize in WIOA Ixom's Best Tasting Tap Water in Australia competition.

The Rossarden Water Treatment Plant, which is run in partnership with water services provider TRILITY, beat the other State competition winners from around the country to win the coveted award.

TasWater Senior Water System Optimisation Scientist and WIOA Tasmanian Advisory Committee Chair, Stephen Westgate said "It is a great result for the community and is particularly pleasing because Rossarden was part of our 24glasses Regional Towns Water Supply Program. The goal of the program was to bring potable water to many small Tasmanian towns. The Rossarden plant was completed in 2018. Before that, the town was on a Boil Water Alert".

The plant services around 110 connections and uses a modern multibarrier approach that incorporates UF filtration, granular activated carbon, calcite remineralisation and disinfection via sodium hypochlorite.

Raw water is fed from Aberfoyle Creek and pre-treated through a self-backwashing 100 µm screen before passing through 2 ultrafiltration membrane units in parallel.

Ultra-filtered water is then fed to Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) and calcite contactors to reduce excess dissolved organics and increase hardness in the final water. UV transmissivity (UVT) is measured on the outlet of the GAC filter to indicate when the GAC filter media has exhausted.

Treated water from the calcite contactor is then dosed with sodium hypochlorite before being discharged into the Clear Water Storage (CWS).

The award recognises our engineers and scientists' excellent work in delivering great-tasting, safe, and reliable drinking water to Tasmania's regional communities.

Rossarden's water will now go up against global competition in the International Best Tasting Tap Water Competition in West Virginia next year. More on TasWater's 24glasses Regional Towns Water Supply Program is at:

www.24glasses.com.au

24glasses



Second Best Water in the World

It is official - Mackay not only has the best tasting water in Australia in 2019, but it also the second best in the world.

The decision was handed down in February 2020 at the 30th Annual Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting competition in West Virginia, USA, when Mackay's H2O came runner up to Desert Hot Springs, California.

Mackay Regional Council's Director of Engineering and Community Infrastructure Jason Devitt was there with Water Treatment Manager Stuart Boyd, and said it was a tough competition against 18 of the world's best. "We were only one vote behind California, so it was very, very close," he said. "It was a really good result. I would've been very happy with anything in top five so to get second, I'm very pleased with that." Beating out over 100 waters from across the globe over three days (from February 20), the final 19 entrants were judged by a panel of 15 on Sunday, on their clarity, taste and odour.

There was also a community element, where locals were invited to try out the water samples themselves and make their own judgments. "Stuart and I had a go at that ourselves. It was really tough. There was lots of good, quality water," Mr Devitt said. "We always thought our water was pretty good but to be up there with the best, we could never have expected or anticipated where we would come."

Despite Australia having yet to win the grand prize, an Aussie water has now won second place for the third time - with Wannon Water and their tap water from Hamilton Water Treatment Plant in Victoria finishing second in 2019 and Marysville Water from Victoria placing second in 2016. Mr Devitt said the silver medal was all about ensuring Mackay locals knew just how "high quality" the tap water was after the "amount of regulation" and the cheapness compared to bottled water.

He also commended the "unsung heroes" at the Marian treatment plant for their tireless efforts in providing "safe, reliable water" year-round.

Frequently Asked Questions



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

You can join by completing and submitting an application form, (which doubles as a Tax Invoice) with your payment to WIOA. There is an application form in the back of this booklet and more forms can be downloaded from the WIOA website.

WIOA has three membership categories, Individual, Corporate and Utility Corporate. The fees are \$40 (individual), \$300 (Corporate) and \$40 per member (Utility Corporate - must have 8 members or pay a minimum of \$300 to be eligible for this category). Payment can be made by cash, cheque, money order, credit card (Visa & Mastercard only) or by EFT. Payment can also be made in person at any Westpac branch using the BSB/account details from your invoice.

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

The membership year runs from 1 January to 31 December annually. A pro-rata membership fee is available, but only to Corporate members joining after 1 July annually. Individual members joining after 1 September annually receive the balance of that year plus all of the next calendar year for their \$40 fee.

What benefits do I receive as an Individual Member?

- New member pack on sign up
- WaterWorks Technical publication twice per year
- Operator newsletter quarterly
- Words, WIOA's electronic newsletter monthly
- Notification of events, seminars and conferences plus positions vacant and wanted adverts
- New product or equipment brochures from Corporate members
- Updates on industry developments including training
- Updates on technical resources specifically aimed at the operational side of the industry
- Access to webinars
- Discounted registration fees to WIOA events
- Application forms for various industry Awards

What benefits do I receive as a Corporate Member?

Corporate Members receive all the items listed above plus:

- Discounted exhibition fees at WIOA conferences
- Rights of individual membership is afforded to the nominated person only
- Company details listed in the Corporate member section of the WIOA website
- Access to WIOA members via product brochure mail outs with only a small postage fee
- Editorial promotional space in "Words", "Operator" or possibly "WaterWorks"
- Recognition at the Annual Conferences
- Preference given to Corporate members for mini trade shows at specific issues seminars
- Copies of the WIOA handbook to distribute

What benefits do I receive as a Utility Corporate Member?

Utility Corporate Membership is open to all employers of water industry Operators. This category allows employers of operators to join up and pay for their operational staff to be individual members and they will receive all the benefits of an individual member. The employer will receive a free corporate membership as well as member registration rates for all staff attending events.

What events does WIOA run?

Annual Conferences

WIOA organises and annually stages an operationally focussed Conference and Exhibition in Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. These major events are designed to provide an opportunity for operations personnel and product and service supplier companies to come together to discuss operational issues and see and hear about advances in technology and process methodologies.

Special Interest Seminars

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

Water Taste Tests

WIOA holds a number of Water Taste Test competitions across Australia, including a National competition, to raise awareness of the quality of drinking water and to recognise the efforts of local water service providers in delivering valuable water services to their communities on a day to day basis.

Charity Events

WIOA holds several charity events such as bowls and golf days across Australia with proceeds donated to charity. In recent years we have also sold hats and collected money for charity via raffles at our events. To date we have distributed more than \$140,000 to worthy charities.

I have an operational problem, can WIOA help?

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

How do I update my Member details or website listing?

All members can update their contact or other personal details by contacting the WIOA office at any time.

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

WIOA has a Privacy Policy which is available from the WIOA website. This policy outlines what information will be collected from Members, how it will be used and under what circumstances. WIOA has a policy of not providing personal details to anyone without prior approval from the Member.

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

WIOA members can choose to receive all correspondence either electronically (by email) or by hard copy (via Australia Post). Sending information by email is more environmentally friendly, efficient, cost effective and is WIOA's preferred method.

If you wish to receive information electronically, you can indicate this on the Membership application form. If you are an existing member and would like to change to email, contact us and we will update your mail preference.

I have a position vacant, can WIOA advertise it?

WIOA will place all relevant Position Vacant advertisements onto the WIOA website free of charge.

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

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

How do I obtain a copy of the WIOA Constitution?

The Constitution is included on our website and can be accessed at: <http://wioa.org.au/about-wioa/constitution-rules-of-association/>

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

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

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

The Committee is elected by the Members at the AGM annually and if you wish to be considered, just complete and return the Committee Nomination form which usually comes out each January. We have established Advisory Committees in Tasmania, Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia to assist us to run our various events. If you don't want to be on the national Committee but would like to help out, just contact us and we can put you in touch with your State based group.

Membership Form



Water Industry Operators Association of Australia MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL 2021

Inc ABN 27 302 677 808

THIS FORM WILL BECOME A TAX INVOICE ON RECEIPT OF PAYMENT. PLEASE RETAIN A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.

Date: ____/____/____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

Please tick the appropriate box

☐ **Individual Membership \$40 (inc. GST)**

☐ **Corporate Membership \$300 (inc. GST)**

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Name: Mr / Ms

Postal Address

(Individual members please provide your private mailing address.)

Suburb State Postcode

Date of Birth DD MM YEAR

Employer

Position

Telephone Fax

Mobile phone

E-mail

In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the Rules of the Association. A copy of the Rules can be found on the WIOA website.

Signature

WIOA encourage the use of electronic correspondence to reduce paper wastage.

I wish to receive correspondence by E-mail in preference to Post

☐ Yes

☐ No

PAYMENT OPTIONS

EFT BANKING DETAILS ☐

BSB: 033-254

A/C: 327-012

Amount: Individual \$40 or Corporate \$300

The following must be included on your payment:

- New members: Full name
- Renewing members: Invoice number and name

CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard (Diners Club and Amex are not accepted)

1% Administration Fee on all credit card payments

Cardholders Name

Card Number _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

Expiry Date: ____ / ____

Amount (please circle): **\$40.40 / \$303.00** (Including 1% Admin Fee)

Signature:

RETURN BY: Post PO Box 6012, Shepparton, Victoria, 3632 **Fax** 03 5821 6033 **Email** sherryn@wioa.org.au

2021

Office Use Only

☐ New

☐ Renewal

Date Paid: ____ / ____ / ____

Rec No:



VIRTUAL WATER PRESENTERS





Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA)

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Vision

To be the leading industry association promoting excellence in water industry operations.

Mission

To develop and support people in water industry operations.

Values

- Integrity
- Being safe
- Professionalism and consistency
- Innovation & sustainability
- Recognition and celebration of achievements
- Open, honest and timely communications
- Supportive behaviour and respect