



NATIONAL URBAN WATER GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

E-Mail Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2006

NUMBER 2

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Program Leader's Message

Happy New Year to you all!

2006 has started very well for the National Urban Water Governance Program research team. We have kick-started the data collection for the first phase of our institutional analysis across Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane. This has involved conducting in-depth interviews with industry leaders and change agents who collectively represent a range of perspectives, including different disciplinary, philosophical and stakeholder views. These interviewees have extensive experience across the industry and have shared their knowledge to allow our team to start assessing the different characteristics of urban water management approaches and values across the three cities.

So far we have interviewed 36 of a total of 49 identified representatives and we expect to complete this data collection by mid-March. While we are in the first stage of the program, this process is proving to be an invaluable basis for the comparative research and analysis needed for the next stages in the program. I would like to thank each of our Industry Liaison Officers, introduced later in this Newsletter, for helping to coordinate this first phase. In addition, I would particularly like to thank Alison Luobikis and Mark Tonti (Water Corporation WA), and Gavin Blakey, Elizabeth Sisson and Jenny Leis (Brisbane City Council) for hosting us in Perth and Brisbane while we were away from our Melbourne base.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you at the *Joint 7th International Conference on Urban Drainage Modelling and 4th International Conference on Water Sensitive Urban Design* on 3-7th April 2006 in Melbourne. We have an item in this newsletter with details of the one-day international workshop that we will be convening as part of this conference, titled 'Inter-Disciplinary Urban Water Research: Lessons in How to Integrate the Social and Physical Sciences'. I would like to invite your participation in this workshop as institutional capacity and governance issues will be a central theme for in-depth discussion on the day.

Also in this newsletter, we provide an overview of project awards and progress made by various members of our team on the development of industry guidelines that further facilitate our understanding of how to develop institutional capacity for more sustainable urban water management. Finally, two additional members of the research team and a new PhD student are introduced.

Once again, we welcome your contributions for our next newsletter edition.

Dr Rebekah Brown
Program Leader

The National Urban Water Governance Program

The Program is a group of social research projects that aim to provide a credible knowledge base that will effectively inform and assist urban water managers to build institutional capacity, improve water governance and deliver more sustainable forms of water management.



News and Events

For more information on the release of the ARQ guidelines visit:

www.arq.org.au

A simple model for understanding the different aspects of 'institutional capacity'.

Launch of the Australian Runoff Quality Guidelines

On 28 November 2005, a pre-release version of the Australian Runoff Quality (ARQ) guidelines was presented to over 100 practitioners in Sydney at a full day workshop. On behalf of Engineers Australia, Dr Tony Wong (Editor-in-Chief) invited 16 specialists from across Australia to contribute to the preparation of the new national guidelines. The document provides "an overview of current best practice in the management of urban stormwater in Australia, within the context of total urban water cycle management and integration of management practices into the urban built form".

Dr Rebekah Brown and André Taylor from the National Urban Water Governance Program, along with Dr Mike Mouritz from the WA Department for Planning and Infrastructure were invited to co-author a chapter on 'Institutional Capacity' (Chapter 5). The pre-release version of this chapter is available in the publications section of www.urbanwatergovernance.com. The final version is due out in early 2006.

The purpose of the new 'Institutional Capacity' chapter is to assist water professionals, managers and policy makers to improve their organisation's and region's capacity for the wide-spread implementation of more sustainable forms or for urban water management.

Figure 1 highlights the aspects of institutional capacity that are addressed by this chapter. This conceptual framework and the 26 suggested interventions in the chapter (i.e. practical management strategies) can be used as a checklist in a workshop setting, where stakeholders can start to collectively diagnose the quality of institutional capacity in a given region or organisation. This approach was used by staff from the National Urban Water Governance Program during a workshop in Perth in September 2005 to assess critical capacity building needs in the region to promote more sustainable urban water management practices (for more details, see the November 2005 newsletter which is available on our website).

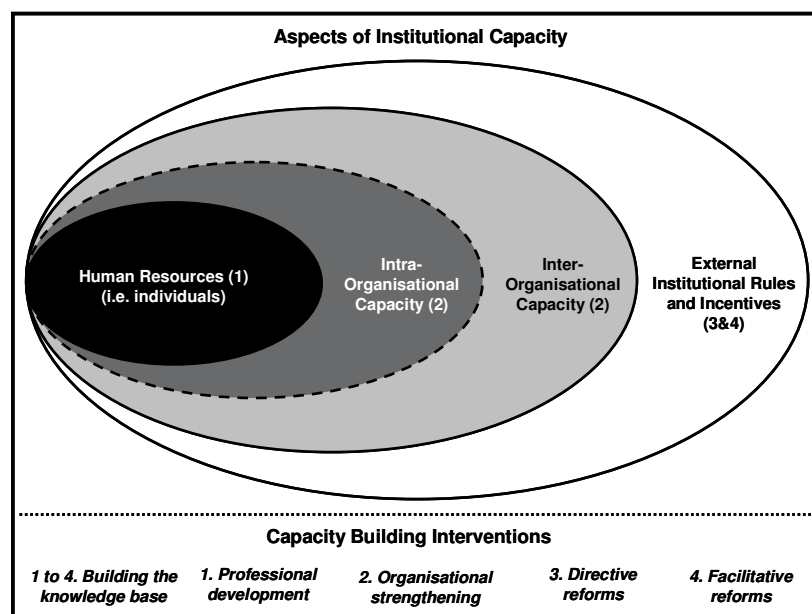


Figure 1. Aspects of institutional capacity and capacity building interventions for promoting more sustainable forms of urban water management (Source: Chapter 5, ARQ guidelines)



At the launch of the ARQ guidelines in November, André Taylor and Dr Mike Mouritz helped to explain the content of the new chapter on institutional capacity to workshop participants. The Greater Sydney region was used as a case study to highlight how the chapter could be used in a workshop setting as an assessment framework. It was pleasing to see a high recognition of the need for this chapter in the ARQ guidelines to complement the many excellent technical chapters.



Dr Mike Mouritz (WA Department for Planning and Development – one of the Program's partners) delivering part of the ARQ workshop

This Committee involves representatives from the Program's funding bodies, Monash University academics and Industry Liaison Officers from Brisbane, Perth and Melbourne.

Steering Committee Progress

On 8 November 2005, the National Urban Water Governance Program's Steering Committee met in Melbourne for the first time. This committee involves representatives from all the funding bodies, as well as researchers. Participants discussed the research objectives and proposed work, a proposed two-day forum in late 2006, the Program's Communication Strategy and new website, as well as future funding opportunities. The next meeting of the Steering Committee will coincide with the *Joint 7th International Conference on Urban Drainage Modelling and 4th International Conference on Water Sensitive Urban Design* over 3-7 April 2006 in Melbourne (see: www.icms.com.au/UDMandWSUD/welcome.asp for conference details). A *tentative* time and date has been set for the meeting: 4 to 7pm (Melbourne time) on Thursday 7 April 2006.

Upcoming Workshop on Institutional Capacity and Governance

As part of the upcoming *Joint 7th International Conference on Urban Drainage Modelling and the 4th International Conference on Water Sensitive Urban Design*, on 3-7th April 2006 in Melbourne, Dr Rebekah Brown will be convening an international workshop on behalf of the International WSUD working group under the auspices of the IAHR /IWA Joint Committee on urban drainage titled: ***Inter-Disciplinary Urban Water Research: Lessons in How to Integrate the Social and Physical Sciences.***

Date: Monday, 3 April 2006

Time: 10.00 - 17.00

Location: Grand Hyatt, Melbourne.

Cost: \$180 per person (AUD)

Registration: www.icms.com.au/UDMandWSUD/highlights.asp

This workshop is in response to the now well-accepted perspective that advancing interdisciplinary approaches is essential for pursuing more sustainable urban water outcomes. Inter-disciplinary urban water case studies from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Australia will be presented and workshopped. This workshop is designed to promote active and open discussions and it is expected that participants will improve their capacity for inter-disciplinary thinking and research.



For a copy of the TBL assessment guidelines, visit the publications section (urban stormwater quality) of www.catchment.crc.org.au.

Capacity Building Tool Wins SIA Research Award

André Taylor from the National Urban Water Governance Program and the Institute for Sustainable Water Resources recently accepted the Victorian Stormwater Industry Association's 2005 Research and Development award for innovation on behalf of a small team of researchers from Monash University and CSIRO. The award was for a research project that produced and trialled 'triple bottom-line assessment guidelines' for proposed stormwater projects.

The trial of these guidelines in Brisbane highlighted how their use can create an information-rich, deliberative environment for stakeholders to assess options.

Tools such as these can help to build a shared vision of desired alternatives, resolve conflict, build human resources, as well as strengthen relationships within and between stakeholder groups, i.e. help to build 'institutional capacity'. A paper on this trial will be delivered at the upcoming Water Sensitive Urban Design Conference in Melbourne.



**SIA Victoria
Stormwater Innovation
Award – R & D 2005**

Marrickville Project Also Wins Excellence Award

Dr Rebekah Brown and Jean Brennan from the National Urban Water Governance Program have been involved with the 'RiverLife Sustainable Water Environments' project with Marrickville Council since its inception in early 2002. This project is a research partnership between Marrickville Council, led by Jan Orton (Manager of Environmental Services), and Monash University. It aims to address some of the barriers to sustainable water management, alleviate stress on the Cooks River, and promote the use of urban stormwater as a source of water for irrigation and other purposes.



In December 2005, Stage 2 of this research project was awarded the NSW Local Government Excellence in Environment Award for Stormwater Management (Division C, 2004-05). The project involved trialling a 'bottom-up' local community planning process at the neighbourhood level for sustainable water management. It has allowed researchers to gain insight into alternative planning approaches often advocated in theory but rarely put into practice. It focuses on in-depth involvement of the community for the identification of local water issues and the design of solutions.

The Illawarra Road sub-catchment in Marrickville South has been used as a trial area for the project. A range of people have been involved from many disciplines and stakeholder perspectives in identifying solutions to water management problems in this area, resulting in innovative solutions, such as techniques and technologies for harvesting, filtering and storing stormwater.

More information is available at: www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au (search for 'riverlife')



Editions 1 and 2 of this Newsletter profile all key research staff involved with the Program

Profiles of the Research Team

In each addition of this newsletter, we will take the opportunity to profile some of the people involved in the National Urban Water Governance Program. In this edition, we profile two researchers as well as the three Industry Liaison Officers who provide an interface between researchers and local stakeholders in Perth, Melbourne and Brisbane.

Jean Brennan – Research Fellow

Jean Brennan is a Research Fellow with the School of Geography and Environmental Science at Monash University. She is an interdisciplinary researcher with a background in philosophy, political economy and environmental management. She has a Masters degree in Environmental Management from the University of New South Wales, Sydney. Her research interests are directed at developing both organisational and community capacity for integrated urban water management.



Before joining the Program in September 2005, Jean worked as a Research Associate at the Institute of Environmental Studies (UNSW) on sustainable stormwater management projects, as well as working on a number of urban water collaborative planning projects with local government. Much of this work involved researching methods for engaging communities, as well as initiatives for improving organisational attitudes and behaviours for using alternative water sources and associated technologies. Prior to this, Jean specialised as an English Language teacher in Australia and overseas.

Jodi Clarke – Research Assistant

Jodi Clarke is a Research Assistant with the School of Geography and Environmental Science at Monash University. She is an Environmental Scientist and has experience with both quantitative and qualitative social research techniques. She is interested in the relationship between urban water systems and society and recently completed her honours degree at Monash titled 'Understanding Influences on Domestic Water Consumption within Bayside, Melbourne' under the supervision of Dr Rebekah Brown.



In addition to her involvement in the National Urban Water Governance Program, Jodi is also working with the Facility for Advancing Water Biofiltration (FAWB) at Monash University. Her research activity at FAWB relates to the assessment of social and institutional barriers to innovative sustainable water technology adoption, with a specific focus on water biofiltration technologies.



Profiles of Industry Liaison Officers

Alison - Perth's Industry Liaison Officer.

Chris - Melbourne's Industry Liaison Officer.

Alison Luobikis – Perth (WA Water Corporation)



Alison Luobikis is a Strategic Analyst in the Water Corporation's Water Cycle Project Team. Her main areas of focus are:

- repositioning the Corporation to manage drainage water as part of the urban water cycle (within a context of a broader, whole-of-sector reform); and
- examining the role of non-drinking water in meeting future water needs of the WA community and the role the Corporation should play in the provision of these services.

To deliver real and sustained on-the-ground change in both of these areas, understanding the institutional context and how to move beyond that context is critical. This is where the findings (and the processes) from the National Urban Water Governance Program will assist.

Chris Lee – Melbourne (Smart Water Fund / South East Water)

Chris has worked in the water industry for 23 years and in that time he has seen a great deal of change in the sector. Based in Melbourne, his career has seen him work for the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, The Rural Water Commission, Mornington Peninsula & District Water Board, Melbourne Water and he is currently with South East Water. Chris has also spent some time working for Anglian Water in the U through an industry based exchange program. With a business background, Chris's current role has him managing the Smart Water Fund, a collaborative Victorian water industry-wide R&D grant fund that supports the development of innovative sustainable water solutions. Chris also sits on various policy and advisory committees including Melbourne's Drought Response Committee and at a national level he sits on the Standards Australia Committee for the Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme. Chris holds 'Fellow' status with the Revenue Management Association and 'Member' status of the Institute of Credit Management in both the United Kingdom and Australia.



As part of the Steering Committee for the National Urban Water Governance Program, with the breadth of his experience and particularly in his role as Manager of the Smart Water Fund (a funding partner to the Program), Chris will be able to utilise his broad industry knowledge to assist in the delivery of the Program in the Melbourne region.



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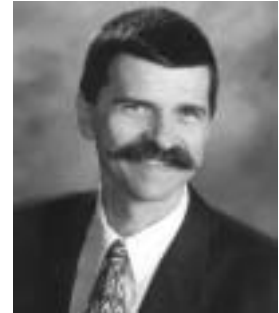
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*Gavin -
Brisbane's
Industry Liaison
Officer.*

Gavin Blakey– Brisbane (Brisbane City Council)

In his role as Principal Officer Water Resources, Gavin manages the flood management and sustainable water programs for Brisbane City Council. In the 24 years since Gavin graduated with Honours in Engineering he has undertaken a range of roles during 8 years in private enterprise and 16 years in local government. Gavin has worked in Australia, the United Kingdom and Taiwan. He also has an MBA in Technology Management and in 2002-3 was the international president for the leadership and communication organisation, Toastmasters International.



Gavin has specialised in policy and strategic planning in urban water management. He is particularly interested in the integration of water elements to achieve sustainable water outcomes. For example stormwater, water supply and sewerage have often been treated as stand alone parts of the water cycle, yet they are inextricably linked.

Susan van de Meene joins the Program as its first PhD Student

PhD Student Joins the Program

The National Urban Water Governance Program is pleased to announce that Susan van de Meene will join the Program in early March to undertake a doctoral research project focused on developing an institutional capacity assessment framework for promoting more sustainable urban water management. This project has been assisted by funding from the Victorian Government through the Department of Sustainability and Environment as part of the *Our Water Our Future* initiative.

The process of selecting a recipient of this scholarship was highly competitive, with many high calibre candidates expressing interest in undertaking research in the growing area of urban water governance.

Susan has completed a Bachelor of Arts (Geography) and Bachelor of Engineering (Environmental) at the University of Melbourne. Since graduating, Susan has worked with the consultants, URS Australia, on a range of projects relating to urban water management. She has developed a particular interest in the social aspects of engineering and is excited about her PhD project and the research being undertaken by the Program.

Susan can be contacted via the School of Geography and Environmental Science on ph. 03 9905 2910.

Visit the Program's web site for more information



www.urbanwatergovernance.com

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