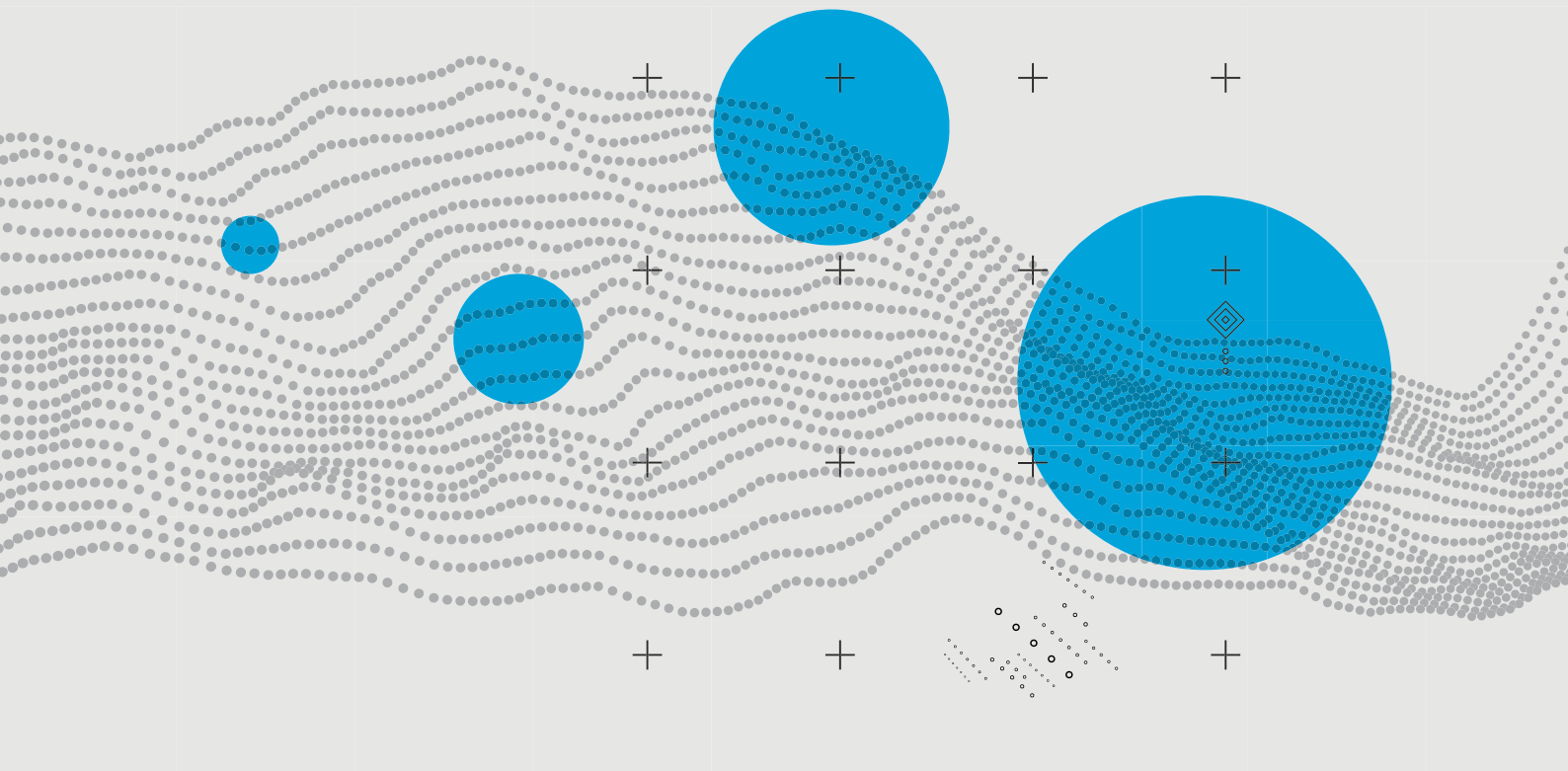


ANNUAL REVIEW 2020/2021



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Water Directorate proudly acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country across New South Wales, their rich culture and their connection to the land and water on which we rely. We pay respect to Aboriginal Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal people.

New South Wales Water Catchments

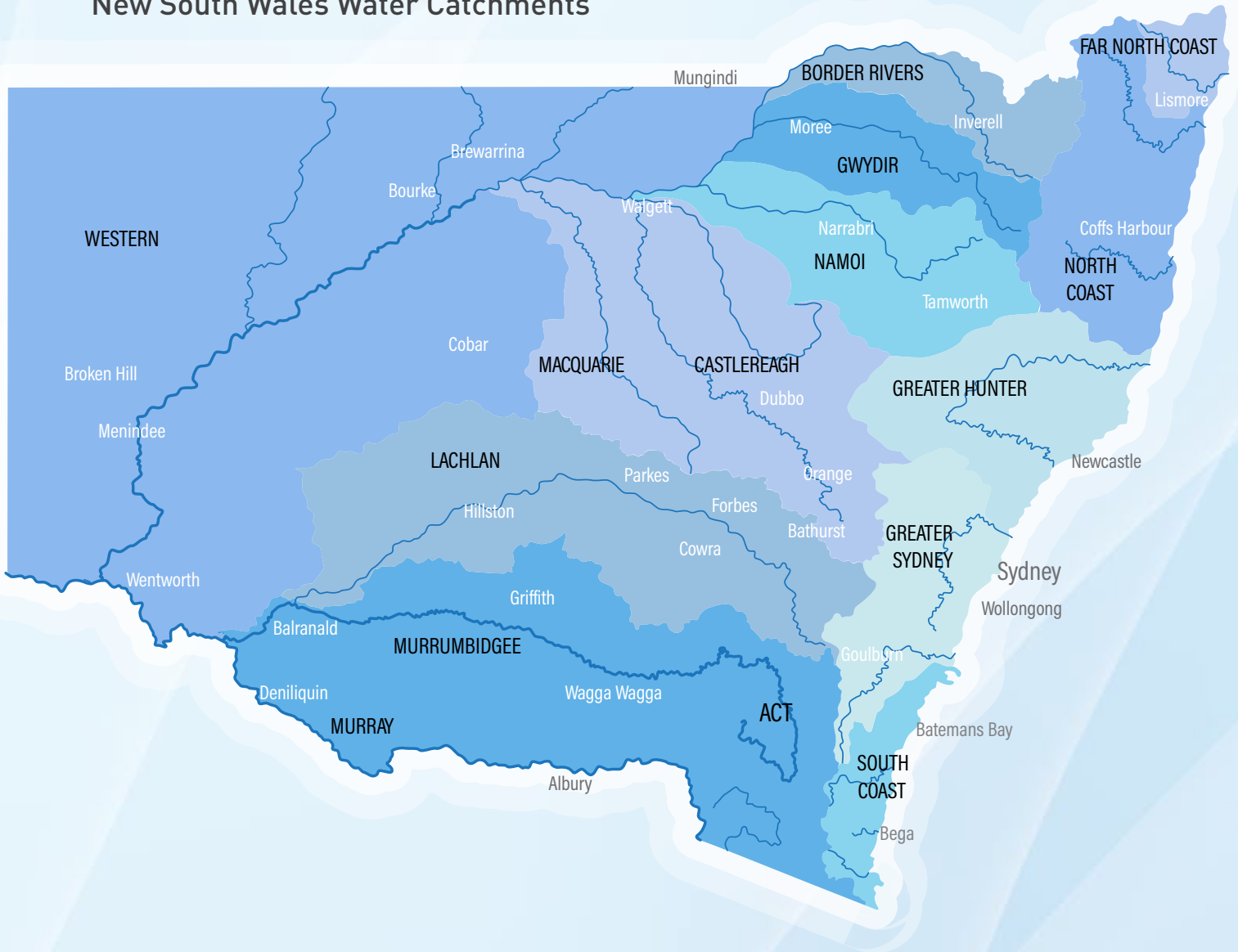


Image: New South Wales Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

CHAIR'S REPORT

What another busy and eventful year it has been in the water industry in regional NSW. I am particularly mindful of the significant impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on our communities across regional NSW, especially in far western NSW, which has heightened our need for government support. I want to thank and congratulate all our water industry workers for the work that you do keeping essential water and wastewater services going for community wellbeing.

NSW Local Water Utilities (LWUs) have played their part during the pandemic, cooperating with NSW Health on the Covid-19 sewage surveillance program, which has provided a powerful tool for tracking community infection to help the government manage the worst impacts.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the Water Directorate alongside our member LWUs and joint organisations have participated in, collaborated on and responded to numerous inquiries launched by the NSW and Commonwealth governments. These inquiries included the Commonwealth Productivity Commission's *National Water Reform Inquiry*, Infrastructure Australia's *2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan*, NSW DPIE Water's *NSW Water Strategy* and *Regional Water Strategies*, the NSW Productivity Commission *White Paper 2021 Rebooting the economy*, to name but a few.

Whilst speaking of government programs, it was particularly pleasing to see the commencement last December of the most significant government initiative for Local Water Utilities in more than a decade, the Town Water Risk Reduction Program (TWRRP), launched by the CEO of Water in NSW, Dr Jim Bentley. After confronting the challenges of drought, fire, flood and pandemic, the TWRRP is set to be a game changer for all LWU's in regional NSW.

Water Directorate's involvement so far in the TWRRP's Stakeholder Advisory Panel has been crucial, providing the government with invaluable feedback on the needs of LWUs large and small, on the coast as well as inland rivers. The job is not over. The initial two-year period will help us identify problems and pilot innovative new solutions. Sustained effort will be required from all partners for many years to come to achieve real risk reduction and sustainable, safe and secure water and sewerage services.

While we are on this journey, we will continue to respond to the top issues our members have identified: a shortage of skilled technical staff, ageing infrastructure, cost of maintenance and cost of compliance with new proposed health-based targets for drinking water.

I commend the work of our Executive Officer, Brendan Guiney over the past year. His relationships with our regulators, in particular, DPIE Water and NSW Health are to be commended. The Water Directorate's presence and status in the water industry has flourished under Brendan's leadership with ongoing collaboration with industry organisations such as the AWA, WSAA, WIOA and the Queensland Water Directorate. All of this, plus more, undertaken in extremely difficult circumstances during the Covid-19 pandemic.

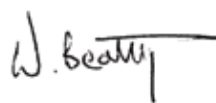
I want to acknowledge our hardworking Executive Committee, who contribute many hours in-kind to solve our regional water utility issues. In February we held our bi-annual elections for our Executive Committee which led to some change. I thank Brett Corven of Eurobodalla Shire Council, Greg Whorlow of Albury City Council and Matthew Cerutti of Kempsey Shire Council for their service through a difficult two-year period for everyone.

In a changing of the guard, Brie Jowett has replaced David Oxenham of Tweed Shire Council. David provided six years of service at the Water Directorate, ably serving as our Training subcommittee chair for the last two years. Welcome Brie, and thank you David for providing a strong impetus for achieving our strategy, particularly in the training space. We also welcome Jessica Dunstan of Snowy Monaro Regional Council to our Executive Committee this year.

The Water Directorate continues to thrive due to the in-kind hours of voluntary work put in by the 18 members of our Executive Committee.

In the near future, we will be making the first update to our Constitution as an incorporated association in ten years. The intent is to modernise the Constitution, whilst creating a new non-voting 'associate member' category to allow our trusted partners to join the Water Directorate and contribute.

In the next twelve months we also intend to consult with all members on the strategic plan for the Water Directorate, to remain relevant and vibrant and to refresh our strategic goals.



Warren Beatty
Water & Sewer Manager
(Strategic) Orange City Council

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



As we learn lessons in resilience from the challenges of drought, fires, flood and pandemic, the Water Directorate has applied significant effort to promote water utility risk awareness, based on three straightforward questions:

- Is our water safe to drink? Apply a catchment-to-tap approach.
- Do we have enough water for the future? Planning for water infrastructure takes years to develop.
- Is our water business being managed effectively? Proactively reviewing your critical water and sewerage assets and ensuring risk is properly addressed.

We were very pleased to see these issues incorporated into the NSW DPIE's Town Water Risk Reduction Program (TWRRP) from the outset. I was also pleased to join the Stakeholder Advisory Panel for the TWRRP representing local water utilities.

It has been a genuine pleasure to collaborate with DPIE TWRRP team, led by Erin Cini and Amanda Chadwick. Their dedication and effort has resulted in the *Draft roadmap to an improved regulatory framework for local water utilities*, which is a significant milestone for local water utilities. The TWRRP team has been open, honest and forthright about regulatory issues in regional water management and have demonstrated their willingness to listen and act. We look forward to continuing this spirit of collaboration into the future and deliver on the roadmap, along with other upcoming risk reduction measures.

All the above work reflects a pivot by the Water Directorate, with a greatly increased focus on government liaison and regulatory issues to complement our core technical advisory work. Beyond TWRRP, the Water Directorate has liaised with a number of regulators and agencies on a range of issues in the past year including:

Water Operator training – Executive Committee member Jason Ip of Riverina Water has sat on the Water Industry Reference Committee (IRC) since 2017. Thank you Jason, and congratulations on recently being appointed Deputy Chair of the Water IRC. I also liaise with state training agencies via the NSW Public Service Industry Training Advisory Body (ITAB), where we have taken forward the issues of a lack of access to accredited water operator training, and the barriers with RTOs and trainers delivering accredited training.

Water efficiency – we worked with DPIE on a number of facets of water efficiency, including the potential for harmonised water restrictions in NSW, calculation of the economic level of water leakage, as well as scoping of a water efficiency leakage management and education program.

EPA Draft Regulatory Strategy – we attended a workshop organised by DPIE and EPA on their draft Regulatory Strategy, and provided feedback on the challenges LWUs have been facing with meeting environmental regulation.

NRAR compliance campaigns – we have assisted with communications, but also given some feedback on the regulatory environment and water management for LWUs, in the wake of the worst drought in 120 years, where alternative and emergency water supplies needed to be urgently implemented and transitioned into 'business as usual'.

Dam Safety Act and Regulation – as the implementation of the changed Act and Regulation approaches, we have worked with DPIE and Dams Safety NSW to keep LWUs up-to-date and investigate support arrangements for compliance.

Review of National Performance Reporting – the Bureau of Meteorology's review continued in 2020-21. A key issue the Water Directorate wants to address is the burden on LWUs to report on up to 1200 performance indicators.

Collaboration with our partners saw the Water Directorate co-hosting the *Sustaining small communities in regional Australia* workshop with [qldwater](#) in February, on the Qld/NSW border at Goondiwindi. Many of our members participated 'virtually' via livestream and reported that the workshop was extremely valuable, particularly for small regional and remote water utilities.

In May we were pleased to support the Ozwater 21 Conference Attendance Award in Adelaide, in partnership with the Australian Water Association, awarded to Sarah Collum of Snowy Monaro Regional Council.

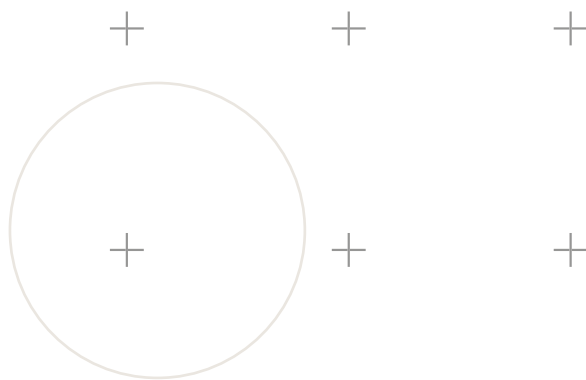
In December, I was honoured to be named as an AWA NSW Legend of Water for 2020 alongside Professor Stuart Khan of University of NSW and Emma Pryor of Sydney Water. It was a great privilege to attend beside these two eminent water professionals.

After a disruptive 2020 and 2021, we look forward to collaborating with our members and friends to renew the Water Directorate's strategic plan in the coming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Guiney', written in a cursive style.

Brendan Guiney
Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2020–2021



Attendance Record – Elected Representatives

Name	Council	Region	Attendance
Wayne Beatty	Orange City Council	Central West	6/6
Chris Best	Bega Valley Shire Council	South East	2/6
Matthew Cerutti*	Kempsey Shire Council	Mid North Coast	4/5
Brett Corven*	Eurobodalla Shire Council	South East	3/4
Russell Deans	Bathurst Regional Council	Central West	3/6
Jessica Dunstan**	Snowy Monaro Regional Council	South East	2/2
Derek Finnigan	Muswellbrook Shire Council	Hunter	4/6
Graham Gordon	Griffith City Council	South West	6/6
Tracey Hamer	MidCoast Council	Mid North Coast	6/6
Phillip Hood	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Hunter	6/6
Jason Ip	Riverina Water County Council	South West	6/6
Brie Jowett**	Tweed Shire Council	North Coast	2/2
Graham Kennett	Kyogle Council	North Coast	6/6
Matt Kidd	Shoalhaven City Council	Illawarra	6/6
Bruce Logan	Tamworth Regional Council	New England	5/6
Gillian Marchant	Tenterfield Shire Council	New England	6/6
Doug Moorby	Narromine Shire Council	Orana	6/6
David Oxenham*	Tweed Shire Council	North Coast	5/5
Victor Papierniak	Cobar Shire Council	Orana	5/6
Geoffrey Veneris	Goldenfields Water County Council	South West	5/6
Greg Whorlow*	Albury City Council	South West	2/4

Appointed committee members

Sean McBride*	LGNSW Representative		1/1
Sanjiv Sathiah**	LGNSW Representative	N/A	3/4
Cr Rod Kendall*	LGNSW Representative		2/4

*Resigned or retired

**Nominated replacement or newly elected representative



Each year the Water Directorate sponsors a number of awards to recognise water industry professionals, including the Ozwater Conference Award, that supports a young water professional to attend the annual conference. The 2021 winner, Sarah Collum (second left), Quality Compliance Officer Water and Wastewater, Snowy Monaro Regional Council, is pictured here at the Adelaide Convention Centre with Corrine Cheeseman CEO of the Australian Water Association, and Water Directorate Chair Wayne Beatty and Executive Officer Brendan Guiney. In 2020 there was no winner as the conference was held online.

Representing LWUs across regional NSW

COMMONWEALTH



Australian Government



Department of Agriculture, Water & Environment: urban water reform



National Water Reform



Infrastructure Australia: 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan



NSW Productivity Commission

Bureau of Meteorology: National Performance Indicator Review



National Covid-19 Commission



Telcos on Tanks
Telecommunications providers powers and immunities framework



Our Relationships

Policy and advocacy



Regulatory





STATE



NSW Health:
 Drinking Water Quality
 Covid-19 Sewage Surveillance Program

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment



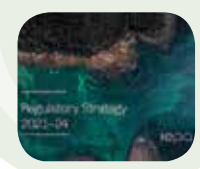
The Safe and Secure Water Program – Risk Prioritisation framework
 Water Efficiency Program
 Harmonised Water Restrictions
 NSW Smart Places
 Adapt NSW

DPIE Town Water Risk Reduction Program:

-  Improve the regulatory and support framework
-  Encourage greater collaboration
-  Encourage greater State government support
-  Review of skills shortages
-  Investigate alternative funding models

Environmental Protection Agency

Draft Regulatory Strategy



Dams Safety regulation



Technical



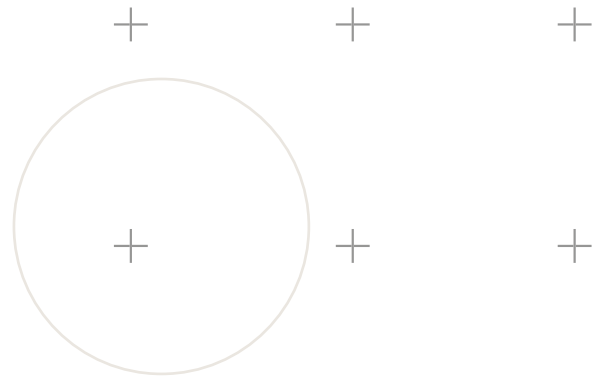
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Membership fees	552,463	542,108
Sales -Manuals	2,273	2,727
Investment Income	541	2,647
Sundry Income	38,591	29,253
Total Income	593,868	576,734
EXPENDITURE		
Accounting and audit	7,820	8,220
Advertising sponsorship	19,536	30,486
Bank Charges	243	455
Computer expenses	3,805	3,417
Conferences, travel and accommodation	8,573	8,886
Consultants and technical support	35,756	46,689
Depreciation	2,248	1,769
Executive committee expenses	1,739	8,054
Insurance	7,403	7,403
Support service fees	38,250	104,093
Membership	13,646	11,909
Printing, postage and stationery	4,190	2,410
Salary	228,010	258,489
Total Expenditure	371,219	492,280
Surplus for the year	222,649	84,455

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 JUNE 2021



	2021	2020
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash at on hand and at Bank	738,901	436,609
Trade and other receivables	421,888	445,663
Prepayments	17,570	21,200
Total Current Assets	1,178,359	903,472
Non Current Assets		
FIXED ASSETS		
Computers	6,217	6,217
Accum Depreciation	6,217	3,969
	0	2,248
TOTAL ASSETS	1,178,359	905,720
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	684,452	632,173
Short-term Provisions	13,632	15,921
Total Current Liabilities	698,084	648,094
Total Liabilities	698,084	648,094
Net Assets	480,275	257,626
EQUITY		
Retained Earnings	257,626	173,171
Surplus YTD	222,649	84,455
	480,275	257,626

MEMBERS BY REGION



Central West Region

Bathurst Regional Council
 Blayney Shire Council
 Cabonne Shire Council
 Central Tablelands Water
 Cowra Shire Council
 Forbes Shire Council
 Lachlan Shire Council
 Lithgow City Council
 Oberon Council
 Orange City Council
 Parkes Shire Council
 Weddin Shire Council

Hunter Region

Hawkesbury City Council
 Muswellbrook Shire Council
 Singleton Shire Council
 Upper Hunter Shire Council

Illawarra Region

Shoalhaven City Council
 Wingecarribee Shire Council

Mid North Coast Region

Bellingen Shire Council
 Coffs Harbour City Council
 Kempsey Shire Council
 MidCoast Council
 Nambucca Valley Council
 Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

New England Region

Armidale Regional Council
 Glen Innes Severn Council
 Gunnedah Shire Council
 Gwydir Shire Council
 Inverell Shire Council
 Liverpool Plains Shire Council
 Moree Plains Shire Council
 Narrabri Shire Council
 Tamworth Regional Council
 Tenterfield Shire Council
 Uralla Shire Council
 Walcha Council

North Coast Region

Ballina Shire Council
 Byron Shire Council
 Clarence Valley Council
 Kyogle Council
 Lismore City Council
 Richmond Valley Council
 Rous County Council
 Tweed Shire Council

Orana Region

Bogan Shire Council
 Bourke Shire Council
 Brewarrina Shire Council
 Central Darling Council
 Cobar Shire Council
 Coonamble Shire Council
 Dubbo Regional Council
 Gilgandra Shire Council
 Mid Western Regional Council
 Narromine Shire Council
 Walgett Shire Council
 Warren Shire Council
 Warrumbungle Shire Council

South East Region

Bega Valley Shire Council
 Eurobodalla Shire Council
 Goulburn Mulwaree Council
 Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
 Snowy Monaro Regional Council
 Upper Lachlan Shire Council
 Yass Valley Council

South West Region

Albury City Council
 Balranald Shire Council
 Berrigan Shire Council
 Bland Shire Council
 Carrathool Shire Council
 Cootamundra - Gundagai
 Regional Council
 Edward River Council
 Federation Council
 Goldenfields Water County Council
 Greater Hume Council
 Griffith City Council
 Hay Shire Council
 Hilltops Council
 Junee Shire Council
 Leeton Shire Council
 Lockhart Shire Council
 Murray River Council
 Murrumbidgee River Council
 Narrandera Shire Council
 Riverina Water County Council
 Snowy Valleys Council
 Temora Shire Council
 Wagga Wagga City Council
 Wentworth Shire Council

Benefits of membership



TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- ✓ We publish **high quality technical publications** freely available to member local water utilities.
- ✓ We advise on water and sewerage operations through **communication and engagement** with water professionals in rural and regional NSW councils.
- ✓ We offer effective technical advice to **reduce the cost of compliance** with government regulation and maintenance of aging infrastructure.
- ✓ We assist with **delivering best practice** for your local water utility through benchmarking and performance improvement.



NETWORKING AND INFORMATION SHARING

- ✓ The Water Directorate facilitates professional networks to share industry knowledge among local water utilities.
- ✓ Our Executive Committee is elected from nine regions in NSW, ensuring broad regional representation.
- ✓ We collaborate with regulators and numerous water sector organisations to avoid duplication of work. We have strong relationships with agencies responsible for health, water and environment. We stay abreast of legislative and regulatory changes.
- ✓ We disseminate information on local, state and national water matters via our website, newsletters, technical meetings, workshops and tele-conferencing.



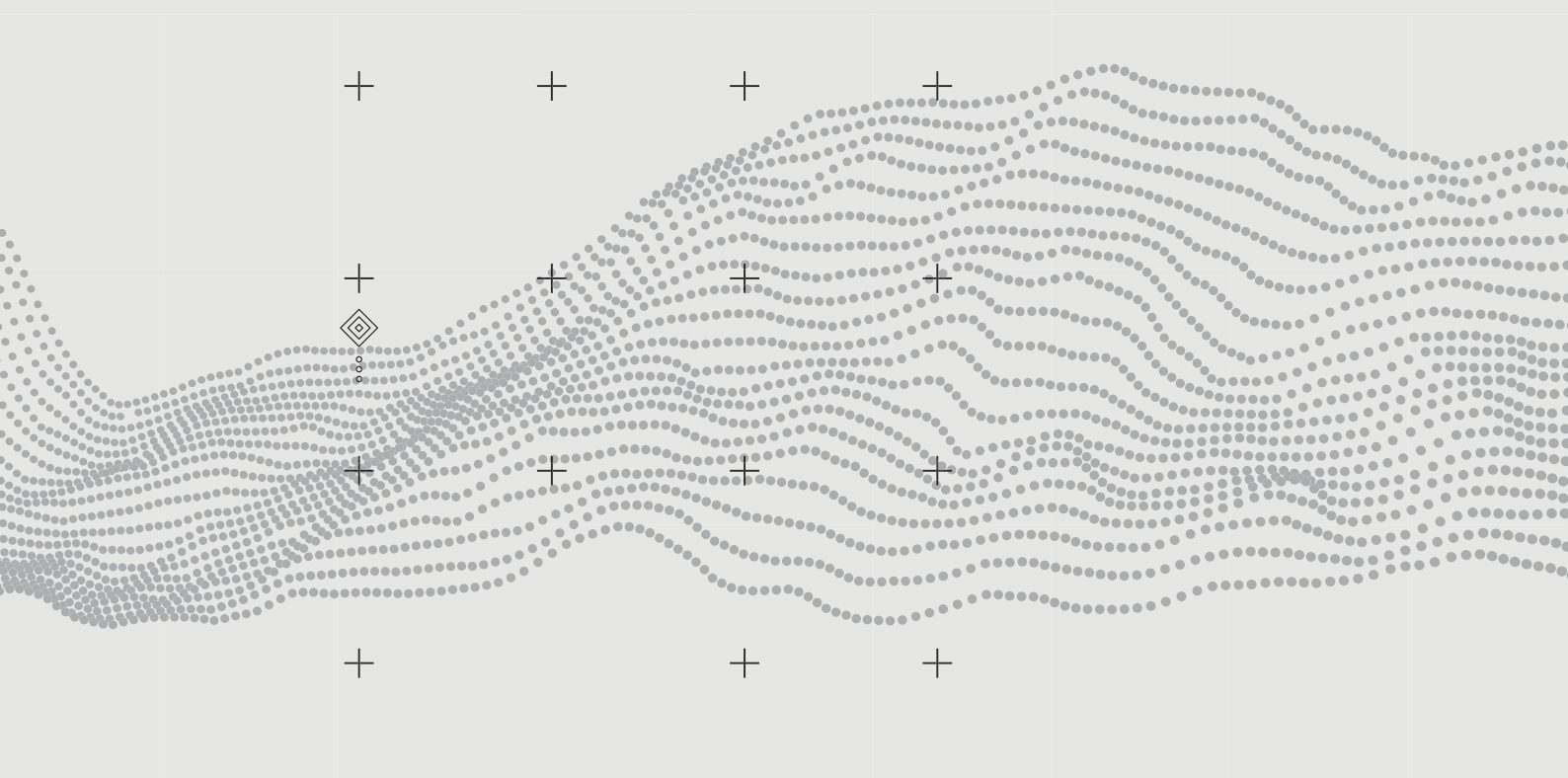
ADVOCATING FOR BETTER OUTCOMES FOR YOUR WATER BUSINESS

- ✓ Water utilities work in a complex and challenging policy environment. The Water Directorate works closely with our key advocacy partner, Local Government NSW, to advocate to government on behalf of local water utilities.
- ✓ The Water Directorate represents 88 out of 89 eligible councils. Our members own and operate 350 water supplies and 300 sewerage schemes, serving 1.85 million residents in regional NSW.
- ✓ Strength in numbers means membership fees are affordable and proportionate, based on population served. All members have the same access rights to our services.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ The Water Directorate facilitates the professional development of water professionals to address the shortage of skilled technical staff and assist water utilities to comply with legislation.
- ✓ We facilitate regional skills audits to confirm training gaps and assist with access to available training programs.



WATER DIRECTORATE INCORPORATED

Brendan Guiney, Executive Officer

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