


**AUSTRALIAN  
WATER**

ASSOCIATION

# Year in Review 2023-24







*The Australian Water Association acknowledges the Traditional Custodians across Australia, where we live, work and play, for their deep connection to our precious waters and land. We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and the ancestors who have cared, protected and nurtured Country for many thousands of years.*

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# Strategy'25

This Annual Review provides a summary of our highlights and achievements aligned to our Strategy'25 focus areas and enablers.

## OUR PURPOSE

Inspire and drive a sustainable water future

## 10 YEAR ASPIRATION (2023)

Water is recognised by all as essential to economic prosperity, health, the environment and Indigenous connection to Country

### MEMBER EXPERIENCE

By 2025, our members will be more diverse, connected and included, have impact and influence, have developed as professionals and celebrated success together.

### WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE & RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

By 2025, we will be recognised for our thought leadership and programs in Australia, South-East Asia and the Pacific that promote and deliver sustainable water outcomes for all.

### INDIGENOUS & COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

By 2025, National Water Week will deliver a stronger voice for water to the community and students. We will create a culturally safe space for the sharing of Indigenous water management practices and celebrate collaborations that deliver positive change.

### PEOPLE & CULTURE

By 2025, we will have reinforced a culture for people who care about a sustainable water future. Our people are connected, collaborative, innovative, commercial and entrepreneurial. We embrace inclusivity for a sustainable water future.

### DATA & DIGITAL

By 2025, we will deliver a personalised member experience, valued online library, data-driven actionable decisions, with our digital capabilities supporting the team's optimal ways of working.



# Member Experience

*By 2025, our members will be more diverse, connected and included, have impact and influence, have developed as professionals and celebrated success together.*

# Ozwater'24

Ozwater'24 held in Melbourne (Naarm) set new records and for the third consecutive year it was the largest Ozwater ever. The water community came together under the theme *Accelerating Action* which focussed on working together to address the water challenges as we face the climate crisis.

Ozwater  
firsts



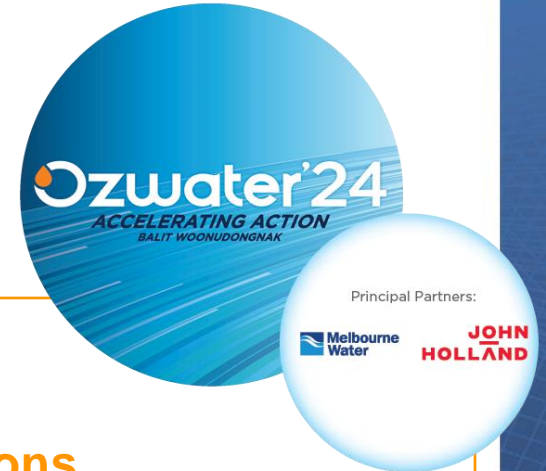
Education  
Hub



Diversity &  
Inclusion  
Signing Wall



Digital  
Posters



**5,724**  
Participants

**↑**  
**12%**  
Participants  
from 2023

**1,829**  
Delegates

**1,202**  
Exhibitor  
Staff

**2,441**  
Trade Visitors

**123**  
Education Program  
Attendees

**129**  
Other

**228**  
Total Presentations

**5**  
Keynote  
Speakers

**32**  
Poster  
Pitches

**5**  
Student Water  
Prize  
Presentations

**65**  
Workshop and  
Panel  
Presenters

**18**  
Workshops  
and Panels

**124**  
Case Studies and  
Technical papers

**30**  
Theatrette  
Presentations

**10**  
Specialised Streams: Directors Program, WSAA,  
International, Aurecon, Neurodiversity, First  
Nations x 2, Social License, Purified Recycled  
Water, Nasty Water

**234**  
Exhibition  
Stands

**342**  
Young Water  
Professionals

**1,340**  
Gala Dinner  
Attendees

**2,764**  
First Time  
Attendees

**425**  
More delegates than  
last Ozwater in  
Melbourne



# Water Leaders Forum

This year's Water Leaders Forum hosted two one-on-one discussions that focused on resilience to multi-hazard risks facing the water sector and how the sector can truly accelerate action on gender pay equity. At times confronting, the discussions highlighted the challenges and opportunities that face water leaders and how the water sector can be positioned as the epitome of industry excellence.



The discussion with Claire Braund highlighted how the water sector can advance gender equity through diverse leadership and inclusive recruitment practices.



**157**  
senior leaders in water gathered to discuss pressing issues



The discussion with Alex Blauensteiner highlighted how the water sector can enhance resilience by leveraging emerging technologies and fostering cross-sector collaboration.

# Directors Program

A co-facilitated panel discussion looked at the changing risk and reporting landscape as it relates to the water sector. The panel of experts covered reporting mandates, social and environmental responsibility and the skill sets required for modern day board members.



The panel looked at voluntary vs mandatory reporting and how they relate to risk and reputation



154 senior leaders in water gathered to discuss pressing issues



The panel explored the changing role of board directors and the shifting skill sets needed to adapt.



# Connected by Water

The inaugural Connected by Water Conference focused on where water underpins economic prosperity, communities, the environment and Indigenous connection to Country. The conference provided an opportunity to discuss the intersection of water with other sectors across the economy that have an interest or dependency on the sustainable management of water including mining, energy and primary production.

**568**

attendees

**107**

Young Water  
Professionals

**14**

First Nations  
attendees

**190**

organisations  
represented

**6**

Interactive sessions

**78**

paper presentations

**13**

poster pitches

**3**

site tours

**32**

exhibitors

Principal Partners:



# National, State, and Territory Events Program

With over 100 events ranging from conferences to webinars and awards dinners, there were plenty of opportunities to share, connect and inspire. In-person event attendance continued to grow this year, and we maintained online event offerings to further extend our reach.





# Branch Achievements



ACT members gathered for a memorable end-of-year event at Snapper and Co., fostering connections and celebrating achievements.

The annual Water Leaders Dinner and Awards were held at the historic Old Parliament House and honoured members for their inspiring leadership in research, programs, and infrastructure.

The ACT Water Matters Conference furthered this momentum by exploring lessons learned from past experiences to shape strategies for climate resilience and readiness, positioning the region as a leader in adaptive water management.



NSW made strides with its inaugural Parliamentary Water Forum, where Hon. Rose Jackson emphasised water as a critical enabler for resilience in regional communities.

The forum, along with the annual breakfast, addressed drought challenges and drew attention to regional water issues.

The Regional Water Champions initiative brought discussions on First Nations water management to hubs across the state.

The NSW Water Awards attracted 460 attendees and celebrated over 50 impressive submissions, with Leonie Haskew receiving the prestigious Roger Pettitt Award for her contribution.



The NT Water in the Bush conference and Awards Dinner attracted guests from all over Australia, underscoring the importance of water security in remote regions.

The event included a panel on *Where to from here* for regional water services and showcased best practices for Aboriginal economic development. Hon. Kate Worden provided insights into the Territory's efforts to strengthen water resilience and close the gap for Indigenous communities, highlighting policies for equitable water allocation and resilience initiatives to support urban and remote populations.



# Branch Achievements



Queensland celebrated a record year, with outstanding attendance at key events. The NQ Conference in Townsville and QWater in Brisbane involved over 300 delegates, reinforcing the state's engagement with the water sector.

The annual Gala Awards Dinner in Brisbane was a sold-out, with 510 attendees and 10 nominations for the Young Water Professional of the Year award.

The Qld Industry Breakfast and technical events, including the YWP favorite, The Amazing Race, showcased a strong commitment to professional growth and community building.



South Australia saw impressive growth in participation across all events, reflecting strong industry engagement.

The State Conference and Minister's Breakfast achieved record attendance, with 170 attendees at the latter, and the YWP Forum saw a 35% increase.

SA showed their commitment to raising awareness and attracting the younger generation to Careers in Water, successfully hosting three events for secondary and tertiary students.

The SA Gala Awards Dinner, a highlight of the year, continued to build in popularity, celebrating 22 outstanding finalists and fostering industry connections.



Tasmania achieved a significant milestone with the addition of a Platinum Corporate Member, underscoring the importance of strong industry partnerships.

The *Where the Water Meets* conference in Launceston marked a return to Northern Tasmania, featuring discussions on flood response and an engaging panel.

The Industry Breakfast in March tackled ESG topics, including a site visit to TasWater's Bryn Estyn Water Treatment Plant, enriching participants' industry knowledge.

The YWP online learning series spotlighted the Bridgewater Bridge as a major project, reflecting a focus on future infrastructure.





# Branch Achievements



Victoria had a standout year, hosting Ozwater'24 in Melbourne, which showcased the state's contributions to the water sector and connected local professionals with international peers.

A new Migrant Worker Initiative was launched, creating pathways for migrant workers to bring their skills into the industry.

Victorian member Andrew Chapman was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his distinguished career and contributions.

The year closed with the 60th anniversary VIC Gala, where over 500 attendees celebrated this important milestone for the Victorian water community.



Members of the WA water community were thrilled to have AWA's Connected by Water Conference held in Perth. The WA Branch organised site tours including a walking tour of Wetlands of Boorloo incorporating Indigenous connection to land and water and water poetry; the Advanced Water Recycling Plant and the Water Research Innovation Precinct, the Woodman Point Water Resource Recovery Facility and Hazer Hydrogen Demonstration Plant.

Other highlights during the year included the YWP Quiz Night, Student Water Prize presentations, and a workshop on effective communication, fostering both learning and professional growth. The event also celebrated excellence in the sector with a presentation by the 2023 WA Water Award winner, Luca Zappia.



The International Water Association Australia (IWAA) marked a significant year, by formally establishing the IWAA Young Water Professionals Subcommittee which hosted its first online mixer, uniting participants from across the South Pacific.

The relaunch of the IWAA newsletter was met with enthusiasm, enhancing member engagement and communication.

At Ozwater'24, IWAA Executive Director Professor Kala Vairavamoorthy, delivered an impactful keynote and participated in a panel on global and local water perspectives, with insights from key industry leaders.

This engagement highlighted IWAA's dedication to fostering international dialogue on water challenges.



# Specialist Networks

Our 11 Specialist Networks provide a platform for members to share ideas and expertise across water management. The networks are overseen by volunteer committees of water professionals committed to sharing information. Members can opt in to be part of any of the Specialist Networks, regardless of career level.



## Member Circles

There were 20 Member Circle's held during 2023-24, an increase of 8 on the previous year. Our Specialist Networks engaged over 1,000 members through Member Circles.

## Ozwater

3 Specialist Networks held workshops at Ozwater'24; Water Efficiency on drought response, Water Quality on the cost of water and Desalination on the state of play 20 years after the Millenium Drought.

## Collaboration

Chairs and Co-Chairs met twice during the year and identified areas for collaboration between the Specialist Networks. Three joint Member Circles were delivered; Recycled Water and Desalination for Hydrogen Production; the Operation of Treatment Plants in Regional, Rural & Remote Areas and Disaster Resilience - lessons learned.

## Careers

The Water Literacy & Education Specialist Network continues to make an important contribution to Careers in Water and the Water Ambassadors Program to ensure that our members have the opportunity to share their passion and knowledge with younger generations.

## Expert panels

The Desalination Specialist Network held a live member circle on the Ozwater'24 Exhibition Stage with over 100 attendees. An expert panel provided an overview of the Big 6 Desalination Plants in Australia and shared their insights 20 Years on from the Peak of the Millenium Drought. A few desalination myths & facts were identified.



# 2024 Australian Water Awards

The Australian Water Awards aim to recognise and promote the outstanding achievements and contributions AWA members make to the water sector and the wider community.



# 2024 Australian Water Award Winners

## **R&D Excellence Award (sponsored by Water Research Australia)**

*Ecosystem Functions in the Murray-Darling Basin (Investing in New Knowledge to Adapt the Murray-Darling Basin Plan)*  
CSIRO and Murray Darling Basin Authority

## **Organisational Excellence Award (sponsored by Hydroflux)**

*Waterwise Perth Action Plan 2019*  
Department of Water & Environmental Regulation, Water Corporation and other contributing organisations

## **Infrastructure Project Innovation Award (Regional) (sponsored by SMEC)**

*Laramba Water Treatment Plant: Improving the Health of a Remote Community*  
Power and Water Corporation and Clean TeQ Water

## **Infrastructure Project Innovation Award (Metro) (sponsored by SMEC)**

*Eastern Treatment Plant Biogas Handling System Stage 1 Upgrade*  
Melbourne Water and John Holland-KBR Joint Venture

## **Water Industry Safety Excellence Award (sponsored by WSAA)**

*Innovative and Safe Solution for Water Distribution System Maintenance - Portable Chlorine Disinfection Skid*  
SUEZ, SA Water and other contributing organisations

## **Customer Experience Award (sponsored by WSAA)**

*School Education Waterwise Experience*  
Water Corporation

## **Best Water E-Journal Paper – in Honour of Guy Parker**

*Digital Tool for Driving Circular Economy Outcomes in the Australian Red Meat Industry*  
Fabiana Tessele

## **Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize (sponsored by Xylem)**

*Hey-sop! Fix-up! and Avo-clean Water System*  
Lily Rofail, PLC Sydney

## **Student Water Prize (sponsored by Guidera O'Connor)**

*Deep Learning for Prognostics of Wastewater Treatment Facilities*  
Maira Alvi

## **Young Water Professional of the Year Award (sponsored by Xylem)**

Dr Samuel Skinner

## **Water Professional of the Year Award (sponsored by KSB)**

Professor Leslie (Phil) Duncan

National Award  
Program Sponsor:



## 248 Award submissions





# Water for Sustainable and Resilient Communities

*By 2025, we will be recognised for our thought leadership and programs in Australia, South –East Asia and the Pacific that promote and deliver sustainable water outcomes for all.*

# International Development Program

We continue to create opportunities to contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals in South East Asia and the Pacific. Our highlights were:

## Partnerships, Climate Smart Water Sectors & Resilience: Pacific, Vietnam and Indonesia



AWA strengthened climate resilience in the water sector by delivering two impactful partnership programs across the Pacific, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

These initiatives fostered collaboration, capacity building, and knowledge sharing between Australian and international partners, involving key organisations like the Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association, Pacific Water and Wastewater Association, and Indonesian Water Association.

More than 600 participants engaged in study tours and workshops, learning from experts across ten countries and gaining insights into sustainable water management. Supported by the Australian Water Partnership, this program exemplifies AWA's commitment to building resilient, climate-smart water sectors across Southeast Asia.

## Wastewater Knowledge Exchange Partnerships: Cambodia

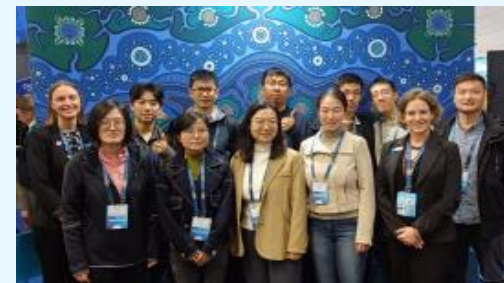


In Cambodia, the Wastewater Knowledge Exchange Partnership provided a platform for Cambodian and Australian professionals to share expertise in modern urban wastewater services.

This initiative, led by the Cambodian Ministry of Public Works and Transport, aims to expand the capacity of local water authorities through hands-on workshops and site visits, enhancing their knowledge of wastewater treatment practices.

Over 25 key representatives from various sectors participated, culminating in valuable interactions with Hunter Water and Yarra Valley Water, which underscored the importance of effective wastewater management. Funded by the Australian Government's Partnerships for Infrastructure, this program has significantly boosted Cambodia's water management capabilities.

## Innovative water management practices and emerging technologies: Australia & China



The Australia-China partnership project fostered engagement between the two countries, with a strong focus on lowering emissions through innovative water management and emerging technologies.

The program included hands-on industry placements and collaborative research, bringing together Australian and Chinese students, young professionals, and major industry leaders like Dupont, Jacobs, and Sydney Water. Five Chinese delegates also attended Ozwater'24, enriching the exchange of ideas and bridging generational and cultural knowledge gaps.

Supported by the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations, this initiative has further strengthened ties between the two nations, advancing sustainable water solutions for a shared future.



# Australia & New Zealand Biosolids Partnership

Australia and New Zealand Biosolids Partnership (ANZBP) provides a platform to bring together utilities, consultants, academics and government agencies to progress and champion the sustainable management of biosolids.

## Ozwater'24

Managing Biosolids in  
An Uncertain Future:  
Resource Recovery,  
Risk, Regulation and  
Resilience Panel

## 5 Newsletters

highlighting biosolids  
news and  
regulations, research  
developments, and  
publications

## Increased Engagement

18 member organisations

600+ active individuals

900 LinkedIn followers

## Production and End Use Survey 2023

Australia and  
New Zealand

## Policy Submissions

Feedback on revised  
PFAS NEMP3.0

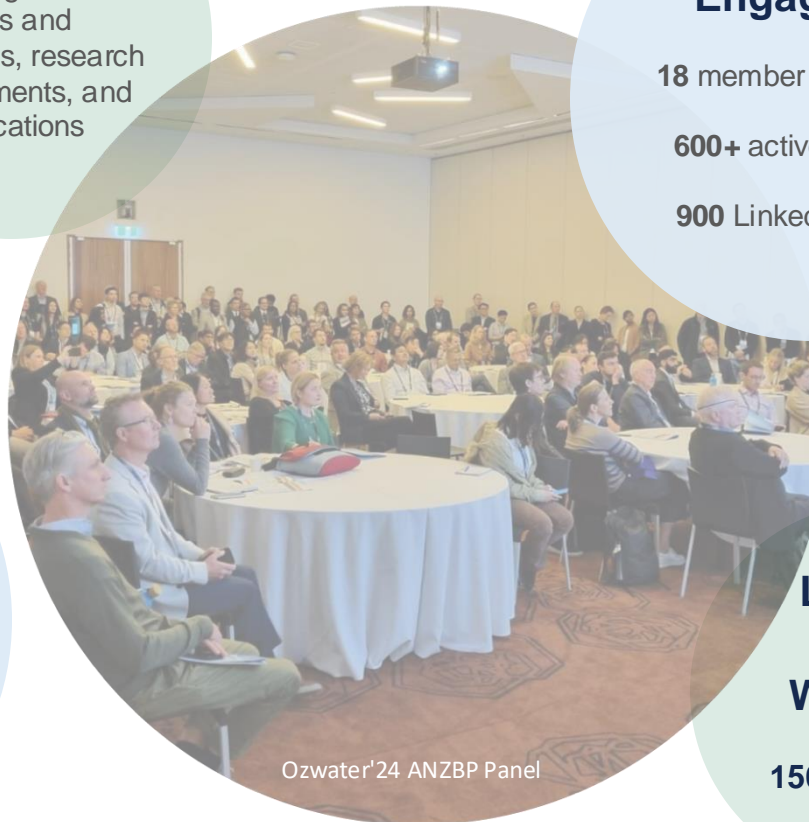
Biosolids Regulatory  
Review Issues Paper

## 4 Lunch & Learn Webinars

150+ attendees  
in total

## 100+ attendees 'Coffee & Cake' Networking Sessions

across three Member-only  
sessions strengthened advocacy  
and provided a platform for  
information sharing



Ozwater'24 ANZBP Panel

ANZBP is an AWA Industry Partnership Program funded through ANZBP member organisation contributions and guided by the expert knowledge of the ANZBP Steering Committee.

# International Trade Program

We continue to connect our members with markets overseas and facilitate access to Australian Government assistance where available. Our highlights were:

## Vietnam Water Week 2023



Organised by Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association (VWSA), VietFair and Binh Duong Water – Environment Joint Stock Company (BIWASE), Vietnam Water Week provided an excellent opportunity to showcase innovation from:

- ALGAESYS
- Detection Services Pty Ltd
- James Cumming And Sons Pty Ltd
- Water Source Australia
- Quantum Filtration Medium Pty Ltd

Celebrations were in order with the event marking the 50th year of Australia and Vietnam's diplomatic relationship and AWA's Australian Pavilion winning the coveted 'outstanding stand'.

The Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) and the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) provided support.



## Singapore International Water Week 2023



- Trade delegation and exhibitors included James Cummings & Sons Pty Ltd, Envirosuite, Quantum Filtration Medium Pty Ltd-, Southern Commercial Divers, Kallipr, Matter IO Pty Ltd and Spiral Data
- AWA hosted a panel session on '*Beyond Crisis: Building Resilience in a Changing Climate Landscape*' with leaders from across the Australian water sector sharing insights on building resilience and future-proofing the Australian water sector amid climate uncertainty.
- Australian High Commissioner in Singapore, Allaster Cox, visited the Australian Pavilion and met with AWA President and CEO, members, and exhibitors.

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## Ozwater'24 trade connections, including Pacific and Vietnam



The Pacific Trade Meet and Greet at Ozwater'24, hosted by the Pacific Water and Wastewater Association (PWWA) and AWA, with support from Hydroflux, provided an opportunity for:

- Valuable networking for delegates and members to connect and exchange insights.
- Exploring trade opportunities with PWWA leadership and members from the Solomon Islands and Tonga.
- An interactive Q&A session to learn from water professionals already working across the Pacific.

Over 60 Vietnamese delegates, including the CEO and Chairman of Vietnam Water utilities, attended OzWater'24 and participated in an Exhibition tour to Australian exhibitors who expressed their interests in doing business in Vietnam.



# Impact and Advocacy

AWA advocated for a sustainable water future in Australia and our region more broadly through policy submissions, thought leadership, and initiatives promoting equity and sustainable management.

## Member-driven Policy Submissions



Australia's water policy is at a pivotal moment. To drive sustainable water outcomes, AWA has provided membership-driven policy recommendations to key state and national consultations.

- [Productivity Commission National Water Initiative Inquiry Submission – February 2024](#)
- [Review of Funding Models for Local Water Utilities, NSW Productivity Commission – April 2024](#)
- [National Water Agreement Discussion Paper Response – May 2024](#)

## Thought Leadership



As part of our drive to move the conversation forward, AWA contributed to key water discussions in Australia, South East Asia, the Pacific, and beyond.

- At the World Water Forum in Bali in May 2024, presenting as part of a water security for resilient cities World Bank panel, AWA CEO Corinne Cheeseman highlighted how the Australian water industry is addressing increasing climate risks, including droughts and floods.
- Partnering with global thought leaders, the Association amplified key topics and emerging trends, ensuring these crucial conversations resonated with Australian audiences.
- At Ozwater'24, Minister Tanya Plibersek met with AWA and presented as a keynote speaker, engaging with AWA on key water policy issues.
- Working with our members, AWA engaged with NSW Minister Rose Jackson, advocating for equitable funding models for local water utilities.

## Water Equity: Australia



During 2024, AWA began exploring the challenges and opportunities for ensuring equitable access to safe water in regional and remote Australian communities, the outcomes of which will enable AWA to:

- Identify key gaps and strategic opportunities to enhance water service delivery in regional and remote communities.
- Develop a comprehensive stakeholder ecosystem map to guide partnerships and influence decision-making for improved water outcomes.
- Develop a series of prioritised pilot project options to inform water management solutions that can be supported and facilitated by AWA with our members and partners.

# Indigenous and Community Collaboration

*By 2025, National Water Week will deliver a stronger voice for water to the community and students. We will create a culturally safe space for the sharing of indigenous water management practices and celebrate collaborations that deliver positive change.*



# Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

The Australian Water Association commenced progress on our *Reflect* Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), aiming to embed respectful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This aligns with our core values and strategic objectives, fostering meaningful relationships that support First Nations water professionals and communities. AWA has made significant strides in our reconciliation journey.

- **Cultural Learning** including a Cultural Onboarding course by proud Gomeroi man Phil Duncan, Tribal Warrior Aboriginal Cultural Cruise on Sydney Harbour, and visiting Sydney Water's Malabar fencing project which incorporated local Indigenous artwork representing animals on the pathway and planting significant plants along the fence line that were important to the Dharawal people in this area.
- **RAP Advisory Group** was formed in partnership with WSAA which includes First Nations representatives from across our membership to provide advice and guide our Reconciliation activities.
- **National Reconciliation Week** online event jointly hosted with WSAA providing a platform for perspectives from Indigenous Australians' experience and knowledge in water management.
- **Ozwater'24** through Welcome to Country and smoking ceremonies, the inclusion of First Nations speakers and papers in the program such as; Keynote Speech by Corey Tutt OAM Aboriginal STEM professional and founder of Deadly Science, cultural workshop by Phil Duncan with Cynthia Mitchell in the YWP Program, Indigenous streams, papers and workshops in the program, displayed Principal members RAP Artworks in the Exhibition and translation of Ozwater'24 theme into the local Aboriginal language.
- **Inclusive Policies** reviewed our organisational policies to understand where we can remove barriers and improve inclusion for First Nations people.



**At the Heart of All Life**  
© Amy Allerton



## On-Country Cultural Immersion

Traditional Owner of the Terry Hie Hie lands of the Gomeroi Nation, Phil Duncan led an On-Country Immersion, designed to deepen participants' cultural understanding and foster respectful, meaningful engagement with First Nations communities. Participants explored Indigenous connections to Country, visiting sacred sites including Myall Creek, Gum Flat Environmental Reserve, Terry Hie Hie Aboriginal Reserve, and the Gwydir Wetlands. This powerful journey left a lasting impact on all members and staff who took part, enriching their perspectives and strengthening their commitment to respectful relationships with First Nations people.

Partner:



Australian Government  
Department of Climate Change, Energy,  
the Environment and Water



16 attendees from AWA Corporate Members spanning government, water utilities, service providers, government agencies and consultants.





## Careers in Water

Careers in Water is a member-funded program that aims to address the skills and talent shortage by raising awareness of the range of roles and careers on offer in water in Australia. Building a national brand and campaign across a broad range of organisations, disciplines and fields, Careers in Water will extend its reach into schools, vocational and tertiary education sectors and increase the talent pool over the course of the three-year program.

AWA launched its Careers in Water website in October 2023 during National Water Week, partnering with the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) in the development of a series of member career profile stories which were released as part of a social media campaign. AWA's jobs board was also enhanced and incorporated as part of the site providing our members with a new comprehensive platform where their job advertisements can be posted to increase the attraction of new employees to their organisation.



**8**  
founding members  
signed on

**10**  
AWA Member careers  
profiles

**CAREERS  
IN WATER**  
CAREERSINWATER.COM.AU

**23,031**  
[www.careersinwater.com.au](http://www.careersinwater.com.au)  
visits

Thank you to our founding partners:



# National Water Week 2023

National Water Week makes a splash across Australia every third week in October. Our goal is to reach the wider community to raise awareness about water and increase engagement through events and competitions held during the week by our members.

The theme for 2023 – “**United by Water**” celebrated water's vital role in connecting us all.

Partner:



Australian Government  
Department of Climate Change, Energy,  
the Environment and Water

**9,550**

Total page views  
on the website in  
October

**5,003**

Entries into the  
poster  
competition

**173,403**

Facebook audience  
for posts on  
Ambassadors,  
poster competition  
and remote school  
fundraiser



**406**

Registrations  
for Academic  
Panel  
Discussion

**16**

Listed events  
across the  
country

**33**

Ambassadors

**19**

Schools  
registered in the  
Ambassadors  
Program



# Education Hub at Ozwater'24

A new initiative at Ozwater'24, the Education Hub provided the opportunity to showcase the important, exciting and boundless opportunities in water to inspire our future water workforce.



**200+**

University, Secondary and Primary school students participated in an industry immersion program

**86**

Year 7 students participated in a STEM problem-based learning program

AWA Members participated as mentors and panellists

The Education Program featured an Exhibition Hall 'Water hunt' for all students

Industry presentations introduced students to the range of different disciplines, companies and opportunities within the water sector

'Our Blue World – A Water Odyssey' screened as part of the University student program

AWA referred students to relevant water career information and programs



# Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize

The Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize is an annual water science competition for high school students. Students are challenged to create solutions for water challenges – with the national prize awarded at Ozwater. The winner of the Australian competition is invited to participate in the [Stockholm Junior Water Prize](#). The prestigious international award is awarded each World Water Week in Sweden.



Sponsored by:

**xylem**  
Let's Solve Water

Lily Rofail from  
PLC, Sydney

Lily's project, "Investigating if Avocado Skin Powder or Bacopa Monnieri Can Alter the Amount of Heavy Metals in Aquatic Environments", aimed to investigate methods of preventing the accumulation of toxic heavy-metal contaminants. Specifically, it examined the use of nature-based phytoremediation strategies (Avocado skin powder and Bacopa monnieri) to reduce copper concentrations in model aquatic environments. The results confirmed that both Avocado skin powder and Bacopa monnieri significantly reduced copper concentrations. These findings could be implemented to reduce heavy metal water toxicity and play a part in our efforts towards clean water for all.



# People and Culture

*By 2025, we will have reinforced a culture for people who care about a sustainable water future. Our people are connected, collaborative, innovative, commercial & entrepreneurial. We embrace inclusivity for a sustainable water future.*

# AWA Diversity and Inclusion Statement

AWA's Board approved our Diversity and Inclusion Statement which was developed with our Strategic Advisory Board (a representative group of members from the Branches and our Sustaining member WSAA). The Diversity and Inclusion Statement was launched at Ozwater'24 and members showed support by signing their name to it at the AWA Stand. The statement is below and on AWA's website.

*At the Australian Water Association, we are committed to fostering a safe and welcoming culture where everyone feels valued and included. We understand the transformative power of diversity.*

*We actively encourage the sharing of ideas and connections that inspire growth through our events, content and programs.*

*We invite you to be your true self, and we pledge to uphold our commitment to positive change, consistently evolving towards a more inclusive and sustainable future.*





# Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

We continue to show our support for the LGBTIQ+ community as partners of Pride in Water, a network that helps to build a strong culture of respect, inclusion and connection both within our workplaces and our broader community. Pride in Water held an activation at Ozwater'24 which led to many sign-ups with partner organisations and pledges to make water-based companies and organisations a safe space for those in the LGBTIQ+ community.

In Indigenous engagement, all significant events included a Welcome to Country. We developed a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and co-hosted a webinar with WSAA during National Reconciliation Week featuring our RAP Advisory Group members David Kirby, Veronica Murphy and Hmalan Hunter-Xénié as they shared their experiences working in the water sector.

In gender equity, we continued to champion women's equity, ensuring our keynote speakers, panels and content are balanced with female participation and inclusion.



**50.9%**

Content with  
female  
interviewers

**17.2%**

Indigenous  
stories in  
content

**45%**

Female  
Speakers &  
Panels

**22**

Indigenous  
Speakers/Papers  
at events

**100%**

Indigenous  
Welcome to  
Country  
(major events)

**96%**

Reconciliation  
Action plan  
actions on time



# Member Honours and Fellowships

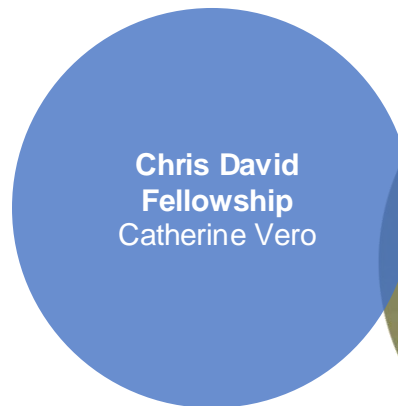
The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to honour members of the Australian Water Association who have made positive and demonstrable contribution to water in Australia.

The Exceptional Service award is the Australian Water Association's highest individual honour. It is awarded in recognition of long and meritorious service, and a positive and demonstrable contribution to the Association.

The Chris Davis Fellowship reflects the values of Chris Davis AM and his ability to share knowledge and leave a legacy of success. The individual is an aspiring leader who is passionate, professional, visionary, and leading a project, initiative or activity that has the potential to transform sustainable water management in Australia. This year was the first year the Fellowship has been awarded.



**Exceptional Service  
Award**  
Andrew Chapman



**Chris Davis  
Fellowship**  
Catherine Vero



**Lifetime Achievement  
Award**  
Craig Keith



**Exceptional Service  
Award**  
Dr Lionel Ho



# Young Water Professionals

The YWP Program attracts, engages, and empowers young water professionals and emerging leaders and is supported by the YWP National Taskforce and all Branches. YWP initiatives engage all professionals across the water sector in Australia, although the activities focus on professionals below the age of 35 or with less than 10 years of experience.

**90**

Delegates at  
Ozwater'24 YWP  
Program

**117**

YWPs  
represented on  
committees

**32**

YWP events  
across Australia



**107**

YWPs attended  
'Connected by  
Water'

**39**

YWP award  
nominations

**132**

Mentoring Pairs  
across Australia

**924**

AWA members are  
Young Water  
Professionals

# Data and Digital

*By 2025, we will deliver a personalised member experience, valued online library, data-driven actionable decisions, with our digital capabilities supporting the team's optimal ways of working.*

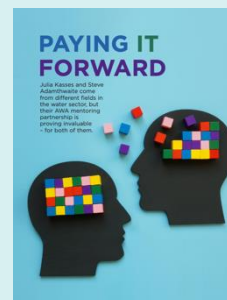


# Publications

*Current Magazine* and the *Water e-Journal* highlighted innovations and research in water management, showcasing Australia's leadership in sustainable practices, community-driven efforts, and sector resilience. These publications continue to inform and inspire advancements across the industry, reflecting AWA's commitment to fostering knowledge and progress in water management.



The 2024 edition of Current Magazine featured:



1 mentoring pair feature



1 international case study

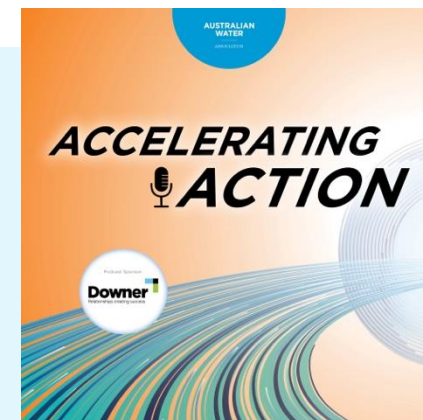


1 Indigenous feature

# Podcasts

The Accelerating Action podcast series explores diverse topics like leveraging IoT to future-proof utilities, Indigenous-led water solutions, water services for Indigenous communities, and incorporating First Nations knowledge in projects. It also covers breaking employment barriers for people with disabilities, biosolids production trends, carbon credits in the water sector, and SCADA analytics tailored for water management. The episodes feature expert insights on tackling climate challenges and advancing the water sector.

**8 episodes released**



**172,911**  
Views

**570,899**  
Newsletter  
recipients



**22%**  
Average  
open rate

**4.3%**  
Click rate

## Top 3 most popular stories

**Sewer health campaign helps reduce  
network blockages in SA**  
(3,029 Page Views)



**New research links global warming to  
increased ENSO variability**  
(2,536 Page Views)



**Announcing the 2024 National Water  
Awards Finalists**  
(2,534 Page Views)



**32,090**  
Followers  
(up from 27,784)



**6,107**  
Followers  
(down from 6,176)



**6,279**  
Followers  
(up from 5,990)



**764**  
Followers  
(up from 670)



**1,327**  
Followers  
(up from 1,127)



# Business Performance

*Review of 2023-24*

# Financial Performance Overview

The Association reported a surplus of \$685K for the financial year 2023-24, bringing net assets (reserve balance) to \$8.2M. This result is primarily attributable to the performance of Ozwater'24, the largest conference to date, which saw record delegate numbers for the third consecutive year.

The stability of the financial position supports the investment in our FY25 budget in the final year of Strategy'25, allowing for the development of new capabilities, enhancement of member benefits, and improvement of our IT infrastructure to support growth.

Operating Surplus:

**\$685K**

Down 30% on 2022/23

Total Revenue:

**\$11,965K**

Up 15% on 2022/23

Total Expenses:

**\$11,280K**

Up 19% on 2022/23

## 5-year Performance Summary

\$'000	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Revenue	\$5,317	\$7,638	\$9,292	\$10,445	\$11,965
Operating Expenses	\$6,332	\$6,006	\$8,192	\$9,461	\$11,280
Operating Surplus	<b>\$(1,015)</b>	\$1,632	\$1,100	\$984	\$685

Total revenue increased by 15% mainly driven by event-generated revenue, with significant contributions from our Ozwater'24 conference and our new national conference, Connected by Water. Our International Program revenue also grew with increased Government funding.

Total operating expenses increased by 19% due to higher employee costs, reflecting investment in staff capability and resourcing for Strategy'25 programs. Event-related expenses also increased from the prior year, in line with higher event revenue.

Full details on AWA's FY24 financial performance are available in our [Annual Report 2023-2024](#).



# Membership Overview

We continued to experience growth, with individual membership increasing by 5%, surpassing 5,300 members, and corporate membership expanding by 6%, reaching 607 organisations. Two members upgraded from Gold to Platinum membership, and we received positive sentiment through our Member Survey (see further highlights on the next page).

## Corporate Members

<b>22</b> Principal	<b>24</b> Platinum	<b>53</b> Gold
<b>317</b> Silver	<b>176</b> Bronze	<b>15</b> University

## Individual Members

<b>1,059</b> Professional	<b>271</b> Discounted Professional	<b>246</b> Concessional
<b>3,108</b> Nominated Professional	<b>578</b> Students	<b>34</b> Life

**78% satisfaction rating**  
(up by 6%)

**NPS of +11.2**  
(up by 4.3)

**Platinum upgrades:**



# All Member Survey 2024 - Key Results and Insights

AWA conducted a biennial comprehensive All Member Survey in February 2024. These valuable insights are used to inform actions to maintain and improve and will also be used to inform our next strategy.

## 1. People still belong to AWA for knowledge & networking

The connections, networking and knowledge sharing forged through AWA continue to be the key motivators for membership. This enables a sense of belonging and paves the way towards collectively realising sustainable solutions in water management, facilitating collaborations with peers, experts and industry leaders across diverse sectors, recognition for efforts, and good 'old fashioned friendships.'

## 2. Member satisfaction

Overall membership satisfaction has reached a new high of 78%, a significant increase from 2022. In 2024 satisfaction is strong, with more than 3 in 4 members satisfied with their AWA membership. The increase in membership satisfaction between 2022 and 2024 is driven by younger members (those aged under 46 years), among whom satisfaction has risen 77% (up from 65% in 2022).

## 3. AWA's brand remains strong, and perceptions of AWA's reputation have seen significant gains in 2024

Member perceptions of AWA's reputation in the water sector have also increased relative to 2022 (89%, up from 84%), as has its reputation for promoting responsible water management (82%, significantly up from 65% in 2022). Despite recognition of AWA's reputation, however, less than 2-in-3 members feel that belonging enhances their own professional reputation (63%).

## 4. Member trust in the AWA is more mixed, but still positive

While members trust the Association to act in their best interests (78%) and trusts the information and support provided by the AWA (82%), there is less certainty that members can trust the Association to support their individual needs (66%) or follow through on commitments (62%).

## 5. The perception the AWA is easy to deal with has significantly improved in 2024

73% of members feel the Association is easy to deal with – up from 57% in 2022. Members overwhelmingly feel that the AWA keeps them up to date with water management issues (81% up significantly from 73% in 2022). However, there has been a significant decline in agreement that it is easy to access needed resources and information, down from 80% in 2022 to 64% this year.

## 6. Members want AWA to focus on leading community education and industry collaboration and the development of sector-specific skills

Nearly 2-in-5 members indicated that educating the community about water-related challenges should be one of the AWA's top two strategic areas of focus. This feedback underscores the importance of industry collaboration and innovation, particularly in addressing climate change and enhancing the industry's workforce skills to prepare for future challenges.



# Our Principal Members

We would like to thank our members for their ongoing support. In particular, we thank our Principal Members, who provide the highest level of membership support to the Association.

**AECOM**



**aurecon**

**Beca**hunterh<sub>2</sub>O

**eurofins**



**Jacobs**

Challenging today.  
Reinventing tomorrow.

**JOHN  
HOLLAND**



**Melbourne  
Water**  
Enhancing Life and Liveability

**smec**  
an sa company

**Stantec**

**suez**

**Sydney  
WATER**



**Unitywater**  
Serving you today. Investing in tomorrow.

**ventia**

**VEOLIA**

**Vinidex**  
by aliaxis



**xylem**  
Let's Solve Water



# AUSTRALIAN WATER

ASSOCIATION

We would like to thank our volunteers and staff for all that they do,  
as we work towards a sustainable water future.

