



Newsletter of Water Quality Research Australia Limited

Issue 9 – 15 November 2008

Welcome to the ninth issue of Water Quality Research Australia News, the newsletter of Water Quality Research Australia Limited (WQRA Limited).

WQRA Limited is a not-for-profit scientific research institution, established to provide strategic knowledge for the Australian urban water industry. Incorporated in October 2007, its registered office is at Level 3, 250 Victoria Square, Adelaide.

Issues 1 - 8 of Water Quality Research Australia News can be downloaded from the website of WQRA Limited www.wqra.com.au

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CEO's Report

Many readers of the WQRA newsletter will have received updates on what has been happening since the last issue, particularly if they are members or have been involved in Project Concept proposals.

Our focus has been squarely on the inaugural Research Portfolio – this is after all our core business. I am pleased to report that voting has been conducted on ~60 projects and the first cut has been made of projects that scored the highest number of votes. (Coincidentally the projects fitted well into the agreed proportion of Priority One and Priority Two issues.)

The next phase is the submission of detailed project proposals, and there is more information later in this newsletter about what is now required.

Needless to say, such an intense process did not unfold without the odd glitch, but I am confident that WQRA members will be pleased with the scope and quality of projects selected by the membership. In a few months WQRA members and colleagues have:

- decided what the priority research issues are for the near future and further out
- put together a comprehensive array of project concepts
- organised these into priority groupings and distributed them to Members for consideration
- voted on the projects to give us our first suite of projects

We are all excited about the prospect of seeing these projects fleshed out with deliverables and budgets so that the Board can begin to sign off on the funding.

Again I must acknowledge a number of individuals who have assisted us greatly in managing the large number of project concepts that we received, following up if more information was required and lending their expertise and energy as required. Our heartfelt thanks go to Peter Cox of Sydney Water,

Heather Chapman from Griffith Uni, Judy Blackbeard from Melbourne Water and Andrew Humpage from AWQC.

With a full complement of WQRA staff on board now, it has also given us the opportunity to do some organisational planning, so that we have a running start in the New Year. You will be receiving a questionnaire by email shortly and I urge you all to give us constructive feedback to help us deliver maximum benefit for the Members, wider industry and community.

Jodieann

Successful Projects – the first cut

The following projects were selected by WQRA members on 27th November (the order is from highest to lowest number of votes). A second round of voting was conducted on Friday 12th December and the results will be released shortly.

Priority One Issues		
Project Title	\$ sought	Researchers
Characterisation and management of taste and odours from coal tar enamel lined mains	\$75,000	Felicity Roddick – RMIT, City West Water, South East Water, YV Water, Melbourne Water
Real time integrity monitoring for RO membrane systems	\$76,500	Eddy Ostarcevic - Victoria Uni, GWM Water, Coliban Water
Chlorine disinfection of human pathogenic viruses in recycled waters	\$350,000	Alex Keegan - AWQC, DHS Victoria, Water Futures, DHSA, Sydney Water
Epidemiology of <i>Cryptosporidium</i> and <i>Giardia</i> species and genotypes in animals in drinking water catchments using molecular tools	\$240,000	Paul Monis/Una Ryan – AWQC/ Murdoch Uni, SCA, Water Corporation
Development of predictive tools for membrane ageing	\$90,000	Pierre Le Clech - UNSW
Treating wastewater for potable reuse: removal of chemicals of concern using advanced oxidation processes	\$250,000	Anna Heitz - CWQRC, Water Corporation, EAWAG, GHD
Use of on-line surrogate parameters for rapid hazard detection and improved system performance	\$100,000	Chris Chow - AWQC, SA Water, Water Corporation, Curtin Uni, Sydney Water, Uni SA, Adel Uni
Characterisation of THM formation for water quality management	\$230,000	Mary Drikas - AWQC, United Water, SA Water, Melbourne Water, Water Corporation
Nitrosamines, including <i>N</i> -nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA), and other nitrogenous disinfection by-products in Australian drinking waters	\$300,000	Anna Heitz - CWQRC, Water Corporation, AWQC
Physico-chemical controls on growth, toxicity and succession of <i>Microcystis</i> and <i>Anabaena</i> species in Sydney Water supply reservoirs (ARC)	\$206,000	David Waite - UNSW, Sydney Catchment Authority, Sydney Water
Priority Two Issues		
POE/POU Management and costing study	\$100,000	Peter Sanciolo - Victoria Uni, GWM Water, Coliban, CH Water, YVW, DHS Victoria
Capacitive deionisation for high recovery and low energy desalination of brackish water supplies	\$70,000	Linda Zou – Uni SA, SA Water
Scale formation and prevention in indigenous community water supplies	\$65,000	David Waite - UNSW, NT Power & Water, CAT
Public perception of source protection and its relationship to recreation and water treatment	\$200,000	TBA - Water Corporation
Optimum control of chloramines in water distribution systems	\$220,000	Graeme Dandy – Uni Adelaide

NOTE: The WQRA Board has ratified these project concepts and the proponents will now be invited to submit detailed proposals. This does not guarantee that they will receive funding. Funding is contingent on the project proposal meeting the specified criteria followed by Board sign-off.

Project Development Process – Next Steps

WQRA would like to thank everyone who prepared project concepts and participated in the voting outcomes.

We anticipate that by the end of this week we will have communicated (via email) the final list of shortlisted project concepts for full proposal development. This email will also contain the Full Project Proposal Templates and the Project Selection Criteria that will be used by the Project Review Team to assess projects.

There is no specific due date for full project proposal submission to WQRA. When proposals are received, they will be assessed by the respective Program Managers and the Project Steering Team on a monthly basis, before being submitted to the Board for a funding decision.

Some projects may require external peer review, which will add more time (dependant on the peer reviewers) to the assessment process. We anticipate the assessment process (i.e. including a Board funding decision) taking approximately 6 - 8 weeks, assuming no external peer review.

We strongly recommend that you work with the relevant Program Manager during the preparation of your project proposal to ensure that it addresses all the assessment criteria and to help minimise hold-ups during the assessment process.

The Project Review Team (PRT) comprises the WQRA CEO and Program Managers, and selected Industry and Research Representatives. Their role is to review each project and make a recommendation to the WQRA Board. The critical objectives of the PRT are to ensure that:

- each project addresses at least one of WQRA Research Priority Issues
- WQRA has a balanced Research Portfolio
- R&D is not being duplicated elsewhere
- potential for collaborative projects is identified
- projects fulfil the Project Selection Criteria

The PRT will review the project for technical rigour and organisational capability and the project schedule to ensure that milestones are achievable within the time and budget allocations.

If you have any queries regarding the project proposal process, please contact either Michele Akeroyd (Drinking Water) or David Halliwell (Wastewater & Recycled Water).

Project Concept Workshop and WQRA AGM – Thursday 27th November

Around 70 people attended this all-day event just over two weeks ago. Most of the day was devoted to enabling proposers to give a three minute pitch on their project concepts. This amounted to roughly three hours of short presentations to the assembled Members, who later voted to make their choices. It was a tightly run session – made easier by the use of a clever digital timer, which counted down from three minutes when the presenter's slide appeared.

There was a late change to the agenda for the day following a decision by the WQRA Board the previous day. It had been suggested that a group of projects with similar focus might fit the criteria for funding under an AusIndustry scheme. Members were asked to vote on whether this potential additional funding opportunity should be pursued, and the answer was yes. The eight projects involved were excluded from the final project vote at the end of the day.

As the terms of four of the WQRA Board Directors expired at the AGM, the Directors – Dharma Dharmabalan, Anne Howe, Jan Bowman and John McNeil – were thanked for their contribution and these positions were declared vacant. Member organisations were advised that nominations for new Board members would be accepted until Friday the 5th December.

[We received many comments about the on-screen digital timer used in the presentations, so for anyone who wants to know where to access it the web link is:

http://www.tushar-mehta.com/powerpoint/ppt_timer/index.htm]

Election of Board Directors

On Friday 12th December Jan Bowman, John McNeill, Dharma Dharmabalan and Anne Howe were re-elected, unopposed for a further two years as Directors of the WQRA Board.

First WQRA Annual Report

The WQRA Annual Report is now available to read or download from the WQRA website.

http://www.wqra.com.au/annualreports/WQRA_Annual_Report_0708.pdf

Forthcoming Dates

Important Dates for your diaries for the first few months of 2009:

14–15 January	Williamstown, Vic	Board Strategic Planning Workshop
16 February	Melbourne	Board Meeting 10am – 12pm
16 February	Melbourne	Members Meeting incl Program Update 1 – 4.30pm
17-18 February	Melbourne	Members Meeting and Summer Scholarships Reporting Seminar, 9am – 4pm
16 March	Teleconference	Board Meeting 9 – 11am (ACDT)
20 April	Teleconference	Board Meeting 9 – 11am (ACDT)
28 May	Sydney	Board Meeting 3 – 5pm
29 May	Sydney	Members Meeting incl Program Update 10am – 4pm
19 June	Teleconference	Board Meeting 9 – 11am (ACDT)

WQRA Education Program

Please circulate relevant information to colleagues and students.

Summer Scholarships

Student projects have all commenced. Project abstracts will be available on the website by the end of this week.

Summer Scholarship Reporting Seminar

To be held at the Hotel Ibis, Melbourne on **17 & 18 February 2009**. The electronic Seminar Registration Form is attached to this email for you to complete and submit as soon as possible. Should you have any difficulties with the electronic form, print off and fax through to Carolyn on **08 8302 3386**. The Seminar Program consists of student presentations on 17th February followed by a Technical Tour to the Yan Yean Treatment Plant and a tour of the Wallaby Creek Catchment. The Seminar Program will be available on the website shortly.

WQRA Top-Up Scholarships commencing 2009 / Nancy Millis Top-Up Scholarship

<http://www.waterquality.org.au/index.htm>

Three projects will be selected for top-up scholarships to the value of \$5,000 x 3.5 years. In addition there will be a consumables budget of up to \$15,000 overall. Information regarding the prestigious Nancy Millis Top-Up Scholarship is on the website. Please direct students to the website for all relevant information. A Sub-committee of the Education Committee will assess the applications. Should you require further clarification, please contact Carolyn Bellamy on 08 8302 5771 or carolyn.bellamy@unisa.edu.au

New publications

Recent publications now available on the (CRC) website include:

Research Report 63: Membrane Distillation of Brine Wastes by Dow, Zhang, Duke, Li, Gray & Ostarcevic

CRC for Water Quality and Treatment 2007-08 Annual Report – the final report!

WQRA's new address

Some of you may have noticed new contact details (postal and street addresses and telephone numbers) on emails and on the newsletter and other correspondence. On the weekend of November 22-23 we moved from Bolivar into the heart of Adelaide. We are now located in the brand new SA Water building on Victoria Square. This is now also the registered address of WQRA.

Positions Vacant at Curtin Water Quality Research Centre

Research Fellow / Senior Research Fellow, Curtin Water Quality Research Centre, Department of Applied Chemistry, Faculty of Science and Engineering

CWQRC is seeking a postdoctoral research fellow or senior research fellow to participate in a project on "Treating wastewater for potable reuse: removal of micropollutants using advanced oxidation" commencing early 2009. A PhD in Analytical, Organic or Water Treatment Chemistry, or a related discipline is required for the position.

Research Assistant / Associate, Curtin Water Quality Research Centre, Department of Applied Chemistry, Faculty of Science and Engineering

CWQRC is also seeking a research assistant or research associate to participate in this project. An Honours degree with relevant experience in Analytical, Organic or Water Treatment Chemistry or a related discipline is required for the position.

Information on how to apply for both these positions can be found on both the WQRA and Curtin Water Quality Research Centre websites: <http://www.cwqrc.curtin.edu.au/career/employment.htm>

Future Courses

RABQSA Auditor Certification Scheme for Drinking Water Quality Risk Management Plans. Melbourne, 26 February 2009.

The next exam supporting the competency unit for management systems for drinking water quality will be held at RMIT Melbourne on 26 February 2009. If you are interested in becoming a certified drinking water quality auditor, or just testing your knowledge of drinking water quality risk management in Australia, please book now. Details and enrolment forms can be found at:

www.shortcourses.rmit.edu.au/keysearch.php?show_public_course=1&select_course_type_code=S001003

Information about the auditor certification scheme can be found at (www.rabqsa.com/cb_wsa.html) Please direct general queries to (dwrw@dhs.vic.gov.au), or call Brian Labza at DHS Victoria on (03) 9096 5088

Contributing to WQRA News

This issue of Water Quality Research Australia News is sent to all nominated people associated with the members of WQRA Limited. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or submit a newsworthy item for the next newsletter, send an email to Angela.Gackle@wqra.com.au

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