



14th NSW Engineers – Operators and Regional Conference October 2011 – Byron Bay NSW

By Murray Thompson

The 14th NSW Engineers-Operators & Regional Conference was recently held in Byron Bay, on 24 to 26 October 2011, this year's conference theme was 'Turbulent Flow – Meeting the Challenges Facing the NSW Water Industry'. The conference also included several excellent papers and presentations related to Emergency Preparedness and Response.

The current lack of water industry reform in NSW somewhat reflected the themed responses received for this conference; however the standard of the submitted papers and the presentations were all of a very high quality, covering a wide cross section of water industry activities.

This made judging of the best papers and presentations a particularly difficult job for the organising committee which included; Cheryl Marvell (Sydney Water), Greg Mashiah (Clarence Valley Council), Phil Warner (Byron Shire Council), Colin Storey (Veolia Water), Geoff Watson (GHD), Iain Fairburn (Sydney Water), Peter Burgess (ACTEW), Michael Seller (AWA) and Despina Hasapis (AWA).

Operator Workshop

A Water Industry Operations Workshop was held on the first day with 21 people from local government, state government agencies and the private sector attending to hear from a number of trainers. The training team included; Erin Cini (Element Solutions Pty Ltd), Joel Byrnes (AECOM), Fiona Conlon (WAM Pty Ltd), Annalisa Contos (ATOM Consulting), Andrew Potter (Clarence Valley Council) and Murray Thompson (MTWS Pty Ltd).

Following upon Cheryl Marvell's original proposal to hold an operations training day, the workshop was developed based upon the National Water Training Package NWP207A – 'work effectively in the water industry'. A training module was prepared in close co-operation with the North Coast TAFE, MECat Faculty, providing participants who successfully complete the assessment tasks with a Statement of Attainment from NSW TAFE, this statement will be cobranded with AWA.

The full day training session included: structure of the Australian water industry; NSW legislative framework; NSW Local Government integrated planning; NSW Office of Water best practice management guidelines and performance reporting; identification of characteristics, requirements and standard for drinking water and recycled water; and identification and assessment of environmental risks and impacts to water services.

At the conclusion of the day a site tour was conducted of Byron Shire Council's urban reclaimed water project, the Byron Bay Integrated Water Management Reserve. This award winning project provided workshop attendees with an excellent practical demonstration of integrated water cycle management in a regional urban environment, reinforcing the training session provided earlier in the day.

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Platinum Sponsors - Sydney Water Delegates



Adam Wilson, Coffs Harbour Council - Winner of the Disaster and Emergency Recovery Presentation

The Operations Workshop would not have been possible without the generous financial support of a number of sponsors including AllFlow, Prominent and Tyco Water. Thanks goes to AWA staff members Michael Seller and Despina Hasapis, Byron Shire Council, Byron Community Centre staff, the training team, and to supporting employers for donating their valuable time and expertise.

Welcome Reception

The conference welcome reception was held at the Byron Bay Cafe on Clarkes Beach, thanks to the sponsorship support of CH2MHILL including Justin Watts and his team. This cafe overlooking the beach and beautiful Byron Bay, provided an excellent setting to launch the 2011 Regional Conference.

Conference Day 1

Day one of the conference commenced with 95 delegates in attendance and an acknowledgement of the traditional owners of the land, people of the Bunjalung Nation. Cheryl Marvell represented Sydney Water as the conference's Platinum Sponsor welcomed delegates to the conference, and introduced the keynote speakers. The keynote speakers included; Mike Paine – CEO, Southern Water Tasmania; and David Parsons – Manager Emergency Management and Security Unit, Sydney Water Corporation.

Mike Paine provided a detailed overview of his recent experiences with urban water reform which has occurred in Tasmania. These reforms have seen 29 Council's water utility activities combined into three water authorities with a realised increase in the capability and levels of water related services, and increased levels of customer protections and transparency.

Mike provided some interesting and disturbing pre-water reform facts including: \$1B funding required to address identified water asset issues; 23 towns with permanent boil water notices; no sewage treatment plant fully

compliant with licence conditions; and a very high incident of OH&S issues.

Many challenges continue to be faced by the Tasmanian water industry including improvements to safety, organisational structure, enterprise agreements, skills, customer services and shared services models. It is also likely there will be further state government reform of the island's water sector in the coming months.

This is in stark contrast to the current situation in NSW with the State Government still yet to provide a response to the 2008 Report of the Independent Inquiry into Secure and Sustainable Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Services for Non-Metropolitan NSW.

David Parsons provided an inspirational presentation of the mutual aid operation mounted by the Australian Water Sector in support of Christchurch following the February 2011 earthquake. This operation involved the deployment of a joint public and private sector Task Force of 14 vacuum excavation trucks and operators, to assist in the cleanup operations and to restore sewage and stormwater services.

This operation was the culmination of three years of planning and exercising to build an Australia wide water industry capability for disaster recovery. Following on from mutual aid operations in SE Queensland, Central Victoria, Japan, Auckland and now Christchurch, lessons have been learnt and work is underway to build an even greater capacity in the future. Sydney Water has been very generous with its development of this resource capacity and also its support of other organisations and communities requiring emergency assistance.

A member of the American Public Works Association (APWA) Greg Chartier from Saskatoon, Canada was introduced to the conference, being the past president (2010) of the Canadian Water and Wastewater Association and the recipient of the 2011 APWA Randolph Jennings Fellowship. Greg had travelled to Australia to provide a keynote presentation at the National IPWEA Conference held in Canberra during August 2011.

Greg is in Australia to evaluate the state of practice in developing sustainable infrastructure plans based on triple bottom line, and assess the suitability of the Australian National Asset Management (NAMS.PLUS) training and certification programs for building asset management capacity in North America. He has been visiting various local government and water utility



agencies to review and discuss levels of services based upon sustainability and life-cycle management principles.

Following morning tea, two streams continued throughout the day for Regional and Engineers/Operators presentations, with a paper titled "The Darwin Theory – Evolution of the Modern Wastewater Operator (Part 1) by Justin Watts (CH2MHILL) generating much discussion. This paper was later awarded the Best Engineering Paper, sponsored by GHD.

During lunch, the Water Training Assessors Network (WTAN) held a regional meeting with convenor Jenny James, addressing over 20 participants and providing an update upon the network's activities and current projects. This includes a project by the NSW Public Sector Industry Training Advisory Body (ITAB) and WTAN to conduct a training needs study of water industry employees in NSW Council's, to help prepare local government water utilities for the likely transition to national qualification requirements for potable water treatment plant operators.

An afternoon panel session titled "The Nuts & Bolts of Water Quality Frameworks" was facilitated by Dr Annalisa Contos (ATOM Consulting); this interactive session explored what the regulators expect to see as evidence of implementation of both the drinking and recycled water quality frameworks, and the implications for Council's in developing these systems. The panellists included; Dr Paul Byleveld (NSW Health), Dr Nanda Altavilla (NSW Office of Water), Doug Moorby (Lachlan Council) and Greg Mashiah (Clarence Valley Council).

Brief presentations were provided by each panellist and a lively discussion and debate followed with a number of recent projects being reviewed to explore the complexities of compliance and practical application of the current frameworks and agency guidelines. The outcome of the



Justin Watts, CH2M Hill - First prize in Engineering Paper Presentation

session included the application of "common sense" rather than blind obedience to the current regulatory framework, which can be accommodated in detailed risk assessment processes.

Conference Dinner



Gold Sponsors - GHD Representatives

The conference dinner was held that night, on the beach at the downtown Byron Bay Surf Club. The dress code was "Byron Bay Beachwear" and attendees dressed for the occasion with numerous awards being handed out on the night.

MidCoast Water appeared to rally and really over achieve in this regard picking up both the best dressed and several other outstanding outfit awards. Thanks for the sponsorship support of Monadelphous, with Stephen Martin attending to represent his organisation.

Conference Day 2

Day two commenced with Chris Hertle representing Gold Sponsor GHD, welcoming delegates and the day's keynote speaker Jim Pruss Executive General Manager, QLD Bulk Water Supply Authority (Seqwater).

Jim provided a very sobering and informative overview of the January 2011 Queensland floods and the successful operation of both the Wivenhoe and Somerset dams during this extreme rainfall event. Some of the interesting facts which were provided included;

- The January 2011 rainfall event produced twice the volume of 1974 flood
- Each of the two rainfall peaks in January 2011 were larger than in 1974
- A total of 2.65 million ML was released at the dam site, which equals the entire contents of the dam
- The flood peak in Brisbane was 1 metre lower than in 1974 and estimated to be 2 metres lower if the Wivenhoe dam had not been in place
- The Wivenhoe and Somerset dams did their job, in accordance with the adopted operational procedures
- The dams only contributed approximately 50% to peak levels
- The public just expected Seqwater to do better, ie. 100% protection from any flood event
- There has been no major flooding since 1974, with the dams containing 1974 size floods

- Unfortunately there is no such thing as 100% flood protection
- There are no flood storage dams in the Lockyer Valley or Toowoomba

The water storage balancing operation of the Somerset and Wivenhoe dams was explained with these dams acting in tandem to: maximise the total water volume stored; and minimise the Somerset dam water level, outflow from Wivenhoe dam and Wivenhoe dam water level.

These dam operations were successfully completed by Seqwater staff in accordance with adopted operational procedures and emergency action plans, despite the emotionally charged atmosphere of this event, and with very limited time to make the required operational decisions.

Unfortunately for all involved in this event, the media's actions and its reliance upon 'non-experts' did nothing to educate people and also caused much grief to affected residents, Seqwater staff and emergency services agencies.

The Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry Interim Report's independent expert said: *"Seqwater and its flood engineers achieved close to the best possible outcome in the January 2011 flood"*

In this regard the recent Sydney media attention upon Sydney Water's effluent releases highlights the media's apparent inability to understand the management of risks and also the appropriate apportionment of limited financial resources, while also not allowing facts to interfere with their distorted story lines.

The conference continued for the remainder of the day with further presentations in the two streams.



Danny Slocombe, Veolia Water - First Prize, Operators Paper

Conference Prizes

The following prizes were awarded to the best papers and presentations;

Best Disaster Recovery Paper, Sponsored by Sydney Water

Adam Wilson, Manager Water Treatment, Coffs Harbour Council
Lessons Learnt: Sawtell STP Chlorine Spill

Best Engineers Paper, Sponsored by GHD

1st Prize

Justin Watts, Process Engineer, CH2MHILL

The Darwin Theory – Evolution of the Modern Wastewater Treatment Operator (Part 1)

2nd Prize

Alex Sanbrook, Treatment Coordinator, Sydney Water & Lisa Hiscock, REG Alliance Manager, Sydney Water

Sydney Water Renewable Energy Continuous Improvement Programme

3rd Prize

Josh Tickell, Chemical Engineer, NSW Public Works

Brackish Groundwater Desalination in Rural & Regional Australia

Best Operators Paper, Sponsored by Hunter Water

1st Prize

Danny Slocombe – Operations Supervisor, Veolia Water

Einspector System for "Predictive Maintenance" at Woronora WTP, NSW

2nd Prize

Graham Kennett, Manager Asset Services, Kyogle Council

Kyogle STW Augmentation & Hydroponic Wetland

3rd Prize

Sam Magill, Diving Supervisor, AquaLift Potable Diving

When is Reservoir Cleaning Not Just About Cleaning – Following the Evidence Trail

This conference and prizes would not have been possible without the generous support and financial assistance provided by our sponsors which included;

Sydney Water – Platinum Sponsor

GHD – Gold Sponsor

CH2MHILL – Welcome Reception Sponsor

Monadelphous – Conference Dinner Sponsor

HydroScience – Satchel Sponsor

ATOM Consulting – Keynote Speaker Sponsor

Planning is now underway for the 2012 NSW Regional Conference.

Editors Comments

Karen Eaton



Welcome to the November edition of NEWSdrop. It has been a busy time since the last edition of this newsletter with much activity to report. Murray Thompson has provided a good summary of relevant events in his President's bit, and Murray's hectic itinerary is evident in his report.

Our lead story summarises the recent 14th NSW Engineers-Operators and Regional Conference held in Byron Bay on 24 – 26 October. Attendees again found the conference well facilitated and a valuable experience. Photos of the conference are included.

Mr Bob Banning, Waste Water Treatment Manager for Bathurst Regional Council, is this edition's Grab Sample interviewee. I had the pleasure of working with Bob and his team at an upgrade of his facilities in 1998. During this time a severe flood was experienced in Bathurst and the plant was badly hit. I have vivid memories of the commitment Bob and his operators had to getting the plant functional, including transport of staff to the control room by boat. I spent the time hoping that newly installed switchboards and control panels that had just been commissioned were not water damaged. In the end they were saved by only a few inches. I hope you enjoy the interview with Bob who has been working at the landmark Bathurst Waste Water Treatment Plant for almost 30 years.

I hope you find this edition of NEWSdrop valuable. All contributions for future editions are welcome and can be emailed to me at: karen.eaton@ugllimited.com.

Presidents Bit - August 2011

Murray Thompson



Much has happened since the last edition of NEWSdrop, please find a summary of important events below.

National Water Week 2011

Water Week 2011 was held throughout the nation from 16 – 22 October 2011. This event was a good opportunity for the community to celebrate the region's natural environment and reflect upon

the importance of a healthy water supply for all living things. This year's theme *Healthy Catchments, Healthy Communities* provided an excellent platform in my local area for the launch of the "AquaSculpture11 Outdoor Exhibition" on Port Macquarie's Town Green. The Confluence Exhibition at the Glasshouse Regional Gallery was also held with the Osmosis 2012 calendar and digital photography competition awards www.aquasculpture.com.au

The 14th NSW Engineers-Operators and Regional Conference

The committee have been busy planning and preparing the 14th NSW Engineers-Operators and Regional Conference which was held in Byron Bay 24th – 26th October. This event, attended by 120 water professionals, included a one day "Operations Workshop" and a two day "Regional

Conference" program. A detailed report on these activities has been provided in this edition of NEWSdrop.

From all accounts, this was another very successful event that provided an interesting, topical and informative program of presentations and workshop sessions. Congratulations to Cheryl Marvell, Despina Hasapis and Michael Seller, and the organising committee for preparing this event. We also thank the sponsors and presenters for supporting and attending this regional conference.

NSW Seminar Series

A number of other events including the Social Media Seminar and Technical Seminar – Sump Design Presentation have been successfully delivered. Thanks again to Erin Cini, Bianca Wirth and Mark Trembath respectively for organising these seminars and to the sponsors of these events AECOM and ITT-Flygt.

The NSW Branch Committee and YWPs are currently preparing and finalising the 2012 events calendar, which will include the successful Seminar series program.

The 2011 Water Management Conference

At the invitation of the NSW Local Government and Shires Association (LGSA), I attended the 2011 Water Management Conference in Grafton on the 14 – 16 September 2011 which was hosted by the Clarence Valley Council.

This annual event is an opportunity for local government water utilities: including elected Council mayors and councillors; Council staff including general managers, water managers and engineers; and various state

government agency representatives, to come together to discuss the latest policy and best practice developments.

The Mayor of Clarence Valley Council, Councillor Richie Williamson, welcomed delegates to the conference and outlined the successful completion of the \$180M regional water supply scheme completed in close cooperation with the neighbouring Coffs Harbour City Council, which includes the 30,000ML Shannon Creek Dam.

• **Keynote address**

The keynote presenter was David Harris, Commissioner, NSW Office of Water. He responded, in part, to the recent reports released by Infrastructure Australia and the Productivity Commission. He noted there is too much focus upon the negatives with little consideration of the many positive outcomes which have been achieved with water reform in NSW.

David outlined the many positive aspects of the recently released NSW 2021 - Ten Year Business Plan for NSW which continues a strong focus upon securing water supply schemes and water sharing plans. The Plan includes further implementation and ongoing development of the NSW Office of Water 'Best Practice Guidelines for Local Water Utilities' and 'Strategic Business Plans'.

In addition, he detailed that water sharing plans have been completed for all major groundwater sources with over 50 plans now in place and the remaining surface water sharing plans will be implemented by mid-2012. The water usage priorities provided under these water sharing plans include: domestic supply, environmental flows, stock watering and low/high yield licences.

An Aquifer Interference Policy has been developed to balance the requirements of agriculture, environment, regional business and mining activities associated with coal seam gas extraction, which includes water licensing provisions for activities over 3ML/year. A Stormwater Harvesting Policy is also currently under development by the NSW Office of Water.

• **Panel Discussion: "Myths & Facts – Water Quality in Regional NSW"**

During the conference, an interesting panel discussion was held titled "Myths & Facts – Water Quality in Regional NSW" with panel members: Bill Ho, NSW Office of Water; Sandy Leask, NSW Health; Dr Annalisa Contos, ATOM Consulting and Simon Thorn, Coffs Harbour Council.

Following upon recent reports by both Infrastructure Australia and the National Water Commission suggesting serious water quality problems in regional NSW, this panel reviewed the current monitoring and performance reporting which indicates on paper that 99% of the urban populations in regional NSW receive high quality drinking compliant with the Australia Drinking Water Guidelines.

However, in comparison with microbiological testing completed by both Sydney Water and Hunter Water, there did appear to be a higher



Winner Open Photography - Frank Kolver

incidence of failures in some areas of regional NSW.

It was generally agreed that the opportunity to improve compliance performance and service levels does exist and that an industry-wide movement towards risk assessment based water quality management plans, as proposed under the new Public Health Regulations 2011, will assist local water utilities in NSW to continue to provide safe drinking water services into the future.

There were many interesting presentations during the conference however two which were particularly noteworthy included; "The Case for Direct Potable Water Reuse in Australia", by Stuart Khan, University of New South Wales and "The Role of in vitro Bioassays in Water Quality Monitoring", by Dr Frederic Leusch, Smart Water Research Centre, Griffith University. These presentations are now available at the LGSA website www.lgsa-plus.net.au

• **NSW Water Directorate Forum**

The NSW Water Directorate's – Water Managers' Forum occurred during the 2011 Water Management Conference. The Forum was facilitated by the executive officer, Gary Mitchell and provided an opportunity to discuss issues around the operations of local water utilities. This year the topics included:

- Public Health Act 2010,
- Water Operator Training/WIOA,
- Fire Flows,
- Building in the vicinity of sewer mains/exempt and complying development,
- Dam Safety Inspections/State Water, and
- Environmental River Flows/Water Licensing

Approximately 50 people attended and actively participated in this forum and the recorded discussions provide some interesting reading to those involved in the NSW local government water industry. A full transcript is now available at NSW Water Directorate website, www.waterdirectorate.asn.au

The Minister for Primary Industries and Small Business, the Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP, unfortunately was not able to attend this conference and nominated the local Member for Clarence, Mr Steve Cansdell to attend on her behalf. This turned out to be an interesting choice of substitute with Mr Cansdell resigning immediately after providing his keynote address to this conference on the Friday morning.

Engineers Australia Newcastle Regional Convention

I attended and facilitated the Engineers Australia Newcastle Regional Convention held in Armidale, 16 – 18 September 2011, at the University of New England. The theme of this conference ‘Sustaining our Regions – The Engineering Challenge’ included keynote presentations by: Jillian Kilby, National Young Engineer of the Year 2010; Chris Davis, Commissioner of the National Water Commission and Merv Lindsay, National President of Engineers Australia.

As always, Chris’ presentation titled ‘Urban Water Futures – Brave New World?’ provided some thought-provoking observations and concepts. These questioned the sustainability of dual water supply reticulation systems and how we, as engineers or water industry professionals, can best approach achieving the goal of providing water sensitive cities.

The conference included a site inspection of the recently completed ozonation plant upgrade of the Armidale Water Treatment Plant which has seen an Ozone/BAC filtration process successfully retrofitted to the existing water treatment plant facilities.

Government Skills Australia consultation workshop

I attended a Government Skills Australia (GSA) consultation workshop held in Coffs Harbour on 18th October 2011. This is one of a series of sessions being held throughout NSW to discuss the proposed National Certification Framework Project for Operators of Potable Water Treatment Facilities.

GSA, as the National Industry Skills Council for government and community safety (including the water sector), has been engaged by the National Water Commission (NWC) to undertake the development of a certification framework in consultation with the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA), Australian Water Association (AWA), Water Industry Operators Association (WIOA) as well as industry stakeholders and regulators.

Currently (with the exception of Victoria) operators of potable water treatment plants in Australia are not required to meet any minimum standards of qualification, competency level, licence or certification which is inconsistent with best practice across the water sector. In NSW the Office of Water has several best practice management guidelines requiring operators to hold appropriate qualifications including those provided by training courses conducted by the NSW Office of Water.

However, in recognition of the importance of operator’s competence in the production of safe drinking water and to mitigate public health risk, the NWC has commissioned the development of a national certification



Highly commended - Tania Fogden

framework for potable water treatment plant operators. This project will result in the development of a Certification Framework for operators of potable water treatment facilities. The framework and accompanying report will inform the NWC and the Commonwealth and state and territory governments about future implementation options, considerations, benefits and barriers. Further information and project details are available at the GSA website www.governmentskills.com.au

The AWA Board and Strategic Advisory Council

The AWA Board and Strategic Advisory Council recently met in Sydney on 26 – 27 October 2011. The meeting included discussions on the Annual Report 2011, training strategy and ongoing development of the 2012 – 2015 Strategic Plan. Erin Cini attended this meeting to represent the NSW Branch and further details from this meeting will be provided in the next edition of NEWSdrop.

Upcoming events

Your next major event will be the Legends of Water - Christmas Party to be held on Thursday, 1 December 2011 at the Grace Hotel, Sydney. The invited legend speakers include: David Barnes, Carmel Krogh and Chris Davis. Please register online to book your attendance at what will be a festive and interesting evening to celebrate 2011.

Engineers Australia has announced that 2012 will be ‘The Year of the Regional Engineering Team’ and it is proposed that the NSW Branch of AWA will be looking to work more closely with other related industry membership organisations during 2012, including: LGSA, NSW Water Directorate, IPWEA and Engineers Australia. The goal is to identify opportunities to co-operate in planned regional based activities and events.

Finally, our NEWSdrop editor, Karen Eaton, is always keen for your contributions to forthcoming editions and is interested in metropolitan and regional submissions. I would encourage everyone to assist Karen in this regard.

NSW Technical Seminar - Sump Design Presentation

By Mark Trembath

On Tuesday, 17 October ITT Water & Waste Water, in conjunction with the NSW AWA, held a technical presentation on pump station (sump design), which was attended by over 50 Engineers from Water Authorities and Consultants. This presentation explained the causes of clogging, blockages, cavitation and odour, and ways of eliminating them via benching, diverters, splitters and baffles etc. Flygt have been examining these causes for the last 25 years, underlining the fact that small sumps are good sumps.

Flygt has publicly released these findings as well as good design guidelines for years and they have been used successfully by Engineers around the globe. The presentation included a demonstration of Flygt's

pump station drawing program SECAD and their capabilities in CFD design, including local case studies such as the sea water intake pumps for the Melbourne desalination project.



The presentation also high-lighted the need for emergency storage tanks and the use of jockey pumps vs. VSD.

The presentation was very successful with many technical questions and positive feedback received on the night, and in follow-up emails. For further information or a copy of the pump station drawing program SECAD please contact mark.trembath@xylem.com.

ITT Water & Waste Water announced it will become Xylem on 1st November 2011.

Grab Sample – Bob Banning



Bob is the Bathurst Regional Council Waste Water Treatment Manager. He has been at the 'Perfume Farm' for 29 years, with the last 23 as manager. In 2008 the plant won recognition by the Institute of Engineers Australia as a National Engineering Heritage Landmark, not just for being the home of the original Bathurst Box but also for the significant role it has subsequently played in research and development of IDEA and BNR technologies.

Most vivid childhood memory involving water?

As I lived near a river it was my playground when I was young. As I became older it became a fishing spot and then a parking spot when I discovered girls.

What was your first job and how did you get it?

Petrol bowser boy; a family friend got me the job.

How did you end up involved in the water industry?

Before working on council I was a flour miller. I was made redundant while I was on holidays and I didn't want it to happen again. When a position became available at the plant I thought everyone goes to the toilet at least once a day so it should be a fairly secure job. The rest is history.

Favourite part of your job?

Being told you are doing a good job from people not connected to the industry.

Worst part of your job?

Going to residents' houses answering odour complaints, when you know the plant is not the cause of the odour.

Most boring job you've ever had?

Mowing the plant grounds with a hand mower when I first started, and when I finished each section the boss would start the sprinkler system up to make the grass grow.

Most bizarre job you've ever had?

Searching through the screenings bin as a resident rang thinking his absent minded mother-in-law had put her bra down the toilet with \$600 tied to the straps. As far as I know no one found it, as no honest operator shared it with me.

Pastimes / hobbies?

A bit of fishing and bushwalking and, can I count watching TV as a hobby?

What's the riskiest thing you've ever done?

Holding an angry brown snake by the tail after one of the floods we had at the plant.

What is the water supply situation in your local area?

Bathurst has been well managed in that area and we had no water restrictions during the drought.

What is the best and what is the toughest thing about working in water in regional NSW?

Not being recognized for what we do by some employers and ratepayers especially given the huge amount of responsibility water and sewer operators have running them. The plants could be worth millions of dollars and basically the town's health (drinking water up and downstream) is

in the operators' hands with very little reward for the dedication and commitment most of them have for their jobs.

How do water restrictions impact on your community's lives?

I've always been water wise, but I imagine it would be hard if you couldn't at least water your veggie garden.

Your ideal weekend consists of ...?

Usually on a Friday night I have a few beers with the mates and on the weekend I go for a walk or be with family. I try to go to my son or son-in-law's place so I can drink their beer; otherwise they come to my place and drink my supply.

What are you currently reading?

ABC Gardening Book

Favorite food?

Sausages, eggs and chips washed down with a glass of red wine just to show I've got class.

Favourite book?

Any true story of the Australian military in past and present conflicts.

Favourite music?

Don't mind a bit of Neil Diamond, Cat Stephens & Meat Loaf and everything in the 60s and 70s era.

Favourite film?

Any Tom Hanks movie e.g. Green Mile, Forrest Gump.

What's your vision for the water industry in 10 years time?

People will be made to realise how important water is and this will be forced on to them through increases in charges.

How much value does community participation add to our industry?

I don't think there is much participation at the moment as most people

just turn the tap on or press the button and they don't really care where it comes from or where it goes.

What are your views on indirect potable reuse?

It happens now only most people don't realise it and, if it's treated properly it's okay. It has to happen as Australia is a dry continent.

What's your greatest asset?

My health although I do it abuse from time to time.

What's your greatest liability?

Probably think too much on what might happen and most times it doesn't.

Best advice you've ever been given?

Look after your workers and if they do good work it makes you look good.

Who inspires you and why?

Probably Ghandi as he stood up for what he believed in and convinced the rest of India to follow him.

If there were one thing you could achieve in your lifetime, what would it be?

Convince people not to throw cotton buds down the toilet.

Name 3 people you'd like to be stranded with on a desert island?

I'll be greedy here - just my friends and their wives as we all have a great time together. (I could have said something else but my wife would probably kill me.)

If you had a time machine and could choose a date to go back to/forward to, what year would you pick and why?

Sometime in the seventies would be good as I had hair it was a different colour and I had spare holes in the end of my belt

What is one thing that not many people would know about you?

I like a challenge especially at work as it keeps the grey matter going

Interview compiled by Leonie Huxedurp

The NSW Branch is holding their final events for the year and invite you to come along to catch up and celebrate.

NSW Legends of Water Seminar & Christmas Party

Thursday 1 December 2011

Grace Hotel, Sydney

Join us on the couch to hear from three legends of water; David Barnes, Carmel Krogh and Chris Davis. From third world sanitation, colourful characters in J'berg, treatment plants burning down, to leading roles in the water industry, our moderator Will Strachan will lead you through a night full of stories both thought-provoking and inspirational.

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NSW YWP Mentor & Mentee Catch Up

Wednesday 7 December 2011

The Menzies Hotel Sydney

The NSW YWP's would like to invite all Mentors and Mentees to come along and share stories and experiences at their annual catch up event. This is open to all past, present and any future mentors or mentees who may be interested in being involved in the program.

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