

2019 President's Report

State of the industry

At the time of preparing this report much of Australia is in drought and the dams of most major metropolitan areas are low and falling. This is leading to a resurgence of interest in stormwater harvesting and the use of stormwater to help sustain urban greenery. This is underpinned by a heightened public awareness of climate change and increasing appreciation of the need to mitigate urban heat island effects. Concern about plastics in the marine environment is growing, and we've seen the implementation of bans on single use plastic bags and container deposit schemes in some states.

The release of Australian Rainfall and Runoff Book 9: Runoff in Urban Areas, which was edited by Stormwater Australia Director Peter Coombes. This is one of the preeminent publications addressing the complex systemic issues associated with urban stormwater. Many members are rapidly familiarising themselves with new practices for storm and flood analyses, and there's a major need for ongoing capacity building in this regard.

eWater had released the beta version of MUSIC X, representing a major overhaul of the code. It's critical that the industry standard software remains affordable for practitioners, and produces results that are credible and reflective of the real performance of stormwater treatment measures. Stormwater Australia has engaged with eWater regarding major increases in software prices and I look forward to a positive outcome for our membership.

Board

This year has seen a major overhaul of the board. A total of seven Directors departed in 2018, with only one Director carrying through. This represents a major loss of corporate knowledge. Five new Directors were appointed at the end of 2018 making a board of six. Regrettably, due to a material conflict of interest that was not disclosed during the director nominations process, the board was reduced to five.

The organisation should give consideration as to how it attracts and retains high calibre directors, especially independent directors from outside the sector. Given the liabilities and responsibilities borne by Directors, some form of remuneration may be worth considering.

Stormwater Australia successfully retained and protected its trading name after it was appropriated by a third party.

SQIDEP

More than ten years in the making, the board has successfully finalised the Stormwater Quality Improvement Device Evaluation Protocol. The protocol was developed in consultation with regulators, technical experts, the key product suppliers and the broader industry, and provides a uniform set of criteria to which stormwater treatment measures can be field-tested and reported. SQIDEP addresses a major headache faced by local government assessment officers, provides greater confidence for those specifying stormwater products, and levels the playing field for suppliers of proprietary stormwater products.

A high calibre **Governance Panel** has been appointed to ensure probity, comprising:

Mr Andrew Swindells (BA, LLB, LLM) - experienced Barrister, Sessional member QCAT & CCT, Former Officer Victoria Mining Warden Court & Executive Officer Crime & Misconduct Commission, and dispute resolution/mediation expert.

Kaia Hodge Director of Regulatory Innovation at the NSW Natural Resources Access Regulator and former stormwater lead at Sydney Water.

Professor Veeriah Jegatheesan (Jega) (B.Sc.Eng. *Hons*, M.Eng., PhD) - experienced academic and water/wastewater/resource recovery/novel & hybrid technologies expert, Director Water Effective Technologies & Tools Centre RMIT, and former consultant to Sydney Water.

Mr Meghraj Thakkar (B.Eng., M.CSc.) - Director Stormwater Australia, risk management, governance, project management and data analytics professional, business owner and author. Negotiations are continuing with others to fill a maximum of 5 positions.

The **Technical Reference Panel** that will oversee any technical refinements as part of a process of ongoing review. The panel includes representatives from the SA EPA, WaterNSW, Qld Dept Environment and Science, Brisbane City Council, Swinburne University and others.

The **Independent Evaluation Panel** comprises some of the most respected practitioners in our industry, and each submission will be reviewed by two of the following:

Chris Beardshaw - Afflux Consulting Pty Ltd

Andrew Allan - Afflux Consulting Pty Ltd

Tracey Pham - Afflux Consulting Pty Ltd

Damian McCann - Australian Wetlands Consulting

Dr Mark Bayley - Australian Wetlands Consulting

Shaun Leinster - Design Flow Consulting Pty Ltd

Dr Robin Allison - Design Flow Consulting Pty Ltd

Adam Joyner - NSW Department of Finance, Service & Innovation - Manly Hydraulics Laboratory

Andrew Judge - NSW Department of Finance, Service & Innovation - Manly Hydraulics Laboratory

Rod Wiese - Storm Consulting

Dr Ricky Kwan - Storm Consulting

Mark Liebman - Sustainability Workshop Pty Ltd

Ben Modra - UNSW - Water Research Laboratory

Tony McAlister - Water Technology Pty Ltd

The implementation of SQIDEP represents one of the most significant accomplishments of Stormwater Australia in recent times and the list of contributors is extensive. It's an achievement that our whole industry can be proud of.

National Conference

Plans are well underway for the National Conference, *Stormwater2020 New Frontiers for Stormwater: Into the Next Decade*, which will be held in Victoria in June 2020.

An updated agreement regarding conference distributions is now in place.

Alan Hoban

President & Director, Stormwater Australia