

WATER MATTERS

VICTORIAN WATER INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION NEWS

Volume 6 Issue 1 Summer 2005

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Due dates: 15 January, 15 April, 15 July and 15 October or call T: (03) 9639 8868

YARRA VALLEY WATER *rewarded*

Yarra Valley Water has been honoured with "Best Change Management" Award at the Australian Human Resources Awards together with winning the 'Best Implementation of Risk Strategy' and 'Best Information Technology Security Strategy' Awards at the recent Australian Risk Management Awards.

Success at the prestigious Australian HR awards recognised Yarra Valley Water's success in implementing a strategic change plan over the last three years to develop a high performing business culture that supports continuous improvement across the business. Yarra Valley Water Managing Director Tony Kelly said 'staff are more in tune with the company objectives and they have more autonomy in their jobs, which means they have better jobs and they have more control over the service they provide to their customers and they are more productive. And there have been dramatic improvements in the level of trust between the management and the staff, as well as the unions'.

Success at the Australian Risk Management Awards demonstrated that Yarra Valley Water had achieved Best Practice in Corporate Governance and Risk Management. The key areas of excellence included: sustainable

performance; application of risk management in practical and tangible areas; positive impact on organisational culture and excellent use of technology. Yarra Valley Water's Managing Director Tony Kelly said 'that the management of risk is critical for any business and requires judgement and trade-offs. The processes we have introduced and adopted across our business to manage risk, and protect our systems, we expect will enable us to minimise our loss exposure and maximise our opportunities'.

Yarra Valley Water was the first utility in Australia to gain certification to the internationally recognised Information Security Management Systems (ISMS) standard AS/NZS 7799.2:2003. This was an unprecedented step in the industry. Mr Kelly said, 'The challenge for all businesses is being able to implement and show our customers that we have done everything necessary to protect our information assets.'

Anyone wanting to know more about Yarra Valley Water's Risk Management or Human Resources systems is encouraged to visit www.yvw.com.au or contact Cheryl West, Media Manager Yarra Valley Water on 0412 514 946 or 9872 1301



Left to Right: Julie Mauka, HF; Tony Kelly, Managing Director and Tracy Busse, HF

“from
the CEO’s
desk”



I am very pleased to be able to present my first CEO’s report for VicWater. For those that don’t know me I have been in the water industry for over 30 years and commenced my career with the then State Rivers and Water Supply Commission.

Over the years I have worked at six offices in Melbourne, Frankston and northern and western Victoria with most of the moves being a result of significant restructures within the industry. In recent years I have been heavily involved with VicWater’s Financial Issues Steering Committee and have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to assist in the policy development at an industry level.

I look forward to continuing the good work that is performed by VicWater and aim to provide ongoing assistance to the member businesses.

Current Issues:

- ◆ We were all saddened by the Asian tsunami disaster and would like to extend our sympathy to all the families who have directly suffered as a result of those events. I have been extremely impressed by the remarkable response from the industry with the offers of assistance. All concerned are to be commended.
- ◆ The Board of the Association has received and considered the final report and recommendations arising from the Review of VicWater’s role and the structure of the Board. The final report has been prepared by Ken Northwood of Northwood Blyth and has been circulated to Council members.
- ◆ At its next meeting on 24 February 2005, the Council will be asked to discuss the report and vote on the recommendations made. Full details of the adopted recommendations will be presented in the next issue of Water Matters.
- ◆ One of our Project Officers, Jason Walker has accepted a Performance Analyst position with the Essential Services Commission and will be working in the area of ‘electricity’ (not water!). Jason has spent two years with VicWater and has made a significant contribution in the preparation of the performance report ‘Victorian Water Review’, the Financial Issues Task Group, the Sustainability Task Group, the Safe Drinking Water Task Group and provided Secretarial services to ARWA.

I am sure that you all join me in thanking Jason for his contribution and wishing him well in his new career.

There is no doubt that 2005 will be yet another year of important change for the industry, and one in which the Victorian Water Industry Association will play a valuable role. I look forward to working with you all as part of that process.

VICTORIAN WATER BUSINESSES RESPOND TO TSUNAMI DISASTER

In light of Asia’s recent tsunami, Victorian water businesses in conjunction with the Minister for Water’s office have been assessing what assistance could be provided in response to the Tsunami disaster.

In late December, Melbourne Water contacted most businesses and commenced compiling a list of technical, field and engineering staff and other equipment that could be used to support a possible response team.

Over the following couple of weeks, information was sought from all Victorian water businesses to try and identify the level of assistance that could be provided. The response from businesses and individual employees has been remarkable and is a credit to the industry. In about two weeks approximately 90 people have indicated their willingness to provide overseas assistance and many people were on

leave when the request was initially made. The list continues to grow as staff return from leave. An extensive list of available equipment has also been established.

In relation to the industry’s response for assistance, VicWater is the central contact point and we are working closely with the Victorian Emergency Services Commissioner who coordinates all Victorian efforts on behalf of the State Government. The Commissioner maintains close contact with the Federal Government’s Australian Emergency Management Council and AusAid.

The Australian Emergency Management Council is aware of the possible assistance available from the Victorian water industry and will forward any request for assistance via the Emergency Services Commissioner and the Victorian government.

The response from the industry has been outstanding and it is now a matter of waiting for a request to be received through the official channels before any further action is taken. Until that request is received we will continue to refine the information that has been gathered and ensure that the industry is as ready as possible to provide assistance when required.

WaterAid Australia is also working very closely with World Vision, Oxfam and other agencies to ascertain what is required to rebuild water and sanitation services for the medium to long-term, once the initial emergency needs are attended to over the next few weeks. Donations are being accepted through the website www.wateraid.org.au

THE INAUGURAL BALANCED SCORECARD FORUM

Western Water is hosting a Water Industry Balanced Scorecard Forum on the 18th February at 10am in Gisborne.

Attendees include Yarra Valley Water, MetroWater, North East Water and SA Water. If anyone is interested in sharing information, please contact Julie Green,

General Manager Commercial Services at Western Water on 03 5421 9440 or mobile 041 958 2576.

WATER INDUSTRY GUIDE TO SEWER SPILLS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY RELEASED

VicWater has released the Water Industry Guide Water Industry Guide on Sewer Spills on Private Property. The guide has been developed as a means of providing members with guidance towards good practice through shared learning. Furthermore the guide has been developed to ensure an appropriate level of service and compassion is delivered to customers that are impacted by sewer spills on private property.

The Guide should be read in conjunction with the relevant policies of your water business. In addition to water businesses policies, reference to the forthcoming regulatory requirements of the ESC's Draft Urban Water Customer Service Code and requirements of this code will also require consideration by urban water businesses.

VicWater developed the Guide in consultation with Victorian urban water

businesses and external stakeholders including the Department of Human Services, EPA Victoria and the Energy and Water Ombudsman (Victoria) (EWOV).

The guide is available online on the VicWater website at www.vicwater.org.au (Click on resources>industry guides).

INTERIM REGULATIONS AND CODES OF PRACTICE FOR THE ROAD MANAGEMENT ACT 2004

Interim regulations under the Road Management Act 2004 have been made by the Governor-in-Council and come into operation on 1 January 2005. The Regulations are as follows:

Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) (Interim) Regulations 2004 - these regulations provide for some exemptions to notification and consent required under the Act for utilities and responsible road authorities, restrictions on conditions of consent that can be imposed by a coordinating road authority and fees payable for consent applications.

Road Management (General) (Interim) Regulations 2004 - these regulations replace the Transport (Roads and Property) Regulations 1993 and Road Management (Interim) Regulations 2004. The scope of these Regulations include the review of road management plans, notices of incidents, property enquiry processing fees and protection of VicRoads property. The Regulations will expire on 30 June 2005.

The Regulations can be found by at:

www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf?OpenDatabase

Codes of Practice have also been made to provide practical guidance for road management by road authorities and the conduct of works managers, infrastructure managers and providers of public transport. The Codes were developed in consultation with key stakeholders. The Codes of Practice are Operational Responsibility for Public Roads; Management of Road and Utility Infrastructure in Road Reserves; Worksite Safety - Traffic Management; Road Management Plans; and Clearways on Declared Arterial Roads. The Internet site for these codes is www.craftpress.com.au/gazette/GazArchFrame.htm

SOUTH EAST WATER WINS ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

South East Water has won the 2004 Australian National Electrical Communications Association "Environmental Excellence Award" for its Blok-Aid program that helps to reduce potential environmental hazards from sewer and stormwater overflows. Blok-Aid is a revolutionary device that enables the detection and notification of

potential spills from storm water systems and sewer mains. This product is available to Government, Commercial and Industrial businesses and can be employed to detect potential spills in all pipe systems. For more information contact Tim Holder on 9552 3772 or tim.holder@sewl.com.au



FORMER VICWATER CHAIRMAN JOINS DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

Russell Cooper, who was Chairman of VicWater in 2000/2001, has joined Deakin University as their Director of Water Research.

He was the founding CEO of South East Water, when the former Melbourne Water was disaggregated in 1994.

Russell was most recently the Australian CEO for the French owned SUEZ group. His responsibilities at SUEZ included Australian Water Services, which owns and operates Sydney Water's major filtration plant at Prospect, and SITA Environmental Solutions, Australia's second largest solid waste collection company.

The role of Director Water Research at Deakin University is a part-time position that will allow Russell to seek some Non-Executive Director positions in Industry sectors where he has had some experience. Prior to joining South East Water, Russell was



General Manager of Email Electronics which manufactured telemetry systems, petrol pumps and computer software.

Deakin University has had an active involvement with the Water Industry for some time and across the 3 major

campuses of Burwood, Geelong and Warrnambool, the research portfolio encompasses –

- ◆ Sustainable catchments & landscapes
- ◆ Wastewater treatment
- ◆ Biosolids management
- ◆ Trade waste treatment in-situ
- ◆ Water reuse
- ◆ GIS for water resources and salinity management
- ◆ Aquatic ecology
- ◆ Public health & managing community perceptions

Russell will be meeting with the Water Industry to determine how these current research areas can be expanded as well as determining new research priorities for the future. His contact details at Deakin are – *Mobile: 0417 392109, E-mail: russell.cooper@deakin.edu.au*

MUSEUM VICTORIA CELEBRATES WATER

To celebrate National Water Week 2004, Museum Victoria developed an impressive program of water related events and activities throughout October and November to engage visitors with the importance of water, along with innovative and easy solutions to save water around the home.

Activities at Melbourne Museum included the specially developed Water Smart Home interactive, giant melting ice capsules, tours of innovative water smart homes throughout Melbourne and a Greywater Forum. Water celebrations at Scienceworks included Max Muck's Stormwater Experience, the House Secrets exhibition and Pumping Station tours throughout National Water Week.

The Water Smart Home Interactive, launched on 17 October 2004, is a fun-filled and informative exhibit designed to encourage visitors to reconsider the way they use water in and around the home. Featuring a model of a house, the interactive invites

visitors to save water inside and outside the home. The more correct decisions they make regarding water use, the more water they save, and visitors can see their results in an enthralling water sculpture that is activated each time water is saved.

This display also features important water saving information, leading innovations in water saving technologies plus a selection of inspiring examples of water saving homes across Melbourne. These include simple strategies to collect and re-use water in the home and garden, the development of an eco-village in inner Melbourne, and a family that aims to reduce their water consumption by 90%.

A website has also been developed, located at www.museum.vic.gov.au/watersmarthome that features 14 examples of leading water smart homes and urban developments from across Melbourne, key resources and links to other water saving sites.

The Water Smart Home Interactive is a long-term installation at the Melbourne Museum, and is included in the admission price.

L-R, National Water Week Official Party viewing the Water Smart Home Interactive.



NATIONAL WATER WEEK 2004

The Hon John Landy, AC, MBE, Governor of Victoria & NWW Patron launched National Water Week 2004 reminding us all that we should heed the NWW message of *Water for Life – Protect, Conserve and Get Involved!* not only during periods of drought and restrictions, but when rainfall returns to its average levels. "We can all make a difference and it is so easy to do."

Over 120 people participated in the launch at the Melbourne Museum and had the opportunity to meet the Governor of Victoria, the Minister for Water (The Hon John Thwaites MP), and Tammy van Wisse (marathon swimmer & NWW Spokesperson).

Tammy van Wisse, marathon swimmer & NWW Spokesperson; The Hon John Landy, AC, MBE, Governor of Victoria & NWW Patron; & Hon John Thwaites MP, Minister for Water; with the winners of the National Water Week competitions.



Many families attended the day, many of whom watched proudly as their children received certificates and prizes in recognition of their success in the National Water Week Competitions. Congratulations to the following students:

POSTER COMPETITION

Danika Andrew, Nangiloc & District Primary School (Mallee CMA)

Chloe Martin, St Mary's Primary School (Grampians Wimmer Mallee)

Amy Bland, Knox Park Primary School (South East Water)

Maddie Symons, Merri Creek Primary School (City West Water)

Emilka Firus, Swifts Creek Primary School (East Gippsland Water)

Tamika Hunter, Coimadai Primary School (Western Water)



Hon John Thwaites MP, Minister for Water at the launch of National Water Week 2005 at the Melbourne Museum.

WRITING COMPETITION

Ebony Hardy, Traralgon Secondary College (Gippsland Water)

Lahna Bradley, Lakes Entrance Secondary College (East Gippsland Water)

Boden Hurst, Mallacoota P -12 College (East Gippsland Water)

Kristen Brehaut, Bairnsdale Secondary College (East Gippsland Water)

Many other events were held across the State, including Water Olympics, river cruises, art displays, wetland tours, twilight river walks, fishing competitions, catchment bus tours, film nights, trivia nights, theatre performances, science presentations, and many Water Watch activities.

The launch was hosted by Melbourne Museum, who also launched their Water Smart Home Installation.

WATER MAP OF MELBOURNE

Released in October 2004, The Water Map of Melbourne is an exciting product containing extensive detail about the use of water within Greater Melbourne, encouraging young people – and the wider community – to think about the water issues facing Melbourne. It captures Melbourne's water history, water supply and treatment infrastructure, and water saving and recycling initiatives. The Map (paper version 130cm x 90cm) and interactive CD ROM were developed by Earth Systems with the support of the Smart Water Fund. Additional support was provided by EPA Victoria and the City of Melbourne.

The Water Map of Melbourne comprises both a spatial and a non-spatial component (accompanying charts and tables), and aims to increase awareness and knowledge of the issues, achievements and impacts associated with water use across Greater Melbourne. In an easily digestible form on two media - paper map and CD ROM, it highlights achievements, current issues and future directions.

The Water Map of Melbourne is a resource for all those with an interest in Melbourne's use of water and the life cycle of water in a city - including professionals needing a ready reference for key water trends, statistics

and noteworthy events, and students wanting information about major issues facing Melbourne's future water resource management and use.

A copy of the map and CD will be distributed to all Melbourne schools, and additional copies can be ordered from www.earthsystems.com.au/map.



TRAINING AND OH&S MATTERS

2004 closed with a number of new training initiatives either completed or well advanced. The *Course in Water Industry Construction Site Supervision* was accredited by the Victorian Qualifications Authority on the 21st of December. Accreditation is from 1 Jan 2005 - 31 Dec 2009 and VicWater would like to thank all who were involved in the development of this course, particularly the Curriculum Maintenance Manager for the water industry, Alexandra Mannell who was also the Project Manager.

Industry input was undertaken by a number of people but special mention must go to John Flett of Training Services, Goulburn-Murray Water, Tony Smith of East Gippsland Water and Chair of the OH&S Network and Peter Cations of Thiess Services. It is expected that the Course will be made available through Training Services in 2005. If you are interested in

undertaking this new course please contact John Flett of Training Services, Goulburn-Murray Water on 5824 2832.

The *Trade Waste Course* which is a joint initiative of the EPA and the National Centre for Sustainability at Swinburne University is nearing completion with the Hatlar Group as project contractors working closely with the *Industry Reference Group* which includes Trevor Hayes of Western Water, Lidia Harvey of Melbourne Water, Adam Polkinghorne of Barwon Water, Jason McGregor of Central Highlands Water, Wayne Pell of Goulburn Valley Water, Peter Chamberlain of South East Water and Paul O'Brien of VicWater. It is expected that the Course will be piloted early in 2005. Please contact Paul O'Brien at VicWater on 9639 8868 if you are interested.

On the OH&S front, the VicRoads *Code of Practice on Roadside Worksite*

Safety was gazetted on 22 December 2004. WorkSafe is undertaking site inspections to ensure compliance with the Code under the title of SWAT-Safety for Workers and Traffic. A Sub-Committee of the Government Reference Group is currently looking at issues around training of traffic management workers, with VicWater representing the water industry on both the Government Reference Group and the Training Sub-Committee.

The OHS Network, ably chaired by Tony Smith of East Gippsland Water, is to commence a project to identify, assess and develop a CD-ROM capturing 30 - 40 of our most *common hazardous manual handling hazards*. The project will be self-funded by the Victorian water industry with most water businesses participating. The next meeting of the OH&S Network has been scheduled to take place in conjunction with the *Safety in Action Conference* on 22 March 2005.

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TASK GROUP TOPICS

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT TASK GROUP

Following the release of the 2003/04 Victorian Water Review, the Performance Measurement Task Group will be conducting a review of the performance report in early 2005. Given the future reporting role of the Essential Services Commission (ESC) it is important that a review be conducted to assess its future role and identify opportunities for future reporting needs of the water industry.

FINANCE ISSUES STEERING COMMITTEE

FISC is continuing its negotiations with the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) and the Victorian Auditor General's Office in trying to resolve the long standing issue over asset valuations and determining whether an entity is "for profit or not for profit".

SUSTAINABILITY TASK GROUP

In December 2004 the Sustainability Task Group held an Annual Report Debrief Seminar to identify areas where the Task Group could assist the water businesses in improving future sustainability/TBL reports. Arthur E Delbridge, Director of the Australasian Reporting Awards also presented at the seminar on the contents of an effective annual report.

The seminar was important as it identified areas where the Sustainability Task Group could assist water businesses in their sustainability/TBL reports. The seminar identified:

- ◆ Not all water businesses were aware of the VicWater TBL Guidelines
- ◆ Guidance was required on how to produce a Sustainability Report
- ◆ The Task Group could provide a template/guidance on the content of a Sustainability Report
- ◆ A need to update VicWater TBL Guidelines

The Sustainability Task Group is currently assessing the feasibility of running a 2 day training course for the water industry on sustainability. The training course is proposed to cover a

range of topics on sustainability including trends, principles, tools and best practice case studies. The Task Group is currently assessing proposals from Universities before seeking water industry interest. If there is sufficient interest the Task Group will be work with the selected University to develop the course content and conduct the training program.

WATER EFFICIENCY TASK GROUP

Following the release of the White Paper, the Water Efficiency Task Group has identified a number of priority areas that the Task Group will focus on, those being:

- ◆ Water Restriction Review (Action 5.4 & 5.8)
- ◆ WSDS Workshop (5.1 & assoc)
- ◆ List of rebates/funding etc that is available from DSE/Govt
- ◆ Billing information session (5.6)
- ◆ Industry water management plans (5.18 & 5.20)
- ◆ Council Water Use Plans (5.21-23)
- ◆ Leak detection (5.37)

On behalf of the industry, Coliban Water is reviewing the Melbourne version of Water: Learn It! Live It!, and identifying modifications to the content to enable the resource to be applicable to the whole State. It is anticipated that this will be launched by June 2005.

WATER RESTRICTION REVIEW WORKING GROUP

In response to Action 5.8 of the White Paper, VicWater submitted to Minister Thwaites on 1 December 2004 a uniform water restriction guideline for drought response, which sets out a recommended four-stage restriction policy for the whole of Victoria. The proposed Guideline was developed in consultation with all Victorian water businesses, and provides a consistent approach to water restrictions in Victoria, allowing for local variation, ensuring that restrictions are suitable for local conditions.

The Victorian water industry agrees that the proposed Guideline is a reasonable basis on which to proceed with wider consultation. VicWater has recommended to the Minister that

consultation be undertaken with key stakeholder groups with statewide interests to refine the Guidelines. A legal review of the Guidelines will also be required prior to subsequent consultation with regional communities.

VicWater understands that the Minister for Water will be providing direction on the context and timing of these future developments prior to initiating further consultation on the proposed Guideline.

DAM'S WORKING GROUP

The Dams Working Group has recently had the opportunity to visit Thompson Reservoir (Melbourne Water) and Honeysuckle Creek (Goulburn Valley Water).

Current issues being addressed include:

- ◆ Dam Operators Training Guideline: minimum levels of competencies in dam safety management, using the existing modules from the National Water industry Training Package.
- ◆ Decommissioning Guideline: Working with DSE to guide authorities on how the issue can be approached. There are approximately 30 dams that are candidates for decommissioning.
- ◆ Dam Safety Management Guideline: Assisting DSE in developing this important guideline, especially the timeframes around when dam safety upgrades are required.
- ◆ Seismic Monitoring Network: Victorian Water Industry seismic network data to be used in a national program to develop attenuation functions for SE Australia (currently using adapted Californian functions).

ENHANCING EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPABILITY

Following on from the VicWater Emergency Response Seminar in November 2004, the Department of Sustainability and Environment together with the Department of Human Services have established a working group consisting of representatives from all sectors of the water industry with the key objective of the group being the development and implementation of a regional emergency exercise involving numerous water businesses in 2005.

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR SMALL TO MEDIUM BUSINESSES



VicWater is participating in the Sustainability Self Assessment Tool Pilot Program being conducted by The National Centre for Sustainability at Swinburne University. This pilot program offers small to medium sized businesses the opportunity to track their progress towards becoming a sustainable business.

Eligible businesses are able to use a web based software tool to measure their progress, and to receive advice, hints and

tips on ways to improve in each area. They will also receive free, one-on-one business consulting advice on what aspects of their business could most benefit from improvement and ways to implement the suggestions. Access to information about a range of free sustainability training and networking opportunities will also be provided. Businesses will only be required to use the software tool once a quarter for about two hours, and attend

a free training session to be eligible for the benefits of participating.

For further information on the Sharland Park development visit www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au

For further information on the program contact Cate Turner on (03) 9214 5302 or cturner@swin.edu.au at The National Centre for Sustainability, Swinburne University.

VICWATER MEETS WITH CHINESE WATER INDUSTRY GROUPS

During September to December 2004, VicWater facilitated site visits and provided information on the Victorian water industry to groups of water industry representatives from China. Visits included Southern Rural Water irrigation zones at Werribee, the Western Treatment Plant, Winnecke Water Treatment facility and Thiess Services Hydrographic facilities at Woori Yallock. Of common interest to the Chinese groups are water pricing and the structure of the Victorian water industry in this State.

Jeff Bonning demonstrates a Detheridge wheel to members of the Sichuan Province delegation.



BARWON WATER'S SHARLAND PARK A WINNER

Barwon Water has been recognised with a prestigious award from the Victorian division of the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) for its Sharland Park development at Hamlyn Heights in Geelong. The submission from Barwon Water and engineering partner Earth Tech won first prize in the Water Sensitive Urban Design category at the UDIA awards for Excellence in 2004.

Sharland Park, an eco-friendly subdivision of 38 housing lots on the decommissioned Bell Post Hill water storage basin, edged out close rivals Altona Green (Hobsons Bay City Council) and Docklands Park (VicUrban) in the category.

The judges were impressed by Sharland Park's water-saving initiatives, including swale drains, bio-filtration ponds and infiltration trenches. The historic valve house and contemporary display home, Sharland Oasis, were also rated highly.

"Sharland Park qualified for this award because of the extent of the measures Barwon Water has taken" judges said. "As an authority it has dedicated so much not only to water sensitive urban design but also towards solving what has become a significant problem in the region. All told it is an amazingly detailed and comprehensive concept."

A water and energy efficient demonstration home is being built on the estate to showcase the latest Ecologically

Sustainable Design principles and environmentally friendly products such as rainwater tanks, water-efficient white goods and solar hot water systems.

Details of the awards can be found in the Urban Affairs newsletter, which can be downloaded from UDIA Victoria website www.udiavic.com.au.

Sharland Park Cross Section

Typical road section with grassed swale

