

BACKWASH



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BOARD NEWS

New directors on board. Welcomed at the IAA AGM held last month in Sydney were newly elected national board directors, Karen Murday (Qld), Ian Atkinson (SA) and Colin Campbell (WA). Also re elected was Trevor Guest, from WA. Three directors have left the board after having made a significant contribution during their terms. Thanks and all the best to Steve Peck, Helen Fairweather and Ken Caldecott.

Long-serving member retires from board. At the May board meeting Tony Addis, former chairman of the IAA and a long serving member of the board and SEQ Regional Committee, informed the board of his intention to resign after the AGM. The board has invited Peter Smith, the candidate in the recent elections who received the next highest number of votes, to fill the vacancy. Peter Smith has accepted and will join the board 1 June.

Board to meet in Queensland. The next board meeting will be held 2 & 3 August in Caloundra, Queensland, in conjunction with the IAA Retail Training School.

AGM rings in changes. At the AGM of the IAA last month, a motion to change the name of the association to Irrigation Australia (Limited) received more than the required 75% support to be passed. The intention is to have an official launch of the new name and logo after the ANCID AGM (20 August).

New membership category. Also passed at the AGM was a motion to create a new membership category, E, for transferring ANCID members to Irrigation Australia Ltd, and to change the constitution to allow the new association to be a committee of ICID (the International Committee on Irrigation & Drainage) and to allow up to two more board members (a maximum of 10, reflecting the additional members).

While these motions don't, of themselves, make a merger happen, they are a clear mandate from the IAA members that they support the merger and they allow ANCID members to transfer across to (the now) Irrigation Australia with confidence. Irrigation Australia will now operate on the assumption that the merger will go ahead.

ANCID AGM. At their AGM, ANCID will move to wind up their organisation at which time any ANCID members who have not already joined Irrigation Australia will be joined up. The ANCID membership has already passed a motion at its 2006 AGM to support a merger of the two bodies. As soon as any legalities of winding the organisation up have been completed, Irrigation Australia and ANCID will officially be one organisation and the new body will be launched. In the unlikely circumstance that the ANCID AGM does not agree to wind up ANCID, Irrigation Australia will continue as before but with a new name and a redundant membership category.

New business plan needed. Once the final outcome of merger discussions are known, Irrigation Australia will be working to develop a comprehensive business plan and set a new membership and board structure, to be completed early in 2008.

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REGIONAL ROUNDUP

News on activities from regional committees around Australia. You can keep up with IAA and industry news in your area and have your say about the future of your industry by attending local events and meetings. Brief reports of regional are given below. Contact your region to see how you can get involved or contact the IAA head office to find your local IAA regional representative.

NT. For information on activities in NT or to get involved with the local committee, contact Peter Giles at Oasis Irrigation, phone 08 8932 4141, email petergiles@oasisirrigation.com.au

South Australia. Next meeting is 12 June, 3.30 pm at Urrbrae Horticulture Centre, room R.01 (Irrigation training room). Office bearers for the coming year will be elected at this meeting.

A successful AGM and industry dinner was held 8 May at the Oakden Central (Adelaide city Soccer Club). Guest speaker for the evening was Ian Atkinson, CEO of the CRC for Irrigation futures. The AGM saw the nomination and election of a new 12-member committee.

South East Queensland. Next meeting is Tuesday 12 June at Landcentre, Woolloongabba starting at 5.15 pm. Please come along and have your say. For information contact the secretariat, phone 0413 334 679, email secy.seq@irrigation.org.au.

A series of two-day workshops and evaluation sessions for Certified Irrigation Operator will be run over the coming months. Each workshop will be run midweek and provide a combination of both classroom learning and practical exercises. For information, or to register your interest, contact the SEQ Secretariat, phone 0413 334 679, fax 07 3701 2300, email: secy.seq@irrigation.org.au

Darling Downs. Next meeting is 13 June at the Irish Club Hotel, Russell St, Toowoomba starting at 5.30 pm. This will be a general business meeting. For information contact David Wigginton, phone 07 48311711, mobile 0427 789 498, email: wiggind@usq.edu.au.

North Queensland. For information, contact Barbara Moloney, Regional Support Officer, phone 07 4721 5811.

In the week beginning Monday, 4 June, Jeremy Cape and Merv Jessen will be visiting the North Queensland region. There will be opportunities to discuss irrigation training and certification issues, as well as a proposed 2-

day Certified Irrigation Auditor Landscape course. You can contact Jeremy on 0410 307 444 and Merv on 0407 828 037

Northwest NSW. A very successful storage and channel seepage symposium was held by the region as a joint activity between the IAA and ANCID 28 and 29 May. Nearly 100 people attended the two days. Report in next month's Backwash.

Melbourne. For information about the region's next meeting contact Des Horton, phone 03 9313 8508, email dhorton@citywestwater.com.au

A presentation night for certification to recognise those who have led the way will be held Wednesday 13 June at Mueller Hall, national herbarium, RBG, Birdwood Dr, Gate F, 5.00 to 6.30 pm with light refreshments (no charge).

Western Australia. Next executive meeting is 7:30 am Tuesday 19 June at the Metro Inn, South Perth. For more information on WA activities contact Doug Hall, the WA Region's Industry Development Officer (ph: 08 9474 9089; mobile 0407 701 513; or email doug.hall@irrigation.org.au).

Don't forget the regional executive's Biennial Irrigation Expo, 8 August at Burswood on Swan. If you are interested in exhibiting, contact Marcus Turpin mturpin@rainbird.com.

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MEMBERSHIP

With Australia in the grip of the worst drought on record, irrigators in many areas facing zero allocations and all capital cities except Darwin on water restrictions, these are challenging times for the irrigation industry. At times like these a strong industry association is vital to ensure that policies and programs that provide a sustainable future for your business is supported.

Do you know someone in the industry in Australia who isn't a member? Why not approach them and give them an application form. Regional committees are encouraged to contact new members and make sure they are invited to the next regional event. New members can find the contact details of all regional committees on the IAA website www.irrigation.org.au. Do your bit to encourage membership from businesses you deal with.

Welcome to new members for May:

- Simon Andrews, Melbourne Zoo, Parkville Victoria
- Robert Carter, Water Tanks Australia, Thornton NSW
- Dale Clark, Glasshouse Mountains Queensland
- Adrian Hayes, Coleambally NSW
- Markus Krebs, Kingsley WA
- Richard Lamb, City of Wodonga, Wodonga Victoria
- Peter Leeson, Peter Leeson Pty Ltd, Goondiwindi Queensland
- Wayne Lister, Lister Irrigation, Warwick Queensland
- Michael Marshall, About Water Solutions, Exford Victoria
- Andrew Oates, Ako Irrigation, Griffith NSW
- Matthew Russell, Rustle Landscapes, Collaroy Beach NSW
- Tim Scott, St Kilda Victoria
- Werner Weijerman, Aqua Flow Irrigation Ltd, Auckland NZ
- Ken Yeomans, Keyline Designs Southport Queensland

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Certification presentation night in Melbourne. A presentation night for certification to recognise those who have led the way will be held 13 June at Mueller Hall, national herbarium, RBG, Birdwood Dr, Gate F, 5.00 to 6.30 pm with light refreshments (no charge).

Certified Irrigation Operator training program. Gold Coast Water is sponsoring this training program for people involved in operating irrigation systems. There will be three workshops: Workshop 1, Irrigation systems and soil plant water relationships, 13 & 14 June; Workshop 2, Irrigation operations and maintenance, 20 & 21 June, and Workshop 3, Irrigation and the environment, 27 & 28 June. Venue is Lakelands Resort, Robina. Cost is \$400 pp. For information and to register email secy.seq@irrigation.org.au

Best Practice in Irrigation - training by industry, for industry. The IAA is delivering a series of irrigation workshops in Queensland as part of a larger program run by the Australian Centre for Lifestyle Horticulture. The workshops are aimed at people with some experience in operating pressurised irrigation systems in public open space, sports grounds, bowling greens and golf courses. Participants who complete all workshops may be eligible to be recognised as IAA Certified Irrigation Operators. Venue is DPI&F Redlands Research Station, Delancey Street, Cleveland. Dates and courses are: 19 & 20 June, Irrigation systems & soil/plant/water relationships; 17 & 18 July Irrigation operations and maintenance; and 21 & 22 August Irrigation and the environment. Each workshop will provide a combination of both classroom learning and practical exercises. Cost is \$770 pp inc. GST. For information and to register email secy.seq@irrigation.org.au

2007 course dates Certified Irrigation Auditor □ Landscape. The Certified Auditor program is aimed at anyone responsible for or operating a commercial or public irrigation system. The program provides training in basic irrigation system operation and scheduling and the process for determining the uniformity and efficiency of the system. With increasing scrutiny of system operation and often regulatory requirements to meet water saving targets, this course is a must for sporting bodies, local councils and irrigation contractors. Dates for 2007 Certified Irrigation Auditor □ Landscape courses are:

Adelaide 9 & 10 October
Brisbane 22 & 23 August
Sydney 19 & 20 September
Perth 22 & 23 August
Melbourne 5 & 6 September

Extra courses run on demand. For information and to register contact Catherine Parbery, IAA head office, phone 02 9476 0142, email catherine.parbery@irrigation.org.au

2007 Retail Training Course full. The 2007 Irrigation Industry Retail Training Course to be held from 21 July 2007 in Caloundra on the Queensland Sunshine Coast is full.

School of Irrigation a great success. More than 60 people participated in the School of Irrigation held in Sydney 21 □ 25 May. From the feedback everyone involved rated the week a great success and recommended that it be run again next year.

Urban Best Management Practice Guidelines. The essential guide for the commercial irrigation sector. Your concise guide to best management practice for designing, installing, maintaining, and operating irrigation systems in an urban setting. The Guidelines now include a handy checklist for assessing system compliance. Get your copy now from the IAA: \$22.00 inc. GST for members and \$33.00 inc. GST for non members. Call 02 9476 0142 to order your copy.

A simpler document aimed at the home gardener has also been produced. This would be suitable for IAA members to distribute to the general public and domestic customers and a print ready version can be downloaded from the IAA website at <http://www.irrigation.org.au/download/standards/Home%20Gardener%20FINAL%20web.pdf>

Recycled Water Course. If you are interested in using recycled water, IWES are conducting a new course on Water Recycling for Agricultural and Horticultural applications presented by Anne-Maree Boland and Daryl Stevens. Location is the Gold Coast, 19 □ 20 July. For more information go to www.iwes.com.au

International Visits and Exchanges Programme now open. The International Centre of Excellence in Water Resources Management has announced that applications for the 2008 International Visits and Exchanges Programme are now open. The programme provides opportunity for industry, vocational education and training and the tertiary education sector and research communities to increase engagement at an international level in the area of water resources management. For information and details on application dates go to website www.icewarm.com.au or contact Paul Saeki, phone 08 8236 5209, email psaeki@icewarm.com.au

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AROUND INDUSTRY

Victoria still not on board with water plan. The Federal Government's hopes of enlisting Victorian Farmers' Federation and the State Government support for the national plan for water security have not been. The Victorian Government has told the Federal Government that there are problems with the draft legislation and they are not prepared to sign up. The VFF is also saying that it can't support the plan at this stage.

Water plan recipe missing two ingredients. How public participation will be achieved and an environmental perspective are two key elements missing from the National Plan for Water Security, according to Professor Kath Bowmer, from Charles Sturt University. She says that it's not clear how agreements on water sharing made through the community consultation over the last five or seven years will be honoured in the new plan, or how, into the future, resources and processes for public participation will be developed. In this context Prof. Bowmer is concerned about the limited extent of regional consultation and participation so far, while some groups, such as irrigation corporations, appear to have access to Malcolm Turnbull, Federal Minister for the Environment and Water Resources. She is also calling for more transparency into how investments through the plan will be made. For info go to <http://news.csu.edu.au/director/latestnews.cfm?itemID=92D309FABEEBC48CCBAA241AC6792A28>

National performance report for urban water utilities released. Last month the National Water Commission and Water Services Association of Australia released the first National Performance Report for urban water utilities. The report provides information on the pricing and service quality of Australia's major and non-major urban water delivery agencies. Included in its findings is the fact that average residential water consumption per property across Australia for properties supplied with water from major urban water utilities fell by 6% from 2004-05 to 2005-06, as a result of water restrictions and reduced supply across many urban areas. It also highlights the level of water recycling occurring across urban water utilities (an average of 9% of total water volume). Melbourne had the lowest annual typical residential bill at \$473, and Perth had the highest at \$750. To read the report go to websites www.nwc.gov.au/nwi/index.cfm or www.wsaa.asn.au.

River Murray irrigators look for rain. The SA Government says that above-average rain is needed across the Murray-Darling Basin for water to be allocated to SA River Murray irrigators next season. Under the worst-case scenario, SA could receive 487 GL along the Murray in 2007-08 (it usually receives 1850 GL). Hopes are being pinned on rain falling in winter and spring to avoid this occurring. Irrigators say that if they don't receive at least 5% water allocation from July, industries will face collapse. Most at risk is the vegetable industry in South Australia's Murraylands, although permanent plantings will follow suit.

Qld Murray Darling farmers describe the big dry. Dry rivers, high hopes was the topic of this week's ABC Radio National Background Briefing program that featured interviews with several Queensland farmers in the Murray Darling Basin who outlined the severe extent of the drought on their farm businesses with even the biggest farms having no water storages. ABC reporter Ian Townsend met with QFF for a briefing before he began his journey from the head of the Condamine River near Queen Mary Falls up and across to the Balonne River and down beyond Dirranbandi to the border during which he interviewed farmers from dairy, grains, cotton, watermelon, table grapes and mixed farming enterprises. To view the transcript or listen to the audio, visit www.abc.net.au/rn/backgroundbriefing/.

Lockyer farmers to finally access recycled water. Lockyer Valley farmers will get access to 25,000 ML of recycled water a year from the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project. While the fine details are still being worked out, the Lockyer Water Users Forum met with Deputy Premier Anna Bligh this week and has received a letter of intent to supply from the State Government. The 25-year water supply agreement comes after Prime Minister John Howard announced the Federal Government would only commit \$408 million for the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project if Lockyer Valley irrigators were included in the scheme. The lack of water availability, particularly this year, has meant supplying the quantity of vegetables and fodder crops required to meet consumer demand has been almost impossible.

Fitzroy dam back on table. Last month the WA Liberal Party announced a plan to build a dam on the West Kimberly's Fitzroy River to establish a food basket for the nation if it is elected and the next election. The party is trying to take the initiative in the face of the water crisis faced in the Murray-Darling Basin, saying that this is an ideal time to create a new agriculture industry in the northwest of the State. According to its leader, Paul Omodei, farmers hit by the drought conditions of the eastern states or the drier areas of WA could be attracted to the northwest to take advantage of the new opportunities presented by this development.

Another desalination plant for WA. The WA Government has announced that a second seawater desalination plant powered by renewable energy will be Western Australia's next major water source. This replaces plans to use the South-West Yarragadee aquifer for the integrated water supply system. A big selling point according to the government is that the desalination plant is climate independent, unlike aquifers and other traditional water

sources. The new plant, to be on line by the end of 2011, will provide at least 45 GL of water a year. Comparing the cost of desalination to that of the Kimberley pipeline, the government says that for the cost of building a pipeline from the Kimberley, at least 12 desalination plants could be built that would deliver three times more water at one third of the price per kilolitre.

Improving channel flow measurement. AWMA was congratulated recently by Assistant Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, John Cobb, for developing FlowLab, which can certify water control and improve the efficiency of irrigation systems through improved metering. Water savings and water accountability are its key benefits. FlowLab is an open-flow verification and research facility based in Cohuna. Flows from 0.5 to 100 ML per day can be monitored in true open channel conditions, enabling accurate verification of flows through water control infrastructure (including meters and meter emplacements). For information go to <http://www.awma.au.com/>

Water licensing administration fees not popular in WA. State Water Resources Minister John Kobelke has made himself very unpopular with grower representative organisation, for pushing for the introduction of a licence fee to irrigation dam owners. According to WAFarmers the minister doesn't understand the realities of irrigated agriculture or the water reform consultative process. While irrigators are not opposed to a licence administration fee, they are hot under the collar about what they see as inequitable and unjustified fees (source, Farm Weekly).

Peak horticulture industry bodies forum. Peak horticulture industry bodies met in Melbourne last week to establish a clear response and plan of action to deal with the potential extreme circumstances with water availability in this coming season. The group agreed on three key areas of priority around: information requirements, exceptional circumstances, and maximising water for horticulture. Horticultures position on these issues was presented to ministers and industry representatives at a special water meeting as part of the HAL Industry Forum 30 May.

Support for water smart garden management. Federal funding has been given to URS Australia Pty Ltd for a project that aims to help domestic consumers become water smart gardeners (using less water and achieving the same result) through the development of best practice guidelines and tools. The focus of the project is to provide information through a website on how often to water, how much water to apply and when not to water because of rain and evaporation. It will also include new information on how to design water efficient landscapes. It will be delivered over two years and will initially be implemented across greater Sydney, with the support of Sydney Water Corporation. It will then be rolled out concurrently across Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra, in association with relevant water authorities/managers.

Murray-Darling task force for NSW. The NSW Government is establishing a high-level task force to help communities along the Murray Darling Basin cope with severe drought and zero water allocations. The Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Advisory Council is to include representatives from the irrigation industry, agriculture, business, the banking industry, tourism, local communities and an environmental expert. The Ministerial Advisory Council, which will report to water minister, Koperberg, will provide advice on ways to assist communities affected by the crisis, in particular on how to prioritise the water allocations.

Interstate water trading entitlements expanded. Permanent water trading entitlements between SA and Victoria have been expanded under a new interim agreement so that now water in SA, Victoria and NSW can be bought and sold under the same tagged trading system. The Minister for the River Murray, Karlene Maywald, says the system allows traded water to be used in another state, but under the conditions of its place of origin, e.g. if a SA irrigator buys water from a NSW valley facing a restriction of 40% on their water allocation, then that irrigator would only be able to take 40 per cent of their allocation because the NSW rules would apply.

IAA convenes meeting of the Lifestyle Horticulture Council. The IAA hosted a meeting of the informal group of industry associations that represent the lifestyle horticulture sector in Sydney last week. The group includes national representatives of the nursery & garden industry, landscape contractors, turf producers, golf course superintendents, parks and leisure and irrigation.

The group received a preliminary briefing from the National water Commission on the soon to be released national review of water restrictions and discussed ways of ensuring better coordination and communication of the various programs to raise the profile of the sector, document the benefits of green open space and to encourage a more sustainable approach to urban water conservation.

Workshop on National Plan for Water Security. More than 40 people from the irrigation industry attended an IAA workshop on the National Plan for Water Security in Sydney last Month. Simon Smalley from the Department of Environment and Water explained key features of the plan and then answered questions from participants, who then developed industry responses.

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JOB SPOT

Chief Executive Officer, WaterAid. WaterAid's unique vision is a world where everyone has access to safe water and sanitation. WaterAid Australia, based in Mitcham, Victoria, was established in 2003 and has a 2010 strategy that sets out targets to increase the number of people with access to safe water and sanitation in Timor Leste, Papua New Guinea and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The organisation is looking for a CEO. It has a strong skills based board and is now set for a period of rapid growth with all the related challenges and opportunities this will bring. The CEO role offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for an exceptional individual to play a pivotal role in the evolution of WaterAid Australia, turn the ambitious 2010 targets into reality and to make WaterAid a leading Australian NGO. You will be a proven leader, experienced in aid but also with a commitment to sound governance practices and you will be an ideal ambassador for WaterAid in the Asia-Pacific region. Closing date for applications is 23 June 2007. To download a copy of the selection criteria and further information on WaterAid Australia go to website at www.wateraid.org.au

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SMART APPROVED WATERMARK UPDATE

Latest approved products and services. Between January and April, 26 new products and services have been licensed to use the Smart Approved WaterMark label. For the full list of Smart WaterMark approved products and services follow these links: [Products Database](#) and [Services Database](#).

Sydney Water is promoting the Smart Approved WaterMark scheme in the autumn edition of its Wrap newsletter. The colour brochure is being sent out to 1.3 million households in Sydney. Download the newsletter from the [Sydney Water Web Site](#).

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INSURANCE UPDATE

Cover for tools and equipment. If you take tools and equipment out in the field, you need General Property Cover. This insurance provides cover for the cost of repairing or replacing items that are accidentally and physically lost or damaged. Cover available includes:

- fire, storm, water, explosion, impact by a vehicle
- earthquake, aircraft, malicious damage
- collision or overturning of a vehicle
- theft following visible, forcible and violent entry to locked vehicles, including locked tool boxes securely attached to the vehicle, or locked premises
- theft of equipment securely attached to a vehicle through use of locks or padlocks, which results in visible damage to the securing devices.

For information about insurance for your situation contact the IAA's insurer, Insurance House, Bev Spark, phone 03 5483 1066, email bev@insurancehouse.com.au website www.insurancehouse.com.au

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VALE

The irrigation industry was saddened to hear of the passing of Jim Coulthart last week, 30 May. Jim played an important role in establishing the IAA, helping it to grow in its early years. He took on the position of secretary where he was known for his meticulously kept notes and wholehearted commitment. Even more than that, however, Jim spent his entire professional life working in and for the irrigation industry. He is a Life Member of the IAA and is

one of the longest serving continuous member on its books, having joined on 21 February 1983. Our sympathy goes to Jim's family.

Sad news from the IA that Ken Mills, Immediate past President of the association died 3 May after a brief battle with cancer. During a 43-year career at Rain Bird Corporation, Ken rose to the position of vice president of the turf division. Our sympathy goes to Ken's family.

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HANDY LINKS

Podcasts address urban issues. Rain Bird Corp., has released eight podcasts taken from its Intelligent Use of Water Summit held last December in California. The video podcasts feature remarks and presentations from a panel of academics, landscape designers, municipal directors and environmental organisations addressing the current state of water conservation and the strategies needed to conserve Earth's most precious natural resource. The free podcasts can be downloaded from iTunes and at <http://www.rainbird.com/iuow/resources/podcasts.htm>.

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BOOKSHOP

A wide range of irrigation related books and other publications are available for the IAA On-Line Bookshop. Just visit <http://www.irrigation.org.au/> .

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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

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