

ANNUAL REVIEW

2021/2022



WATER
DIRECTORATE



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.

CHAIR'S REPORT

It has been yet another busy and eventful year in the water industry in regional NSW. As we move from back-to-back La Nina events between 2020 and 2022 into a third in the coming summer, resilient water and sewerage assets, management systems and people have never been more important. Our thoughts continue to be with the communities affected by the unprecedented March 2022 flooding.

Like other sectors, the water sector relies on Average Reoccurrence Interval (ARI) information based on historical data to plan, design, and build assets. We are now experiencing multiple exceedances with records broken in very short time periods. Assets are being built or repaired/replaced following natural disasters based on the same historical data and modelling approaches.

With the changes in climate we are experiencing, using historical data is not good enough to support risk-based decision making on investments into critical and essential water and sewerage assets. Assets that were replaced and built above the 1 in 100 year predicted river level after the 2017 floods in the northern rivers at significant cost were expected to last many decades but were inundated again in 2022 by flood levels in excess of the 1 in 500 year ARI modelling. Investment is required in better climate change modelling and projections to ensure investment in critical infrastructure appropriately mitigates climate risk.

There needs to be increased importance placed upon water and sewerage as a critical and essential service, not only for impacted communities, but also to accommodate first responders and enable recovery to commence. Delays to restoring essential services has a significant impact on the length of an emergency or incident and recovery.

LWU input crucial for a better regulatory environment

The Town Water Risk Reduction Program (TWRRP) is the most significant government initiative for Local Water Utilities in more than a decade. The Water Directorate's involvement in TWRRP's Stakeholder Advisory Panel has been crucial, providing the government with invaluable feedback on the needs of local water utilities large and small, on the coast as well as inland. Sustained effort will be required from all partners for many years to come to achieve real risk reduction and our ongoing goal of sustainable, safe and secure water and sewerage services.

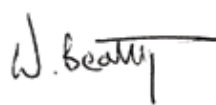
I want to thank and congratulate the Department of Planning and Environment senior management and the TWRRP team for listening and bringing meaningful change to the regional water industry with the newly introduced Regulatory and Assurance Framework commencing on 1 July. The spirit of partnership fostered by the program team has been crucial part of developing a better, fit-for-purpose regulatory environment.

I also thank our Executive Officer, Brendan Guiney after his third year in the role, and his team. Brendan often describes his role at the Water Directorate as 'drinking from the hydrant'. As you will see in the later part of this Annual Review we have been involved an unprecedented level of government review to make sure the Water Directorate has a seat at the table, responding on behalf of local water utilities to address the issues that matter to you, the members.

I want to acknowledge our hardworking Executive Committee, who contribute many hours in-kind to solve our regional water utility issues. We farewell and thank Jessica Dunstan and Phil Hood for their service on the Committee, representing Snowy Monaro Regional Council and Upper Hunter Shire Council respectively, and wish them all the best in their new roles. Also thanks to Sanjiv Sathiah who provided valuable input during his two years as Local Government NSW representative. The Water Directorate continues to thrive due to the voluntary work put in by the 18 members of our Executive Committee.

During the reporting year we refreshed our Strategic Plan with a range of projects and stretch targets. There are a number of interesting and important projects to progress to assist our member local water utilities to provide high quality water supply and sewerage services to all communities across regional NSW.

Finally, I want to thank and congratulate all our water industry workers for all of the work that you do keeping essential water and wastewater services going for community wellbeing.



Wayne Beatty
Chair, Water Directorate



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

After three years of extreme weather events in some ways it seems that 'extreme' has become somewhat of a 'new normal'. In the face of these unprecedented challenges, the Water Directorate has continued to promote water utility risk awareness and a less prescriptive, more flexible, adaptive and outcomes-focussed approach to managing regional NSW water and sewerage services, to fit local circumstances.

In particular, the 2022 NSW Flood Inquiry has highlighted that we need to question the status quo with our design standards, as well as the roles and responsibilities for response, recovery and mutual assistance between utilities during these extreme events. Water and sewerage assets will always be located close to water in floodplains, but there are opportunities to recover more quickly, collaborate and coordinate to maintain and restore water services for our regional communities.

Working for local water utilities

It has been a privilege to continue to represent local water utilities on the Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) Stakeholder Advisory Panel for the Town Water Risk Reduction Program (TWRRP) alongside Local Government NSW. I am particularly grateful for the leadership and spirit of collaboration generated by all the members of the TWRRP team, led by Amanda Chadwick and Erin Cini. In the last year, we have made submissions on Best Practice Management, the interface with the NSW local government Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework, Integrated Water Cycle Management, Secure Yield guidance and Section 60 approvals. I look forward to hearing from you all as we work with DPE to implement new plans.

LGNSW is working with the NSW Government to increase resilience to climate change. The greatest opportunity for local councils to better plan for the impact of climate extremes on our water and sewerage assets is through the Cross Dependency Initiative (XDI). XDI aims to quantify extreme climate risk to critical infrastructure, including third party risks from other critical infrastructure. I urge regional councils to engage with DPE on the opportunities that XDI provides to plan for future climate events.

The Water Directorate has liaised with a number of regulators and agencies in the past year including DPE's Water Efficiency Program and Water Efficiency Framework, the Regional Leakage Reduction Program, as well as supporting LWU input into NSW's 12 Regional Water Strategies. Under the leadership of DPE's Chief Operating Officer Graham Attenborough we continued to engage on Work Health and Safety performance improvement in partnership with Sydney Water, Hunter Water and WaterNSW.

I want to especially thank Dave Cameron and his team at Qldwater. Dave especially has been of great support to me in my first three years here at the NSW Water Directorate, and I wish you all the best for your future endeavours mate with Irrigation Australia.

Thanks also to Adam Lovell and his team at WSAA. We partnered with WSAA on a number of issues and submissions including Workplace Exposure Standards for hazardous chemicals such as hydrogen sulfide and chlorine gas, telecommunications facilities on water infrastructure, and Contaminants of Emerging Concern, which includes PFAS.

In May we were pleased to support the Ozwater '22 Conference Attendance Award in Brisbane, in partnership with the Australian Water Association, presented to James Kennedy of MidCoast Council. Thanks to CEO Corinne Cheeseman and the team at AWA. I have been working with a subcommittee of AWA NSW to progress their Regional Water Champions program to enhance networking, mentoring and professional development for water professionals across regional NSW. I strongly recommend LWU staff get involved.

And finally, warm congratulations to our Chair Wayne Beatty and our former Executive Committee member David Kirby for being confirmed as Australian Water Association's NSW Legends of Water at their annual awards in December 2021.



Brendan Guiney
Executive Officer



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2021–2022

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	5/6
Russell Deans	Bathurst Regional Council	Central West	6/6
Jessica Dunstan	Snowy Monaro Regional Council	South East	6/6
Derek Finnigan	Muswellbrook Shire Council	Hunter	6/6
Graham Gordon	Griffith City Council	South West	6/6
Tracey Hamer	MidCoast Council	Mid North Coast	4/6
Phillip Hood*	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Hunter	4/6
Jason Ip	Riverina Water County Council	South West	6/6
Brie Jowett	Tweed Shire Council	North Coast	6/6
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
Victor Papierniak	Cobar Shire Council	Orana	4/6
Geoffrey Veneris	Goldenfields Water County Council	South West	3/6

Thanks to Local Government NSW, the Executive Committee was able to hold two hybrid meetings in the LGNSW Board Room during the year, with members attending face-to-face as well as online via Zoom. Due to ongoing Covid restrictions, three meetings were held online via Zoom only. A strategic planning meeting was held for Executive Committee members who were in Narrabri for the LGNSW Water Management Conference in February 2022.

Appointed committee members

Shaun McBride	LGNSW Representative	4/6
Sanjiv Sathiah*	LGNSW Representative	5/5
Cr Dominic King	LGNSW Representative	5/6

* Resigned or retired during the year.



Welcome to Sarah Eastman, Project Officer

The Water Directorate created a new project officer role and appointed Sarah in November 2021. Sarah is working to develop an online training modules program offering micro-credentials on - for example - WSAA regional codes, and the Aqua and Brown cards. This is planned to be delivered via a shared online training platform with Queensland Water. Other projects include compiling the monthly e-newsletter and the development of a communications strategy for the Water Directorate. Sarah is also undertaking a Masters of Integrated Water Management via the International Water Centre at Griffith University.

Please stay in touch with Sarah with your e-news topics, questions or suggestions:
sarah.eastman@waterdirectorate.asn.au

MEET THE WATER DIRECTORATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The committee is made up of Local Water Utility water and sewer managers and General Managers / Deputy GMs. Read about their challenges and successes in 2021-22 and the Department of Planning and Environment's Town Water Risk Reduction Program (TWRRP) working parties they have contributed to.

Executive Committee elections are held bi-annually to elect two representatives from seven regions across NSW. Local Government NSW appoints two additional members.



Wayne Beatty
Chair, Water Directorate
Water and Sewer Manager (Strategic),
Orange City Council

Executive Committee member for 20+ years
Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months
Successful collaboration with the NSW Government on town water security options in the Macquarie Regional Water Strategy; and developing a Sub-Regional Town Water Strategy with Cabonne Council and Central Tablelands Water.
TWRRP working group:
Technical Assessment and Approvals Working Group



Chris Best
Manager Water and Sewer Services,
Bega Shire Council

Executive Committee member for 2 years
Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months
Changing roles and responsibilities as water filtration is added to our assets for the first time.
TWRRP working groups:
Financial and Pricing Reform, Technical Assessment Reform



Russell Deans
Manager Water and Waste,
Bathurst Regional Council

Executive Committee member for 11 years
Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months
Major challenge has been to continue to seek review of dam licence conditions, and success has been getting a tender accepted for a \$21M Stormwater Harvesting Project.



Graham Kennett
Deputy Chair, Water Directorate
General Manager,
Kyogle Council

Executive Committee member for 7 years
Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months
The Kyogle water supply suffered a series of adverse events (drought, bushfire and floods), which put the system to the test, following its augmentation in 2015/16. It is rewarding to see a project from concept through to delivery, but to also see its performance proven in service provided a real sense of satisfaction.

TWRRP working groups:
Stakeholder Advisory Panel, LGNSW and JO Water Working Group, Regulatory Framework Working Group, Strategic Business Planning Working Group.



Derek Finnigan
Deputy General Manager (currently Acting
General Manager)
Muswellbrook Shire Council

Executive Committee member for 4 years
Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months
Managing fluctuations in raw water quality, due to flooding and heavy rainfall events, to ensure the consistent production of high quality drinking water to the community.

TWRRP working group:
Skills & Training Working Group



Graham Gordon
Director Utilities,
Griffith City Council

Executive Committee member for 8 years
Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months
The major challenge has been our aging infrastructure. Concrete remediation works are being carried out on the inlet works at the Water Reclamation Plant and also at the Water Treatment Plant.

TWRRP working groups:
GCC has been successful in being able to deliver an IWCM Strategic Planning Pilot under the TWRRP.



Tracey Hamer
Manager Water Planning & Assets,
MidCoast Council

Executive Committee member for 8 years
Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months
Attracting and retaining skilled and qualified staff in regional NSW.

TWRRP working group:
Strategic Planning Working Group /Regulatory Framework Working Group



Jason Ip
Manager Operations,
Riverina Water County Council
Deputy Chair of the Water Industry Reference
Group

Executive Committee member for 8 years
Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months?
Challenge: COVID impact issues to workforce and water supply operations. Success: Attainment of DPE's IWCM Strategy concurrence in December 2021.

TWRRP working group:
Skills & Training Working Group



Matthew Kidd
Section Manager - Water Asset
Planning & Development,
Shoalhaven City Council

Executive Committee member for 7 years

Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months

Major success has been the move to strategic planning and away from the BPMG and IWCM.

TWRRP working group:
Strategic Planning



Doug Moorby,
Manager Utilities, Narromine Shire Council
and Chairman,
Orana Water Utilities Alliance

Executive Committee member for 4 years

Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months

Designing and constructing the first SIC Membrane Water Treatment Plant in NSW.

TWRRP working groups:
Regulatory Planning Framework Group, Regulatory Assurance Group, Incident and Emergency Planning, Skills & Training Working Group



Brie Jowett
Manager Water & Wastewater Operations,
Tweed Shire Council

Executive Committee member for 1 year

Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months

The biggest challenge was the record-breaking floods in Northern NSW in February/ March. We restored safe water supply to the majority (>99%) of our connected customers within 5 days of the event and sewerage services within a week. Within 3 weeks we achieved 100% for both water and wastewater services.

TWRRP working groups:
Emergency Management Working Group, Catchment & Water Quality Pilot Study.



Bruce Logan
Director Water and Waste,
Tamworth Regional Council

Executive Committee member for 9 years

Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months

Long-term water security for Tamworth and government support via funding for a Purified Water Treatment plant to supply industrial quality water to businesses in Tamworth.

TWRRP working groups:
Staff from Council were/are involved in Improve the Regulatory and Assurance Framework, Encourage Greater Collaboration working groups.



Victor Papierniak
Water and Wastewater Manager,
Cobar Shire Council

Executive Committee member for 2 years

Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months

Cobar secured \$46 million for the replacement of multiple water supply pumping stations from Nyngan to Cobar - ensuring that the community and the mining industries in the far west region have long-term water security and reliability.

TWRRP working groups:
Strategic Planning, Technical Assessments and Approval



Jessica Dunstan
Manager Water Wastewater Operations,
Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Executive Committee member for 2 years

Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months

The main challenge and success was the construction of the new Bombala Sewage Treatment Plant. The original trickle filter was well beyond its service life.

TWRRP working group:
Technical Assessments and Approvals



Gillian Marchant
Manager Water & Waste,
Tenterfield Shire Council

Executive Committee member for 2 years

Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months

Finalised emergency bore installation, additional bore analysis program pending completion, NSW Dam Safety DSMP completed and approved, DWMP updated and Risk Assessment completed. Awarded grant for Urbenville as UMMWS upgrade, IWCM grant awarded and underway, completed major main replacement in New England Highway. Awarded Grant for Village Bore Program, new Water Filtration plant underway, and awarded pilot project for magflow meter on reservoir-underway.

TWRRP working group:
Communications and Engagement Subcommittee



Geoff Veneris
Manager Production & Services,
Goldenfields Water

Executive Committee member for 2 years

Major challenge and/or success in the past 12 months

Timely delivery of major works has been a challenge. A notable success is the modernisation of the Jugiong Water Treatment Plants control system: a major upgrade to its control system including additional automated functionality of the plant to ensure remote access/operation and to meet future HBT reporting/monitoring requirements.

TWRRP working groups:
Incident & Emergency Focus Group, Performance Monitoring Focus Group and also part of the initial Regulatory Stakeholder Group.



Councillor Dominic King
LGNSW representative
Bellingen Shire Council

In late 2021 Councillor Dominic King was nominated by the Board of LGNSW to represent LGNSW on the Water Directorate. Supported by the staff of LGNSW, Councillor King has provided an essential connection on behalf of regional Councils between the Water Directorate's work on providing technical advice to council owned local water utilities and the work of Local Government NSW advocating on improved support and investment in regional and rural water supplies.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

INCOME	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Membership fees	581,622	552,463
Sales -Manuals	2,236	2,273
Investment Income	512	541
Sundry Income	0	38,591
Total Income	584,370	593,868
EXPENDITURE		
Accounting and audit	8,410	7,820
Advertising sponsorship	22,078	19,536
Bank Charges	276	243
Computer expenses	6,340	3,805
Conferences, travel and accommodation	12,706	8,573
Consultants and technical support	101,079	35,756
Depreciation	854	2,248
Executive committee expenses	1,711	1,738
Insurance	6,324	7,403
Support service fees	36,975	38,250
Membership	11,604	13,646
Printing, postage and stationery	8,507	4,190
Salary	296,476	228,010
Total Expenditure	513,340	371,219
Surplus for the year	71,030	222,649

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 JUNE 2022

	2022	2021
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash at on hand and at Bank	848,628	738,901
Trade and other receivables	382,238	421,887
Prepayments	31,983	17,570
Total Current Assets	1,262,849	1,178,359
Non Current Assets		
FIXED ASSETS		
Computers	10,961	6,217
Accum Depreciation	7,071	6,217
	3,890	0
TOTAL ASSETS	1,266,739	1,178,359
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	693,184	684,452
Short-term Provisions	22,250	13,632
Total Current Liabilities	715,434	698,084
Total Liabilities	715,434	698,084
Net Assets	551,305	480,275
EQUITY		
Retained Earnings	480,275	257,626
Surplus YTD	71,030	222,649
	551,305	480,275

2021-2022 PRIORITY ACTIONS AT A GLANCE



ENQUIRIES & SUBMISSIONS

- 2022 NSW Flood Enquiry
- NSW Best Practice Management of Water and Sewerage
- Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework for Local Water Utilities
- Integrated Water Cycle Management
- Secure Yield Guidance
- Section 60 Approvals
- Cross Dependency Initiative
- Water Efficiency Framework and Program
- Regional Leakage Reduction Program



PUBLICATIONS

- Digital Metering Guidelines: Evaluation, Costs & Benefits* November 2021
- O&M Manual for Water Treatment Plants* revised January 2022



BLOG

- Water Directorate Constitution Review 2021



AWARDS SPONSORED

- LGNSW Excellence in the Environment Awards
- WIOA Operator of the Year Award
- AWA Conference Attendance Award
- Sam Samra Award



TWRRP WORKING GROUPS

- Stakeholder Advisory Panel
- LGNSW & JO Water Working Group
- Technical Assessment & Approvals Group
- Financial and Pricing Reform Working Group
- Skills & Training Working Group
- Strategic Planning Working Group
- Regulatory Reform Working Group
- Incident & Emergency Planning Working Group
- Regulatory Assurance Group
- Regulatory Planning Framework Group
- Performance Monitoring Focus Group
- Catchment & Water Quality Pilot Study



EVENTS

- Water Directorate sessions at LGNSW Water Management Conference, Narrabri, February 2022



SPONSORSHIP

The Water Directorate is a Silver Member of Water Aid – an international non-profit organisation that works to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone in the world.

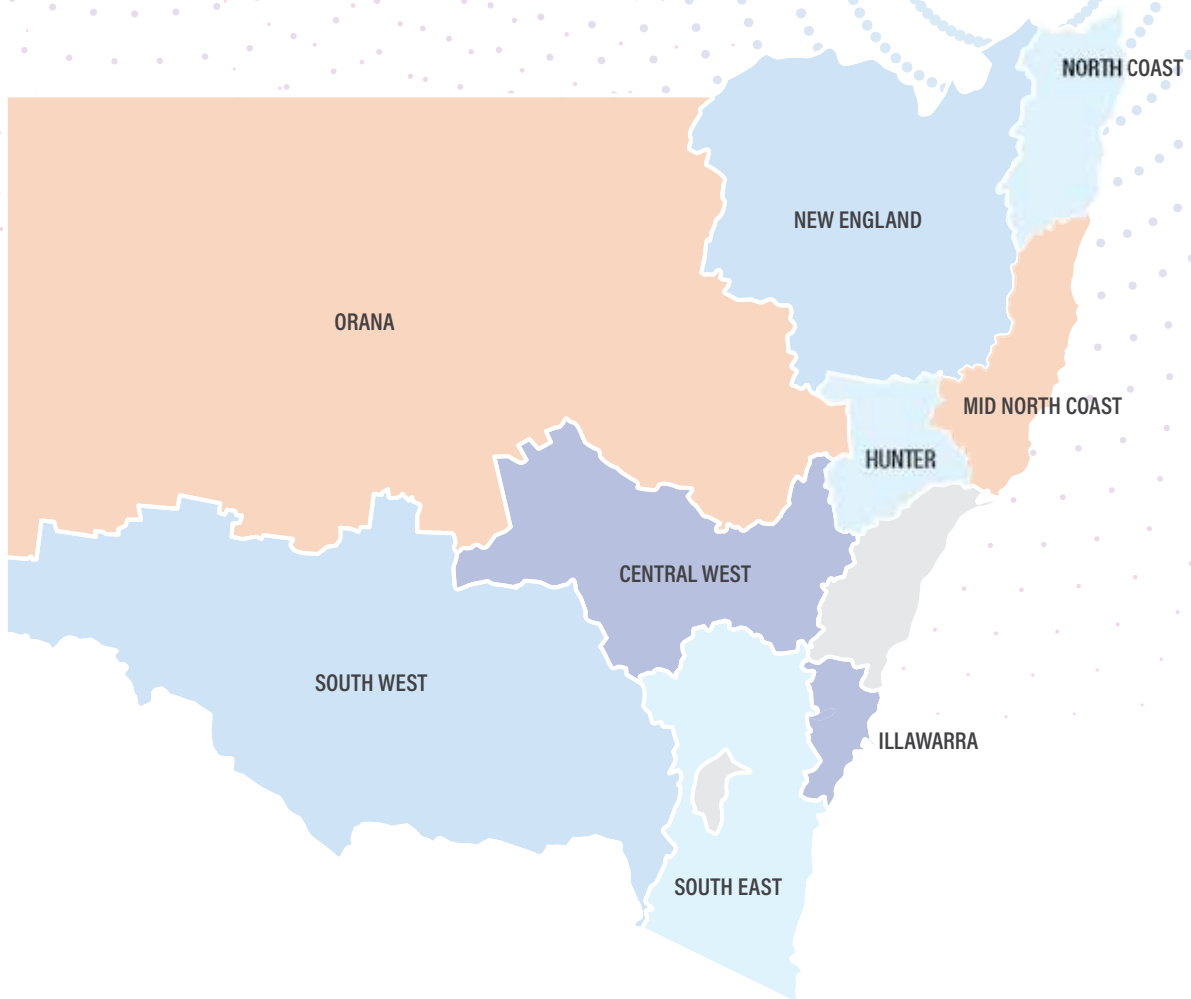
LEGENDS OF WATER 2021

In December 2021 the NSW Legends of Water were awarded to two very worthy regional water representatives. David Kirby, a proud Ngemba man born and raised in Brewarrina, not only a leader in his community with a deep spiritual connection to water as custodian of the oldest structure on earth, Baiame Ngunnhgu (Brewarrina Fishtraps) but also the Utilities Manager at Brewarrina Shire Council, in addition contributed his time and expertise as an Executive Committee member of the Water Directorate. Our own Chair Wayne Beatty, was also recognised for his service on behalf of regional NSW water utilities as well as leading a number of innovative water infrastructure projects including the first stormwater harvesting scheme for potable use in Australia.



L to R: Dr Annalisa Contos, Nanda Altavilla, Dave Kirby, Lisa Currie, Wayne Beatty, Corinne Cheeseman

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

Mid North Coast Region

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

Illawarra Region

Shoalhaven City Council
Wingecarribee Shire 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

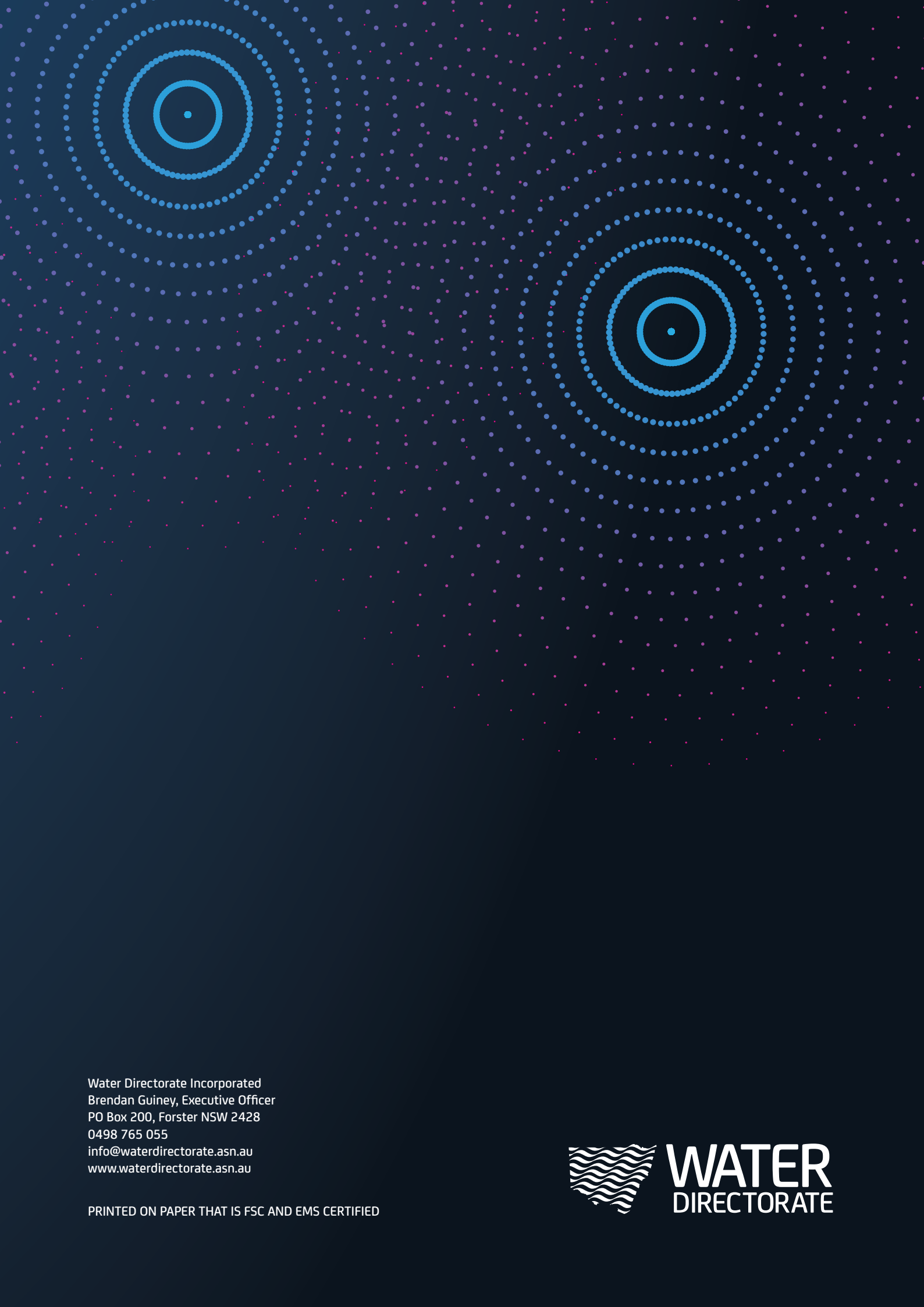
Bogan Shire Council
Bourke Shire Council
Brewarrina Shire Council
Central Darling Council
Cobar Shire Council
Coonamble Shire Council
Dubbo Regional Council
Gilgandra Shire Council
Mid Western Regional Council
Narromine Shire Council
Walgett Shire Council
Warren Shire Council
Warrumbungle Shire Council

South East Region

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

South West Region

Albury City Council
Balranald Shire Council
Berrigan 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



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