

Local Water Utilities newsletter – June 2023



Roadshow reflections and feedback

More than 130 people recently attended a series of roadshows we held for local water utilities staff.

The roadshows in Dubbo, Tamworth, Coffs Harbour, Griffith and Queanbeyan enabled participants from across the state to talk about the key issues and challenges in providing water to their communities.

Key takeaways from the roadshows include:

- our strong focus on training and workforce planning is still one of the most important priorities from the group
- the need to think differently how we are investing in infrastructure in regional NSW.

- improved emergency and incident preparedness and practices is a priority
- improved knowledge sharing - regular webinars or workshops that facilitate collaboration
- alternative funding models for regional local water utilities needs to be looked at
- focus on using innovative approaches to water resilience and security.

We value the insights provided during the roadshows and encourage attendees to provide feedback via our survey if they haven't already done so.

[Complete the survey.](#)

Are we providing the support you need?



Every 6 months, we ask you to provide feedback so we can understand your views on how the department regulates, supports and works in partnership with local water utilities. Your feedback helps us identify areas for improvement. Our survey is currently open until 31 July 2023.

We would appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey and value your feedback – all responses are anonymous. The survey will take around 5 minutes to complete and we will share the responses on our website later this year.

[Complete the survey.](#)

Engaging residents about alternative water sources



To help support a range of different water sources to be considered as utilities plan for a future with drought, variable climate and increasing population. We are collaborating with you to develop communication and engagement tools needed to inform and engage with customers about alternative water sources.

We recently asked roadshow participants to tell us what would help them talk to customers about different water sources.

So far, we've been asked for help with:

- communications support for events
- examples of successful engagements on different sources
- developing materials and resources for a variety of regions
- benefits and risk of different water sources.

If you have more ideas on the type of resources or materials that would be of interest to you and your community, email diana.cowie@dpie.nsw.gov.au by 7 July 2023.

Have your say on land use and water planning



We need your help to find ways to improve how water management is considered in land use planning.

The Integrating Land Use Planning and Water Management project aims to better integrate land use planning and water management. The project's key objectives are to:

- understand links and gaps between land use planning and water management frameworks
- ensure that policy, legislation, regulation and advisory functions for development impacting water catchments are fit for purpose
- support an environment where key land use decisions are supported by water information
- support water-related climate change and ecosystem resilience through the planning system.

The project is in its foundational phase, and we are seeking input from utilities and councils on land use planning and water management issues.

We are inviting stakeholders to participate in a one-hour interview, to discuss:

- key barriers to integrating land use planning and water management
- current collaborative arrangements between water managers and land use planners at a local government level
- examples or case studies where integration has occurred or not occurred

- recommendations to better integrate land use planning and water management.

Interview results will be anonymised and used to inform a recommendations report to help shape future policies about water and the land use planning process.

To get involved, please contact Matt Jessup (Principal Policy Officer, Urban Water) at matt.jessup@dpi.nsw.gov.au by 14 July.

EOI: Advanced Operational Support Program



We are seeking expressions of interest from local water utilities with high-risk category treatment plants (SSWP ERIL score of 3, 4 or 5) to participate in the Advanced Operational Support Program.

The free program will support local water utilities that have high-risk category treatment plants to reduce their water quality risks through improved operation and monitoring.

The program aims to optimise the performance of up to 10 water treatment plants so more regional towns have reliable, resilient and safe water services.

Submit an expression of interest by 11.59 pm, Wednesday 12 July 2023.

To apply and for more information, visit www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/water-utilities/advanced-operational-support-program

Have your say: Onsite wastewater management



The Environment and Health Protection Guidelines: Onsite Wastewater Management (EHP Guidelines or “Silver Book”) are undergoing a review and update, to bring them in line with modern expectations in relation to technological advancements, the latest scientific literature and emerging trends in land use.

The Office of Local Government is now seeking written feedback on a draft update. Consultation closes on **21 July 2023**.

For further information, including a copy of the draft update and a feedback template to use, visit: www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/council-infrastructure/services-to-communities/on-site-wastewater-management

Further information

Have your say

For more information or enquires please email the team at <mailto:regional.town.water@dpie.nsw.gov.au>

Want more monthly updates on water planning, management and reform in NSW? [Subscribe to Water News.](#)

NSW Government – Water Relations

Phone 1300 081 047

<mailto:water.relations@dpie.nsw.gov.au>

Department of Planning and Environment, Dharug Country, 4 Parramatta Square, 12 Darcy Street,
Parramatta, NSW 2150

We pay respect to the Traditional Custodians and First Peoples of NSW and acknowledge their continued connection to their country and culture.

Privacy

Your privacy is important to us. Our stakeholder management system is compliant with NSW Government's information security requirements. The data is stored in NSW for five years and users manage data under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. We will not disclose your personal information to anybody else unless you have given your consent or we are required to do so by law. More information on how the Department complies with [privacy requirements can be found on our website](#).