

WATER SERVICES MANAGERS' GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2014/2015

1.0 Review of 2014/15

1.1 Committee membership

Over the past year the committee has seen changes in its membership. Andrew Venmore stepped down from Chairman which he had successfully held for the previous three years. We are very grateful for the valuable input and leadership Andrew has provided and we appreciate Andrew remaining in the committee to provide a smooth handover to the new Madam Chair Lorraine Kendrick. We have also had two resignations from the Committee, Sarah Stephen moved to Australia and Rob Green resigned from Palmerston North City Council and his position on the committee. We would like to thank all of the members of the committee for their valuable input over the years.

The committee has also provided for the provision of a co-opted member from Watercare which we believe will be a benefit to the group. Mark Bourne has attended recent meetings, but we are waiting for confirmation from Watercare on their permanent appointee for the committee.

1.2 Projects

This year has seen the completion of the Infiltration and Inflow guidelines, which has been an intensive piece of work over the last few years. For the first time Water New Zealand issued each corporate membership with 2 hard copies of the guidelines, we praise Water New Zealand for this approach as it promotes sharing knowledge across the sector.

Project work also continued on the bio-waste guidelines, which includes an update on the biosolids guidelines. These guidelines will cover all waste material that will benefit soil for growing things rather than just biosolids.

1.3 National Performance Review

This year 31 councils participated in the review, and all CEO's were provided with a copy. It has been great to have both Lesley and Nick driving the performance review which has enabled the process to really step up a gear. A successful workshop was held in August that will help set the standards for accurate reporting, develop 'champions' across a number of local authorities who can be advocates for the performance review and can help others to complete the survey accurately. This will ensure consistency in the collation of data across the sector.

1.4 WSMG meetings

1.4.1 November Meeting held at The West Plaza, Wellington, Friday 7th November 2014.

27 members attending along with 4 representatives from Water New Zealand. Lorraine Kendrick was appointed as the new chair with Andrew Venmore stepping down but remaining on the committee.

Presentations were provided by Greg Preston, Manger Research and Education Portfolio from University of Canterbury Quake Centre, who spoke on levels of service for the resilience of underground services project. Kenny Williamson from Watercare introduced the commencement for certification of the Anaerobic digesters at Mangere wastewater treatment plant under the new HSNO regime. Philp Shackleton from LGNZ gave a presentation on the LGNZ 3 waters project.

Peter Whitehouse provided the group with the Policy update and in particular the NPS for Freshwater management which would have an impact on territorial authority activities for water and wastewater abstraction and discharge consents. Nick Walmsley provided an update on the technical projects and the national performance review.

Committee members, Kelvin Hill gave a presentation on the Water industry Partnership Group and Dylan Stuijt provided an updated on NZUAG.

1.4.2 April Meeting held at The Mercure Hotel, Auckland, Thursday 30th April and Friday 1st May 2015.

29 members attended the meeting along with 4 representatives from Water New Zealand. The committee was pleased with the numbers that attended as this was a very busy time of the year for water service managers as the local authorities who were preparing the 2015 - 2025 10 year plans.

As usual the agenda was busy with numerous items to be covered. Peter Whitehouse provided a policy update. Nick Walmsey updated the members of the various projects that were underway, such as the completion of the I&I manual, review of the Biowaste Guidelines, Backflow survey standards and Rainfall runoff Guidelines. Nick also discussed other projects/reviews that were of interest to the group, such as metadata standards, discharge consents consistency, chemical supply standards, digester certification and small water system training.

Annie Yates and Dave Giddens from Connexis gave a presentation on the new training environment and how it effects the water industry.

Kenny Williamson from Watercare give an further presentation on Watercare's journey following up on the presentation to WSMG in November to get the Anaerobic digesters certified to achieve HSNO compliance. A site visit to the Digesters at the Mangere Wastewater Treatment Plant then followed this presentation.





1.5 WSMG involvement in other Groups

Connexis Water Industry Group – Update provided by Kelvin Hill

Kelvin Hill is the WSMG representative for Connexis

The inaugural meeting was held on Thursday 23rd July 2015 in Wellington.

Nigel Hesford, Water Training Consultant for Connexis gave an overview of progress since the transfer from Primary ITO to Connexis was approved by TEC on 26 May 2015, including:

- 95% of Water trainees were now registered in the Connexis database
- 55% enrolled in Level 3 and 4 Reticulation
- 45% enrolled in Treatment qualifications

Nigel described the establishment of customer service areas across Northern, Central and Southern NZ, to be overseen by Annie Yeates. Supporting Nigel and Martyn Simpson in their Training Consultant roles are three area managers and 16 customer service account managers. Customer Service Account Managers are receiving training in water to enable them to achieve capability and trainee visit frequency every six weeks.

Program development is continuing in the following qualifications:

- New Zealand Certificate in Water Treatment (Small Scale Systems) (Level 3)
- New Zealand Certificate in Water Treatment (Drinking-Water/Wastewater) (Level 3)
- New Zealand Certificate in Water Treatment (Level 4) with strands in Drinking-Water, Wastewater, Drinking-Water Multistage Processes, and Wastewater Multistage Processes
- New Zealand Diploma in Drinking-Water Assessment (Level 5)
- New Zealand Diploma in Water Treatment (Level 5) with strands in Drinking-Water, and Wastewater

The development of a comprehensive snapshot report had not been completed and that this would be a priority for future meetings. The short term requirements of the group have been agreed to be:

- Clarity around reporting of completion rates to put pressure on companies falling behind
- Financial impact of completion rates
- Civil Trade Certificate presentation that provides the group with more detail so that they can effectively assess its potential
- Career pathways – provision of Water and Civil matrix to understand the focus on L3 v L5+

- Development of meaningful qualifications

A draft of the proposed rules for the Water Industry group were presented for consideration by the group. The rules were accepted with one alternation relating to the frequency of meetings.

NZUAG – Update provided by Dylan Stuijt

Dylan Stuijt is the WSMG representative for NZUAG.

NZUAG has completed the first Review of the National Code Of Practice for Utility Operators' Access to Transport Corridors. The review process and the updated Code have been approved by the Minister of Finance. This was gazetted on 10 September. Accordingly NZUAG has posted 3 new documents onto its website providing reference to the changes made to the Code.

These are:

- A copy of the new Code document, dated 10 September 2015,
- A “track change” version of the Code document highlighting the changes, and
- A summary sheet identify changes, purpose of the change, and scale of the change.

WSMG will continue as part of this group to advocate for the protection of water services in the road corridor.

Ministry of Health – WINZ Database – Update provided by Malcolm Loan

Adrian Cocker of Invercargill City Council represented WSMG on this working group.

MoH has been working on the development of a new WINZ database to provide an improved database to manage water supply information in line with the drinking water provisions of the Health Act, and had established a group of public health and water supply professionals to assist.

The working group held several workshops in 2014 with prospective suppliers to gauge the market and gather information on the potential for a new solution. Since then MoH has approved a business case for the purchase of the new database and in August released a “ request for proposals” , closing 29 September, for its delivery. We await further advice on progress”

2.0 Looking Ahead 15/16

2.1 Review of the objectives and rules:

In August the committee met to go through the purpose of WSMG, update the WSMG Objectives and Rules (Appendix A). The updated objectives and rules are to be tabled at the November 2015 meeting to obtain feedback/approval from the membership.

2.2 Projects

The WSMG committee will be recommending to the membership to focus on the following projects:

- AC main condition assessments and renewals
- Oxidation Pond Guideline update

Nick and Lesley are currently undertaking further scoping of these projects. It is anticipated that the projects will start in earnest in November following approval from the group at the November meeting.

The committee also reviewed and agreed a forward work programme with the following potential projects identified. Nick and Lesley will work with WSMG to further identify the scope and need for delivering these projects.

- *Chlorine Emergency Gas Response*
- *Health and safety – Checklist (Best practice guideline)*
- *Pressure Sewer System guidelines (to include vacuum)*
- *Water Meter Code of Practice*
- *Grey water reuse/private rural water tank supply*
- *Hygiene Code of Practice*
- *Mobile solutions*

To continue to fund projects on an ongoing basis the committee have agreed that the reestablishment of the project levy is required. If WSMG wish to continue to undertake 2-3 projects per year, then a annual project fund of \$100k is necessary. The committee are working with Peter to establish a process for setting up a project levy and determining a fair and equitable split for funding the projects from the various local authorities. This item will be raised at the November 2015 meeting seeking feedback from the membership.

2.3 WSMG Membership

The committee reviewed the current membership from local authorities and noted that only a small proportion of the smaller councils are not represented. The committee has concluded that their focus should be on enhancing the relationship and knowledge sharing with the existing members, this in turn should promote the benefits of being a member of WSMG to the wider audience. Committee members will continue to advocate the group to non-members of WSMG to try and attract the councils that are not yet members.



Lorraine Kendrick
WSMG Chair

APPENDIX A

Draft Water Services Managers Group Objectives and Rules September 2015