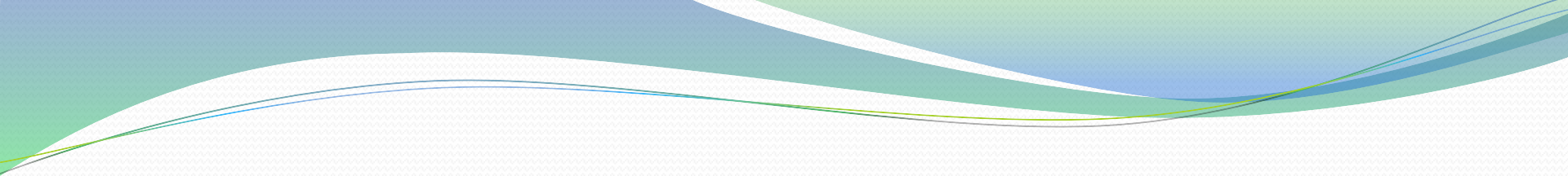


# Water Services Covid-19 Update and Issues Webinar 14 May 2020



# Agenda

1. Where to find information and what information is available
2. Getting essential expertise into New Zealand
3. Overseas trends update
  1. Delays in delivery
  2. Possible challenges over the next few years
4. Training Requirements
5. Other
  1. SiteSafe alert level 2 construction Protocols
  2. PPE suppliers
  3. AWA – Recommendations for Increasing Immediate Employment and Economic Activities for the Water Sector
  4. Frequency of updates webinars
  5. Isle Utility -Water loss / leak detection
  6. Budget outcomes?
  7. questions



<https://www.sitesafe.org.nz/guides--resources/covid-19-protocols/new-zealand-construction-covid-19-protocols/>



**5000+**

*individual members  
across the whole  
water cycle*

**600+**

*corporate members  
from utilities,  
science and research,  
energy and resources,  
manufacturing and  
agriculture*

**100+**

*water utilities  
servicing more than  
20 million customers*

**50+**

*years servicing  
the water sector*

**AUSTRALIAN  
WATER**  
ASSOCIATION

## Recommendations for Increasing Immediate Employment and Economic Activities by the Water Industry

Prepared by the Australian Water Association for the  
National COVID-19 Coordination Commission Utilities Work Stream

6 May 2020

# Recommendations for Increasing Immediate Employment and Economic Activities by the Water Industry

## Introduction

The Australian Water Association (AWA) has developed these recommendations for the consideration of the COVID Working Group on ways to maximise employment and boost economic activities after the COVID-19 restrictions are eased. The recommendations have been produced for consideration by the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission.

The recommendations harness the water sector's vital role as an economic driver for Australia. In addition to re-engaging employment and economic activity following the lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions, AWA's recommendations address the ongoing needs to provide regional economic development, water security, and water resilience following the drought and bushfires across Australia in the summer of 2019-20.

## Criteria

The criteria used to formulate the recommendations were based on their capacity to:

- I. Generate immediate employment
- II. Generate short-term economic stimulus for local communities and businesses
- III. Strengthen the supply chain required to service the water industry
- IV. Implement the recommendations within an immediate (3-6 months) or short-term (6-12 months) period

## AWA Recommendations in Three Categories

### 1. Water Projects for Regional Economic Development (\$2 billion)

#### 1.1 Fast-tracking of Existing Water Projects

AWA is seeking National Cabinet endorsement to fast-forward the implementation of water projects included within existing capital budgets of regional water utilities. AWA estimates that projects valued in excess of \$500M could be implemented/continued immediately. This is not seeking additional funding but rather fast-tracking those projects that have already been approved within capital expenditure budgets.

*Estimated value of employment and economic stimulus: TBC*

#### 1.2 Regional Water Asset Upgrades

Establishment of a fund of \$1.5 billion to fund regional water projects to address water quality issues and their concomitant public health risks. These projects would also fast-track regional development with the provision of improved water services to attract new industrial, commercial, and residential investment. Eligible projects to include the repair of pipe leakage, upgrade of water treatment plants, investment in new water recycling plants, recreational water projects, and increased water quality testing across regional areas with remote water monitoring technology (potentially linked with the data collection of the Bureau of Meteorology). Eligibility for funding to be linked to compliance with a Code of Conduct on Procurement to support SMEs and Local Employment.

*Estimated value of employment and economic stimulus: TBC*

#### 1.3 Regional Digital Technology

Establishment of a fund of \$400M to increase the capacity of regional utilities and their data acquisition, data analytics and water utility operational technology to modernise the way regional utilities provide water and sewerage services. Online monitoring and control will allow regional utilities to detect issues before they become apparent to the customer for more efficient and effective water utility. Customers will have information on their water services that can be used to monitor usage (this is especially relevant where daily targets per person are set under very high water restriction levels that are still in place in some regional areas). The adoption of technology will yield safer, more reliable water supplies for our communities whilst conserving water.

*Estimated value of employment and economic stimulus: TBC*

#### 1.4 Capacity Building for Regional Utilities

Establishment of a fund of \$100M for an employee/trainee scheme to increase resources for regional water utilities that includes dedicated training for the new employees and apprentices onsite.

*Estimated value of employment and economic stimulus: TBC*

## 2. Water Security (\$4 billion)

To continue to future proof Australia's water security, a fund valued at \$4 billion to be established for competitive bids in the following areas:

### 2.1 Water Recycling Projects

The implementation of projects that are 'shovel-ready' that increase the use of 'fit-for-purpose' water recycling. Eligible projects would include potable water recycling, water for industrial reuse, mining water discharge for reuse, water recycling for recreational use, desalination for potable and non-potable uses, and managed aquifer recharge projects.

*Estimated value of employment and economic stimulus: TBC*

### 2.2 Advanced Digital Water Technology

The rollout of advanced digital technology to better monitor the management and distribution of water and waste water. This includes multi-purpose smart metering capable of providing customers and water utilities with accurate and transparent data. Such technology also provides the analysis of sound and pressure to detect potential leaks, overflows, and other damage that can be controlled by pre-emptive actions. The digital integration of sample extraction results for monitoring biological pathogens and chemical contaminants to better manage community health could be supported.

*Estimated value of employment and economic stimulus: TBC*

### 2.3 Stormwater Harvesting

The harvesting of unused stormwater provides a massive resource that can be recycled for recreational uses to irrigate playing fields and public parks, community gardens and urban greening projects. It can also augment other sources of supply of treated drinking water.

*Estimated value of employment and economic stimulus: TBC*

## 3. Capturing Resilience From Covid-19 Lessons Learnt (\$2 million)

**3.1 Establish a National Protocol on Essential Work** defining the 'essential work' undertaken by the water industry for agreement by all State and Territory Governments. Such a protocol would eliminate any confusions or interruptions to the provision of water services during the next national crisis.

**3.2 Establish a new Water Industry National Code of Conduct on Procurement** to strengthen the water industry supply chain by supporting increased SME participation in the supply chain. The National Code would cover standard tender provisions, payment terms, equitable rewards for preparation of procurement proposals, and a fair allocation of risks between the parties.

**3.3 Establish a Water Industry Code of Conduct for Communicable Diseases** that documents the water industry's COVID-19 responses and systems for use during the next crisis.

**3.4 Implement Community Engagement on the Value of Water** to maintain increased water literacy across the community for better informed decision-making. The program would include water conservation, the value of water to the economy, alternative sources of water, water recycling, and the sustainable management of water.

**3.5 Sharing our Water COVID-19 Lessons Learned across the Asia-Pacific** through existing water industry partnerships between Australia and the Asia-Pacific, utility twinning programs between Australia and the Asia-Pacific, and targeted workshops for both Government and private sector water operators.