



Melbourne Water

2000/01



Community
Review

Contents

COMMUNITY REVIEW

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Triple-bottom-line reporting

Our triple-bottom-line approach to reporting places equal emphasis on economic, environmental and social reporting. In this document we report on our community performance. Other aspects of our social performance are addressed in our public health and safety reviews.

Our financial performance, our statutory and regulatory reporting and summaries of our environmental and social performance are provided in our *Melbourne Water Business Review 2000/01*.

Our environmental performance is reported in greater detail in our *Melbourne Water Environment Review 2000/01*.

Copies of our public reports can be obtained by calling 131 722 or may be downloaded from our web site at: www.melbournewater.com.au

ENVIRONMENTAL



FINANCIAL



SOCIAL



Melbourne Water Charter

Melbourne Water is owned by the Victorian Government. We manage Melbourne's water supply catchments, remove and treat most of Melbourne's sewage, and manage waterways and major drainage systems. Three retail water companies provide local water and sewerage services to consumers.

Melburnians enjoy drinking water that is among the world's best, thanks primarily to the foresight more than 100 years ago of Melbourne's city planners who set aside water catchments protected from human contamination.

The city planners also laid the foundations for a sewerage system that continues to lead in technology and environmental sustainability.

These are legacies few other cities in the world can match and Melbourne Water acknowledges the role of its actions in ensuring these resources meet Melbourne's needs, now and into the future.



In managing Melbourne’s water supply catchments, sewerage system, waterways and drains, Melbourne Water strives to match the foresight and innovation shown by the city’s original planners.

Our aim is to show leadership in water cycle management, through effective, sustainable and forward-looking management of the community resources we oversee.

The business objectives established to realise the vision are to:

- protect public health
- operate as a successful commercial business
- manage Melbourne’s water resources and the environment in a sustainable manner
- provide excellent service and maintain the trust and respect of the community.

At Melbourne Water we understand that partnerships with stakeholders and the community are the key to

achieving our vision—leadership in water cycle management. We also appreciate that achievements occur through people. At Melbourne Water we are people who:

- recognise that we achieve more by working with others
- feel privileged to be the custodians of our water resources
- behave with integrity
- attain excellence through creativity innovation
- celebrate our achievements and learn from our experiences.

Through working successfully with others and operating as an efficient commercial business, we will be able to make Melbourne a better place to live both now and in the future.

Leadership in water cycle management



Foreword

One of our key business objectives is to help maintain community trust and respect through open interaction with communities. We believe that a good working relationship with the community is good business.

We provide a great deal of information to help people understand our operations and actions, and to ensure numerous community opportunities for input to our decision making.

We have established consultative committees and advisory groups in areas around our major assets so that we know how these communities feel about the services we provide. Every project that we undertake includes community consultation. We work closely with municipal councils, volunteer community groups, local groups, schools and the general public.

We believe in developing strong relationships with broad and specific community groups as part of our commitment to addressing community concerns before major problems arise.

We have initiated a regular and independent review of our performance on social issues, including community consultation. This review will make recommendations to help us improve our performance.

This is our first annual review focusing specifically on our performance in relation to community issues. It demonstrates our belief in the importance of meeting community expectations, and in working to increase our accountability and transparency.

This review outlines the targets we had set ourselves for 2000/01, and our performance against those targets. This document also outlines measures against which our future work with communities will be measured.

The report will also help you, as a member of the community, judge how well we meet your expectations. We welcome your feedback, comments and suggestions.



Brian Bayley
Managing Director

Community policy

Melbourne Water is committed to promoting good community relations by:

- Providing the public with factual and readily accessible information on issues of community interest.
- Managing incidents to minimise impact on the community.
- Requiring that Melbourne Water employees and contractors are considerate and courteous in dealing with members of the public.
- Actively seeking community input early in the decision-making process to ensure that major decisions are based on an informed view of community opinion by:
 - Establishing local consultative committees where this will assist in the efficient management of major operational assets.
 - Involving local residents, government, industry groups, and community and environment groups in major research or construction projects where appropriate.
 - Assessing community expectations of Melbourne Water's performance through regular research with the general public, local communities, government, consultative committees and community representatives.

Effective community relations is essential to the efficient management of any construction, major maintenance or research project and is a necessary component of all budgeting, planning and implementation processes.



Performance snapshot 2000/01

ACHIEVEMENTS

The community

- > We worked with the community to develop a master plan for the future use of our Devilbend Reservoir site.
- > Our community consultation programs played an important role in helping us complete complex capital works projects, including the Cardinia to Pearcedale pipeline.
- > We sought community input for an environmental improvement plan for the Western Treatment Plant.
- > Our Managing Director, Brian Bayley, personally briefed 26 councils on our activities and discussed local issues and projects.
- > We commissioned a project outlining the history of Western Treatment Plant and its contribution to developing Melbourne and the Werribee district.
- > We announced an innovative litter initiative – involving all tiers of government including four local councils – for the Moonee Ponds Creek catchment.
- > We spent \$140,000 formulating another seven stormwater management plans with local councils.
- > We established an Internet template to help volunteer community groups set up their own websites.
- > We produced and distributed 1,200 water conservation activity booklets and kits for primary and secondary school students.
- > We produced a drinking water brochure to increase knowledge of Melbourne's water supply system among school students.
- > We partnered the Melbourne Museum in developing the Forest Gallery/Water Zone and virtual Sewer Tour exhibits to increase community understanding of the water supply and sewerage systems.
- > We distributed \$40,000 among 25 groups involved in protecting and improving waterways and wetlands as part of our annual Community Grants Scheme.

Our people

- > We restructured our organisation to reflect our vision of managing the water cycle as a whole.
- > Employee forums brought together our people to gain broader perspectives and set future directions for the organisation.
- > We introduced an innovation development program to encourage value creating ideas consistent with our business objectives.
- > We negotiated a new three-year enterprise agreement that includes salary increases based on the achievement of corporate objectives.

DISAPPOINTMENTS

The community

- > The licence breach due to the St Andrews Beach incident is a reminder to our people of the importance of the community's views about the impact of our operations.
- > We did not provide a clear focus for the Eastern Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee.
- > Only six volunteer groups took advantage of our Internet template to establish their own websites. We need to be more aware of internet access capability among these groups.
- > Signage and education support materials for our virtual Sewer Tour exhibit at Melbourne Museum were inadequate in the initial months.

Our people

- > We didn't make as much progress on our knowledge management strategy as we would have liked.
- > We improved but didn't complete our approach to graduate development.

KEY CHALLENGES

The community

- > Maintaining open and regular communication with specific community groups and the broader community.
- > Engaging communities in our works program and the long-term issues we face such as water conservation, effluent management and water recycling.
- > Balancing the needs and expectations of special interest groups with those of the broader community.
- > Building a sound working relationship with volunteer community groups to meet the goals of all parties.
- > Assessing accurately the impact and value of sponsorship to us and the community.
- > Clarifying responsibility for maintaining wetlands and water bodies at new housing estates.
- > Providing long-term community benefit by helping educate young people in water conservation and other programs.
- > Making school communities aware of our range of education resources and ensuring the resources are used effectively.

Our people

- > Being open and flexible to new ideas and alternative views.
- > Ensuring that all our people are aware of community needs and expectations.
- > Attracting and retaining the right people.
- > Providing opportunities for talented people in an organisation that has limited potential for growth.
- > Harnessing the potential of our people.
- > Empowering our people to take decisions that can add value to their working groups and our organisation.
- > Aligning our organisation with our vision.
- > Developing leadership competencies within our organisation to improve business performance.

Advisory groups

Melbourne Water is committed to engaging communities in all aspects of our business, including in our strategic planning and capital works.

We do this by establishing formal consultative, advisory or liaison committees to provide community input into managing our assets. These committees usually include representatives of residents, councils, interest groups, EPA Victoria and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

All our capital works projects incorporate public consultation to ensure communities are informed and local disruption is minimised. Our goals in forming these committees include:

- engaging communities in our works programs and the long-term issues we face such as water conservation, effluent management and water recycling
- being open and flexible to new ideas and alternative views
- ensuring mutual respect and trust by maintaining open and regular communication.

The Devilbend Reference Group is helping us develop future uses for the Devilbend and Bittern reservoirs.



Community involvement

Eastern Treatment Plant

During the year, we provided a clearer focus for the Eastern Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee.

We also briefed the committee on several projects that we have undertaken as a result of recommendations in a major CSIRO study completed in 1999. These include a project to reduce ammonia in effluent discharged from the plant, and long-term CSIRO monitoring of the area around the discharge point.

Late in the year we began working with the community as part of developing a new directions plan for the plant. This plan will form the basis of a works approval application we will make to EPA Victoria in November 2001.

Litter incident

Our standing with the community was affected in November 2000 when litter, including cotton bud stems and plastic from sanitary products, was found at St Andrews Beach. The litter was found to have come from our Eastern Treatment Plant outfall and led to EPA Victoria fining us \$5,000 for a licence breach.

As a result of the incident, we amended operating procedures, installed additional screens to contain litter, upgraded security and surveillance of the outfall pipeline to prevent dumping.

We also implemented a program to inform the community and key stakeholders of actions we had taken and to express our regret.

In December 2000, we held a briefing on the incident, the ammonia reduction project and monitoring programs for community and industry stakeholders including residents, environment groups, the Surfrider Foundation, retail water companies, EPA Victoria, Parks Victoria and the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council.

We prepared information kits, with personal letters from our Managing Director, which were distributed to the Community Liaison Committee, local Members of Parliament, local councils, and environment and community groups.

We placed advertisements in local papers to encourage community feedback.

During the year, we worked to increase the accountability and transparency of our activities on the Peninsula.

We established a Gunnamatta Beach home page on our website that includes weekly updates of water quality monitoring at six sites around the Boags Rocks outfall as well as the results of a year-long microbiological study by Monash University of 13 sites at and around the outfall. This public health monitoring program compared water quality at Boags Rocks with draft World Health Organization guidelines for recreational waters.

We are also working with the retail water companies to educate their customers to reduce the quantities of litter, oil and grease placed in the sewerage system.

Model for the future

In September 2000, the Western Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee completed an Environment Improvement Plan outlining how we will enhance the local environment and meet our future environmental obligations. The plan identified 42 activities as having significant environmental risks.

The plan was developed with EPA Victoria and took about three years to complete. It includes sections on enhanced lagoons, which will reduce nitrogen loads to Port Phillip Bay, water recycling schemes, monitoring programs, odour management and a Conservation Management Plan.

This plan aims to protect high conservation values at Western Treatment Plant, which is included in Australia's list of wetlands under the international Ramsar convention and includes habitat for rare birds and animals.

A Wildlife Consultative Committee helped develop a weed and fox control program during the year. We removed 98 per cent of spiny rush from the plant site, released cochineal insects on tiger pear and prickly pear cactuses and controlled serrated tussock near saltmarshes inhabited by the rare orange-bellied parrot.

Working together to achieve change

Anne Lee

Anne Lee has lived at St Andrews Beach near the Eastern Treatment Plant outfall for 12 years and in that time she has often been at odds with Melbourne Water. Ms Lee wants to see the outfall removed, but knows such changes cannot happen overnight. "You have to live in the real world—these things can't happen the next day," she says.

A member of the Eastern Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee, Ms Lee began taking her concerns to Melbourne Water 10 years ago. "In those days, Melbourne Water did what they pleased," she says. "But because of our concerns, made over many years, various changes have been made."

She counts as major achievements beach and water monitoring, locking access points to the outfall to stop illegal dumping, installing screens at the plant and placing signs at the discharge point at Boags Rocks.

To her, a project to examine ways to reduce ammonia in the effluent, a long-term monitoring program run by CSIRO and more work and interest in water recycling schemes are genuine signs of improvements.

Ms Lee says such progress would not have been possible without dialogue, which has helped

Melbourne Water and the community work together to find the best possible solutions. A lack of communication had let down Melbourne Water and the community during the November litter incident.

"I was disappointed with the way Melbourne Water handled the incident," she says.

"Communications between Eastern Treatment Plant and head office weren't working and this led to frustration on both sides. Hopefully this situation won't happen again."

She thinks Melbourne Water needs to work even harder to educate people to use less water so that less needs to be discharged, and to reuse water around the home and garden.

Ms Lee, who is President of the Westernport Port Phillip Coastal Watch Association, sees drinking water becoming more expensive over time, and the community being dragged into supporting the notion of total reuse—turning effluent into drinking water.

"Public opinion will continue to change and Melbourne Water will have to embrace this change," she says. "We'll always be down at the next post waiting for Melbourne Water to catch up. But that's the way it is with communities."



Anne Lee, member of the Eastern Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee, wants more promotion of total reuse—turning effluent into drinking water.

A plan for the future

The Devilbend Reference Group represents many diverse interests. Clockwise from left, Tom Camp, Mornington Peninsula Fly Fishers; Peter Carroll, South Eastern Peninsula Residents' Association; Steve Compton, Bunurong Land Council; and Peter Cotter, Barrymore Estate vineyard and farm.

New future for reservoirs

We withdrew the Devilbend and Bittern reservoirs from the Mornington Peninsula water supply system during the year. These open storages were not suited to maintaining high-quality drinking water. Peninsula residents are now supplied with drinking water from Melbourne's uninhabited catchments, via a pipeline from Cardinia Reservoir.

We recognise the need to work with the Mornington Peninsula community on a plan that ensures the site continues to be a community asset.

The community reference group, which we established in late 1999, is determining community aspirations and options for the 1057-hectare site. The group includes representatives of the Bunurong people, local communities, environment groups, councils, downstream users of the reservoirs, fly fishers, nearby landowners and Victorian Government departments.

The group is developing a master plan to preserve the site's significant natural and cultural heritage values, identify areas for public access and use, detail management arrangements and guide the sale and future use of any surplus land.

Protecting bushland

A local structure plan, developed by an advisory committee of community and council representatives, has helped us preserve bushland around Christmas Hills. We will sell 278 hectares of surplus land in this area by June 2003.

As part of the plan, the advisory committee and Melbourne Water have worked together to establish controls to preserve and enhance environmental values of the natural bushland and consolidate bush blocks.

During the year, we sold the first 12 of 38 titles, realising \$2.2 million.



Informing local residents

In the pipeline

We completed a major community consultation program in April 2001 as we commissioned one of our largest water construction projects for many decades. We constructed a \$46 million pipeline from Cardinia Reservoir to Pearcedale to increase the supply of high-quality drinking water to the Mornington Peninsula

This 30-kilometre pipeline passed through Berwick and Cranbourne, as well as rural areas, affecting residents who did not benefit from the project. During the final stage, from Cranbourne South to



Pearcedale, about 100 nature strips were removed and access to driveways was interrupted as part of the works, which required heavy machinery. We funded revegetation of nature strips.

We visited residents to advise them of impending works and disruption. We also issued three newsletters during the year. In March 2001, we surveyed residents, some of who expressed concerns about access to driveways but many others made positive remarks about management of the project.

Our concerted consultation campaign helped us finish the project on time and on budget.

Western Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee

Committee chairman John McElvaney sees an environment improvement plan, which was completed during the year, as giving the Western Treatment Plant a model for the future. Preparing the plan included three years during which the committee assessed and quantified the most important risks—an activity that has helped people better understand the plant.

He sees improvements such as installing a reuse channel which will enable more and higher quality effluent to be reused within, and potentially outside, the plant. He believes introducing activated sludge technology to enhance the lagoon system will make the plant more efficient and reduce its impact on the environment.

He has challenged his fellow committee members to suggest further long-term enhancements. He wants the committee and Melbourne Water to create a vision to at least the year 2020, and believes the environment improvement plan can be used as a basis for what he is calling the 2020 vision strategy.

“It’s an excellent plant that is one of the leaders in the world, but that doesn’t mean it can’t be a lot better than it is,” he says. “To their credit, Melbourne Water seems to be prepared to try any reasonable idea that people come up with. Top management certainly seems to value the consultative process, although there is a varying degree of support further down the line.”

Left: Local school children drink from the commemorative water fountain, which marks the completion of the Cardinia to Pearcedale pipeline.

Below: John McElvaney chairman of the Western Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee.



Project with a history

In June 2001, we completed the first stage of works to prevent erosion and stabilise the Bunyip Main Drain, east of Melbourne. These works are part of a 10-year project to repair the channel that was cut through the former Koo Wee Rup Swamp in the late 1800s.

The local community has not always been convinced of our commitment to undertake the works necessary to minimise erosion and landslips in the banks and levees and provide flood protection for adjacent land. The beginning of the project, in March 2001, was a milestone for the community and us.

Before then, we held a project information session for local people to view project plans and displays and speak to our people and consulting

engineers. We produced and delivered to local residents regular information bulletins on the improvement works, and provided news releases to local media.

Replacing trees

In February 2001, we began a \$1.6 million project to renew a section of stormwater drain in Hampton. We limited work to between 8am and 5.30pm to reduce disturbance to residents, other than overnight on one weekend to minimise disruption to train services. We also replaced eucalypt trees that had to be removed as part of the works.

An essential aspect of the works was a good working relationship and close communication between us, our contractors, Bayside Council, Bicycle Victoria, Bayside Trains and the community.

ADVISORY GROUP SCORECARD

Target for 2000/01	Progress			Performance Target for 2001/02
	Little or no progress	Some	Achieved	
<p>Sewage treatment plant community committees Maintain close working relationship with Eastern Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee to provide community input for Environment Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Complete Environment Improvement Plan for Western Treatment Plant.</p>		✓		<p>Community Liaison Committee met five times in 2000/01 but did not work effectively. Held two community meetings with broader audiences.</p> <p>We restructured the committee in June 2001 to include broader community and stakeholder representation.</p> <p><i>Provide community input for our works approval submission to EPA Victoria for the plant, due in November 2001.</i></p> <p>Plan completed in September 2000.</p> <p><i>Members examining long-term vision for plant.</i></p>
<p>Disposal of surplus land Develop future use strategy for Devilbend Reservoir site.</p> <p>Consolidate bush blocks and preserve bushland in land sales at Christmas Hills.</p>			✓	<p>Broad parameters agreed for a master plan, which will lead to a management plan for the new owner.</p> <p><i>Complete master plan by January 2002.</i></p> <p>First 12 blocks of surplus land sold at Christmas Hills during 2000/01.</p> <p><i>Three-year plan to sell land on a total of 38 titles.</i></p>
<p>Capital works Continue consulting with residents during Cardinia to Pearcedale pipeline project.</p> <p>Ensure community is kept informed of works on Bunyip Main Drain.</p> <p>Replace trees and minimise disturbance during upgrade of Hampton stormwater drain.</p>			✓	<p>Pipeline commissioned in April 2001. In the final stage we undertook extensive consultation, including doorknocking and distributing newsletters. Our resident survey revealed a mainly positive response.</p> <p><i>Use findings in future major capital works projects.</i></p> <p>✓ We held an information session in February 2001 before beginning works. We also distributed newsletters and media releases.</p> <p><i>Continue community consultation during next stage of works beginning in December 2001.</i></p> <p>✓ We established sound working relationships with stakeholders and worked to minimise community disruption. Work was completed in August 2001.</p>

Consultative committees

During 2000/01, Melbourne Water consulted with, and received advice from, the following consultative committees or boards:

LAND DEVELOPMENT

Association of Land Development Engineers Liaison Committee

Development Industry–Water Industry Liaison Committee

Urban Development Institute of Australia Liaison Committee

SPECIAL RATING ARRANGEMENTS

Koo Wee Rup and Longwarry Drainage and Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee

Patterson Lakes Advisory Committee

Yallock Drainage and River Improvement Rates Advisory Committee

DIVERSIONS/FLOW MANAGEMENT

Deep Creek Streamflow Management Plan Working Group

Diamond Creek Streamflow Management Plan Working Group

Diversion Management Advisory Committee

Environmental Working Group–Tarago Bulk Entitlements Process

Environmental Working Group–Yarra Bulk Entitlements Process

Gippsland Regional Monitoring Partnership Working Group

Gippsland Research Coordination Group

Hoddles Creek Streamflow Management Plan Working Group

Keilor Diverters Advisory Group

King Parrot Creek Streamflow Management Plan Working Group

Maribyrnong Bulk Entitlements Committee

Plenty River Streamflow Management Plan Working Group

Sustainable Diversion Limits Steering Group

Thompson/Macalister Environmental Flow Working Group

Victorian Streamflow Management Plans Working Group

Wandin Yallock Groundwater Supply Protection Area Management Plan Working Group

WATERWAY MANAGEMENT

Bunyip Main Drain Project Coordinating Committee

Darebin Creek Coordinating Committee

Kananook Creek Association

Merri Creek Management Committee

Moonee Ponds Creek–Cleanup Project

Moonee Ponds Creek Association

Moonee Ponds Creek Coordination Committee

Moonee Ponds Creek Revival Plan Steering Committee

Watsons Creek Catchment Group

Watts River Consultative Committee

WETLANDS/WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Carrum Lowlands Wetlands Community Forum
Friends of Cherry Lake
Friends of Edithvale–Seaford Wetlands
Friends of Koolunga
Friends of Lower Kororoit Creek
Friends of Westona Wetlands
Lillydale Lake Landcare Consultative Committee
Ruffey Lake Park Advisory Committee

STATE/NATIONAL POLICY

Australian Water Association
Cooperative Research Centre for Catchment Hydrology
Cooperative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology
Cooperative Research Centre for Water Quality and Treatment
Farm Dams Project Steering Group
Flood Liaison Committee
Board of Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA)
Index of Stream Condition Steering Committee
International Water Association
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
National Codes Reference Group
Painting Contractors Certification Program Technical Committee
Region 4 Division 2 Emergency Response Planning Committee
Regulatory Control of Water Meters Group
Shire of Yarra Ranges Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
State Fishway Implementation Committee
State Flood Policy Committee
Strategic Committee on Industry and Regulatory Reform
Trade Waste Acceptance Advisory Committee
Victorian Flood Warning Consultative Committee (Bureau of Meteorology)
Victorian Stormwater Action Program Technical Group
Victorian Stormwater Action Program Working Group
Victorian Stormwater Advisory Committee
Victorian Water Industry Association
Water Efficient Appliance Group
Water Environment Federation
WSAA Economic and Finance Reference Group
WSAA Technical Reference Group
WSAA Research Committee
Western Port Portfolio Coordinating Group

CATCHMENT AND LAND PROTECTION

Dandenong Catchment Implementation Committee
Environmental Water Quality Monitoring Committee
Floodplain Managers Network
Maribyrnong Catchment Implementation Committee
Neerim District Land Care Group
Port Phillip and Western Port Catchment and Land Protection Board
Waterway Managers Network
Werribee Catchment Implementation Committee
Western Port Catchment Implementation Committee
Yarra Catchment Implementation Committee
Yarra Region Agribusiness Forum

REGIONAL ISSUE COMMITTEES

Christmas Hills Working Group
Devilbend Reference Group
Eastern Freeway Extension Community Activity Group
Eastern Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee
Eastern Treatment Plant EPA Liaison Committee
Geelong Freeway Extension Liaison Group
Monash Freeway–Hallam Bypass Project
Northern Suburbs Sewerage Strategy Consultation Committee
Western Treatment Plant Community Liaison Committee
Western Treatment Plant Spits Forum
Western Treatment Plant Wildlife Consultative Committee
Yarra Glen Bypass Environmental Effects Consultative Committee

WATERWATCH

Melbourne Waterwatch Boonerwung Region Steering Committee
Melbourne Waterwatch Coordinators' Committee
Melbourne Waterwatch Werribee Catchment Steering Committee

PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS

River Basin Management Society
Stormwater Industry Association (Victorian Committee)

FIRE PROTECTION-WATER SUPPLY CATCHMENTS

Cardinia Shire Fire Prevention Committee
City of Whittlesea Fire Prevention Committee
Region 13 Regional Fire Prevention Committee
Region 4 Division 3 Regional Emergency Response Committee.
Regions 12 and 14 Fire Prevention Committees
Shire of Nillumbik Fire Prevention Committee
Shire of Yarra Ranges Fire Prevention Committee

Local councils

Melbourne Water is committed to maintaining strong relationships and working closely with councils because they:

- represent local communities
- manage local infrastructure including drainage
- undertake works such as street cleaning and waste disposal that have important implications for stormwater quality
- administer planning schemes and so play a vital role in property and land development. We consult municipal councils on issues including planning scheme amendments, land development proposals, flood mitigation projects, environmental management of waterways, protecting stormwater quality and water-sensitive residential developments.

Children at play on the boardwalk over wetlands at Lynbrook Estate, Lyndhurst. We shared a national award winner for innovative stormwater and drainage system at the estate.



Managing Director's briefings

During the year, our Managing Director, Brian Bayley, briefed 26 councils in greater Melbourne to increase their understanding and awareness of our objectives and activities. The briefings also aimed to improve cooperation between Melbourne Water and councils in the management of local issues and works.

Presentations included information on our structure and functions as well as key initiatives and projects specific to each municipality. After each briefing, we provided written clarification of any issues as required.

Tackling stormwater pollution

Removing litter

A \$2.6 million partnership with all levels of government aims to remove litter across the Moonee Ponds Creek catchment in a coordinated and strategic way.

This innovative project, announced in January 2001, includes a waste accreditation program for businesses to reduce litter entering the creek, and installing litter traps across the catchment.

We are coordinating the project, which involves Hume, Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Moreland councils, the Australian Government, Melbourne Ports Corporation, EPA Victoria, EcoRecycle Victoria, the Clean-Up Australia Foundation and the Cooperative Research Centre for Catchment Hydrology.

Removing syringes

We continued working closely with Frankston and Port Phillip councils on the effectiveness of litter traps in removing syringes from stormwater to protect bayside beaches. The Syringes on Victorian Beaches Taskforce finished sampling in June 2001. Its report should be completed by October 2001.

Stencilling drains

During the year, Litter flows into the Bay signs were stencilled on drains in the City of Monash and Queen Victoria Market. The message encourages people to place litter in bins rather than throwing it on the ground. We also placed

this message on drains and litterbins in and around Brunswick Street, Fitzroy—the Melbourne Fringe Festival's parade route.

Council plans

During 2000/01, we reached the final stages of preparing stormwater management plans with seven councils. Nineteen plans have been completed with four more nearing completion.

Stormwater management plans examine ways of reducing stormwater pollution and help councils understand the impact of activities within their boundaries. Examples of improved stormwater practices include sediment and litter traps, wetlands built into new housing estates, modern street-cleaning practices, community awareness programs and clean construction sites.

Banyule, Knox, Hume, Manningham, Maribyrnong, Maroondah and Moreland councils completed plans to draft or final stages during the year.

Water-sensitive design

Responsible development

During 2000/01, we worked closely with local councils and property developers to produce drainage schemes, which give developers a framework for designing and constructing the required drainage and water-quality works. Council drainage requirements are incorporated in the schemes to ensure future systems are fully integrated.

We established five new drainage schemes during the year, covering a total of 184 square kilometres. We have 150 drainage schemes in various stages of completion.

Increasingly, we are working with councils and property developers in these schemes to incorporate water-sensitive environmental features, including wetlands, sediment traps, grassed swales or water bodies. These features detain and filter stormwater, improving runoff quality to waterways and Port Phillip Bay, and integrate water-quality treatment into new and existing urban developments. Some design elements are not standard practice and require council approval.

Future maintenance

Water features, such as lakes and wetlands, are a major selling feature but they need to be managed long after developers leave a site. We are responsible for the water quality improvements these features provide and for flood prevention, but not recreation.

Responsibility for issues such as algal blooms, maintaining beaches, jetties, retaining walls and sufficient water levels for recreational activities needs to be divided between the developer, councils and Melbourne Water.

With local councils and developers we are establishing maintenance agreements for water bodies at these sites. Further documentation is needed to finalise these agreements.

Water conservation seminars

In May 2001, we held a seminar to promote water conservation and responsible water management that included practical advice on how to reduce water consumption and associated energy use.

It was aimed at organisations that manage recreation reserves and other open spaces. Ninety-eight people representing councils, sports associations and schools attended.

Speakers included water industry and gardening experts, and representatives from La Trobe University, the Sustainable Energy Authority, Bureau of Meteorology, Port Phillip council and Melbourne Water.

Our Managing Director presented papers on water recycling options and opportunities at separate seminars and workshops on sustainable agriculture and effluent reuse on the Mornington Peninsula. We also displayed information on water recycling at A Sustainable Peninsula seminar run by the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council.

Planning approvals

Property referrals

Local councils refer subdivisions and some building applications to us to ensure:

- construction of agreed drainage works

- developed properties are not subject to inappropriate flood risks
- we are able to adequately protect our assets.

During the year, local councils referred more than 14,000 applications to us. We assessed these applications for town planning permits, subdivisions and building permits, requests for statements of compliance and advice of proposed planning scheme amendments.

Flood information

During 2000/01, we undertook a major project to communicate flood risks to local councils and property owners across Melbourne. This followed a \$2.5 million drainage survey that identified properties theoretically subject to flooding from extreme rainfall. In line with Victoria Planning Provisions, information from the survey is incorporated into local government planning schemes as special building overlays, land subject to inundation overlays, urban floodway zones or rural floodway overlays.

We undertake planning amendments jointly with local councils. In the past year, amendments were exhibited in eight municipalities. This involved letters being sent to 33,500 property owners who were affected by the introduction of planning controls related to flooding.

As a result of these letters, we responded to more than 1,200 telephone calls, met 25 residents in their homes and provided detailed written responses to 174 submissions. We also briefed councillors and council staff, responded to media inquiries and submissions at panel hearings, and attended council and public meetings.

As at 30 June 2001, 12 councils had adopted the special building overlay amendment into their planning schemes, 12 were in various stages of approval and work on progressing the other seven began in 2001/02.

LOCAL COUNCIL SCORECARD

Target for 2000/01	Progress			Performance Target for 2001/02
	Little or no progress	Some	Achieved	
<p>Council briefings Present local councils with information on our organisation and activities.</p>			✓	<p>Briefing 26 councils completed, incorporating information on local projects. <i>A regular program of briefings to be developed.</i></p>
<p>Managing stormwater Produce sufficient stormwater management plans to ensure all municipalities have completed plans by June 2003.</p>			✓	<p>Seven more plans reached final stages. <i>Develop six new plans.</i> <i>All Melbourne councils to complete plans by June 2003.</i></p>
<p>Managing litter Begin coordinated and strategic clean-up of Moonee Ponds Creek catchment with four local councils, other levels of government and agencies.</p>			✓	<p>Announced Moonee Ponds Creek litter initiative in January 2001. <i>Begin work, in December 2001, on Jacana Retarding Basin wetland system, Broadmeadows, and floating litter booms in West Melbourne.</i> Complete in September 2002.</p>
<p>Responsible development Incorporate drainage schemes into any greenfields sites within three years of development starting.</p> <p>Clarify responsibility for ongoing maintenance of wetlands and water bodies at residential developments.</p>	✓		✓	<p>Five new drainage schemes were established during the year. Work on 13 housing estates with water-sensitive features continued. <i>Begin planning how best to implement drainage schemes in residential redevelopments.</i></p> <p>Little progress in 2000/01. <i>Begin work with councils and developers to establish management plans for future maintenance of water features at housing estates.</i></p>
<p>Water conservation seminar Hold seminar on practical ways of improving water management.</p>			✓	<p>Seminar for councils, sports organisations and schools, held at Melbourne Museum in May 2001, attracted 98 water managers. <i>Hold similar seminar targeting water managers to share knowledge and build relationships.</i></p>
<p>Planning approvals Assess and process development proposals referred by councils.</p> <p>Communicate flood risks to local councils and property owners as part of the planning amendment scheme.</p>			✓ ✓	<p>A total of 14,069 items of business were referred by councils, with 99 per cent processed within 28 days and 100 per cent of agreement applications processed within 60 days. <i>This work is an ongoing requirement.</i></p> <p>Councils sent letters on our behalf to 33,500 affected property owners in eight municipalities. <i>Begin work to have special building overlay amendment incorporated into planning schemes of final seven municipalities.</i></p>

Volunteers

Melbourne Water is committed to working with Landcare, “friends of” and other volunteer community groups to protect and enhance the environment, especially around waterways. We appreciate the significant environmental benefit from the work of these groups, which also raises the profile of waterways and wetlands in the broader community.

During the year, we worked with a wide range of volunteer community and environment groups on projects including revegetation, weed control, bird and butterfly monitoring, community education (newsletters and special events) and water quality testing.

A volunteer taking part in a community planting day at the Hampton Park wetlands.



Funding and facilities

Friends in cyberspace

A partnership developed during the year between Melbourne Water and volunteer “friends of” groups has led to the groups developing their own Internet sites.

We established a site template to enable these groups to publish information about their activities and membership, along with newsletters and photos. Each group creates its content, which we do not influence unless it breaches agreed rules relating to accuracy and Internet etiquette.

By December 2000, six groups had established sites, which are linked to the Melbourne Water website. We need to work harder to increase Internet access among these groups.

Mark Williams, a committee member of the Friends of Koolunga, one of the first groups to establish a website under the partnership, said: “There is so much experience out there in the friends’ groups, but it has been really hard to exchange information. This could be the best resource for us to date.”

Community Grants Scheme

During the year, we continued our annual Community Grants Scheme for volunteer Landcare, “friends of” and other community and environmental groups. The scheme recognises the valuable efforts and commitment of these groups, and the difficulties they face in sustaining their work.

We distributed \$40,000 among 25 groups involved in protecting and improving waterways and wetlands. Examples of how this money is used include buying plants for revegetation and habitat projects; buying planting equipment, such as trailers, tree planters, hammers, mallets and other gardening tools; and for monitoring and newsletters to inform local communities of projects to protect the habitat of rare or endangered species along waterways.

Helping develop new groups

During the year, we worked closely with key individuals in areas of environmental importance to help establish two new volunteer groups.

The Friends of Lower Kororoit Creek was formed in early 2001 to improve the amenity and environmental quality of Kororoit Creek within the City of Hobsons Bay. We provided strategic advice on the waterway and suggestions on the group’s development. We also provided plants, guards and stakes for the group’s first two planting events and attended onsite and formal committee meetings.

We were also involved in establishing the Watsons Creek Catchment Group. Watsons Creek, which runs through the Baxter-Somerville area, is one of the most environmentally degraded streams in greater Melbourne. Inappropriate land management practices appear to have had a detrimental impact on the waterway, which also deposits sediment in Western Port.

The new group consists of local residents, businesspeople and landholders and aims to increase community involvement in improving the environmental quality of the waterway and its catchment.

Watching the waterways

Shared vision

During 2000/01, community groups helped us, local councils, other agencies and interest groups to develop long-term plans for four waterways.

Waterway management plans were completed for Mullum Mullum Creek, Plenty River and Taylors Creek. These plans focus on the entire waterway and cover issues for which we are responsible including flood and drainage management, water quality and stream vegetation.

A future directions plan was completed for Old Joes Creek retarding basin in Boronia. These plans, which are for sites of environmental significance, identify ways of maintaining and managing natural resources such as flora, fauna and habitat, as well as compatible community uses. This was the sixth future directions plan to be completed for Melbourne Water sites identified as being environmentally significant.

Water monitors

During the year, about 11,000 people participated in the community water-quality monitoring program, Melbourne Waterwatch. Some 241 school groups and 94 community and other groups collected data at 440 sites to monitor changes in waterways, understand their local environment, detect pollution problems and identify actions to improve water quality.

Employees from The Body Shop began volunteering for Melbourne Waterwatch as part of a community work program. The Scout movement adopted the program the previous year.

We are the program's regional sponsor and coordinator. By March 2002, the program will include frog call-monitoring.

Greening the corridors

A \$500,000 partnership over three years between Melbourne Water, Landcare Foundation Victoria and packaging manufacturer Amcor is helping local councils and volunteer community groups rejuvenate Melbourne's waterways.

Under the Corridors of Green program, volunteer groups assist local councils to replant indigenous shrubs and trees to protect banks from erosion, improve water quality and provide wildlife habitat. We manage the program's technical aspects and monitor its results.

During 2000/01, the first 11 projects were carried out in nine municipalities. Revegetation works were completed at 16 sites across Melbourne, and more than 25 community groups established some 45,000 plants along seven kilometres of waterways.

Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands

A valuable relationship

According to Ross Nelson, Melbourne Water can benefit from volunteer groups who work in their own time for causes close to their heart. Mr Nelson is a former president of the Friends of Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands, and has been a member of the group for 12 years.

The wetlands, which are managed by Melbourne Water, cover 212 hectares, attract more than 190 species of birds and are home to a mob of eastern grey kangaroos. There is a four-kilometre bicycle track featuring a noticeboard with regular news bulletins from the friends' group. Thousands of people visit each year, including school groups and overseas visitors.

"In the long run, nurturing your friends' group must pay dividends," Mr Nelson says. "We're keeping our eyes and ears on the ground, helping to maintain the place and making it more interesting and attractive for visitors."

"We've got some fire in the belly to do things and that helps Melbourne Water. All we're looking for is some support and encouragement, a little technical expertise and access to some contacts and resources. And if they manage us well, we'll talk to people and build their profile."

Mr Nelson believes Melbourne Water is increasingly struggling to nurture friends' groups because its priorities have changed as it has become more business focused. And he says lack of interest and support from members of the broader community, who want to visit the wetlands but do not want to invest time, money or effort to help maintain them, does not help either.

Melbourne Water has encouraged Mr Nelson and his group to take more ownership of the wetlands. This led to the volunteers establishing a bird hide and providing a wetlands resource book for schools as part of educational displays.

VOLUNTEERS SCORECARD

Target for 2000/01	Progress			Performance Target for 2001/02
	Little or no progress	Some	Achieved	
Friends in cyberspace Introduce Internet template for volunteer groups to help groups share knowledge and information.			✓	Established Internet template, but only six groups set up their own sites. <i>Increase use of template among volunteer group in 2001/02.</i>
Community grants Continue Community Grants Scheme to help groups protect and improve waterways and wetlands.			✓	Issued a total of \$40,000 to 25 groups for 29 projects. <i>Continue providing grants to enhance relationships with volunteer groups and recognise and encourage their efforts.</i>
Greening the corridors Work with Landcare Foundation and Amcor to assist local councils and community groups with revegetation projects.			✓	Completed first 11 projects in nine municipalities. <i>Complete next round of 18 projects in 12 municipalities by 30 June 2002.</i>
Shared vision Complete long-term plans for four waterways.			✓	Completed, with community advice and support, waterway management plans and future directions plans for four waterways. <i>Complete last five waterway management plans by June 2002.</i>
Water monitor Support Melbourne Waterwatch program to help monitor waterways and foster community interest and action.			✓	About 11,000 people participated in the program during the year. <i>Develop strategic plan for Melbourne Waterwatch by March 2002.</i>



Ross Nelson, observes the birdlife from a hide at the Edithvale-Seaford Wetlands.

Education

Melbourne Water is committed to providing readily accessible education resources on our activities, services and on major community issues such as water conservation.

We believe that increased understanding of such issues, through education programs, helps young people establish patterns of behaviour that will benefit the community into the future.

During 2000/01, we spent \$220,000 on education programs. Most of the education resources we produced during the year focused on water conservation at school and in the home.

Conservation and Environment Minister the Hon. Sherryl Garbutt with school children at the launch of our water conservation education materials for schools.



Education audit

In the past we have not assessed how effectively our range of education resources is used in schools. During the year, we produced a brochure to promote these resources to schools and libraries. We also began auditing our education resource materials for gaps and the extent to which schools use these resources.

During 2001/02, we will work closely with schools and tertiary institutions to consolidate materials and improve distribution. The audit will focus on consulting with teachers and other education providers, and strengthening relationships in the education sector.

It will also seek to assess curricula offered by the education sector and identify areas where we can encourage and support the introduction of water education. The long-term aim is to encourage the teaching of water issues at every level of education.

Water conservation resources

During 2000/01, we worked with educational organisations to produce and distribute quality water conservation resources for teachers and students. We produced activity booklets to encourage students to save water at school and at home, and to protect the environment. These booklets help teachers introduce water conservation into the classroom.

The *Every Drop Counts* primary and secondary school booklets were developed for us by the Gould League, an environmental education organisation. These booklets, which are linked with the school curriculum, were designed to help students instigate change in their school environment. Exercises include monitoring how and where water is used around the school and exploring how taps and sprinklers work. They cover subjects such as science, geography, environment, English, mathematics and media.

Co-author Bob Winters says: "Every school can save water, and every dollar saved is another dollar that can be spent on children. We think it will help change the culture so that as soon as children see a dripping tap, they will get it fixed. We're sure that the students who get involved in these activities will become more water-conscious at home, too."

Another water conservation resource we provide, *Rain Rain, Don't Go Away*, helps children and teachers understand the many ways water impacts on people's lives. Developed for us by the Curriculum Corporation, this resource is aimed at children from pre-school to Grade 2 and distributed free to all primary schools. It is designed to build good observation skills as well as water-wise habits and includes science and art activities.

Learning activities include experiments examining the forms of water, drought, assessing water use, creating an indigenous garden, and looking at water from Aboriginal and Asian perspectives.

Drinking water brochure

While most Melburnians believe that their drinking water is of the highest quality, they don't understand where this water comes from, or who is responsible for it.

In August 2000, we produced an educational brochure explaining the sources of Melbourne's drinking water. The brochure outlines how water is collected in the wilderness catchments in the Yarra Ranges, flows downhill to Melbourne, the minimal treatment it receives and the importance of the uninhabited water supply catchments.

We distributed copies of the brochure to all schools in metropolitan Melbourne. Several have requested additional copies.

Thomas Brown from Lady Forster Kindergarten sizes up some spadework during a visit to our drainage worksite in Esplanade West, Port Melbourne.

Open days and tours

An open day at our Western Treatment Plant in May 2001 attracted 550 visitors. We have scheduled an open day at our Eastern Treatment Plant for late 2001.

During the year, 2,210 primary, secondary and tertiary students toured our plants, along with 122 people from 10 international delegations, and 314 from bird observer and senior citizen groups. Twenty tours of Sugarloaf Reservoir and Winneke Water Treatment Plant during the year attracted 1,154 people of whom 1,066 were primary, secondary and tertiary students with the others from social clubs.

Education resources

Water conservation

- *Every Drop Counts*—primary and secondary booklets
- *Rain Rain Don't Go Away* kit
- *Supplying safe, healthy drinking water* brochure
- *Rain Hail Shine, please use water wisely*—card

Stormwater system and pollution

- *Drains to the Bay* kit
- *Down Under, Down Under* brochure
- *Healthy Bay Wetlands Initiative* brochure
- *Care about the bay... don't throw it away* brochure



Protecting the Bay and managing sewage

- *The Bay* CD-ROM
- *Phillip Bay Environmental Study*—primary and secondary kit
- *Bin it, recycle it, don't flush it away* brochure
- *The issues now and for the future*—Mornington Peninsula brochure
- *Werribee Farm—A history 1892-2000* booklet
- *Western Treatment Plant—A Vision for the Future* booklet
- *Western Treatment Plant—Environment Improvement Plan 2000* booklet
- *Western Treatment Plant—Conservation Management Action Plan 2000* booklet
- *Western Treatment Plant—Bird Checklist* booklet

Water cycle management

- *Waterworks Adventure* (CD-ROM and online)

EDUCATION SCORECARD

Target for 2000/01	Progress			Performance Target for 2001/02
	Little or no progress	Some	Achieved	
Education audit Begin auditing education resources to identify whether they are meeting teacher needs.		✓		Prepared and distributed audit brief in June 2001. Complete audit by December 2001. <i>Work with schools and tertiary institutions to identify needs, consolidate materials, improve distribution and develop education resources on our Internet site. Identify tertiary courses where water education units may be relevant.</i>
Water conservation resources Produce materials to be used in primary and secondary schools to reduce long-term water consumption.			✓	Produced and distributed activity booklets to 90 primary schools and 65 secondary schools in greater Melbourne. Also produced and distributed water conservation kits to all primary schools in metropolitan Melbourne. <i>Use results of education audit to begin increasing the reach of water conservation resources and education in schools and tertiary institutions as part of their curriculum.</i>
Drinking water brochure Improve understanding of the sources of Melbourne's water and its water supply system.			✓	Produced and distributed brochure to all schools in metropolitan Melbourne. <i>Use results of education audit to identify educational institutions requiring information on Melbourne's water supply system.</i>
Open days and tours Hold open days and tours at major sites to help inform and educate the community about water and sewage treatment.			✓	A total of 3,914 people attended open days and site tours. <i>Continue tours in 2001/02, with an open day at Eastern and Western treatment plants and tours of Winneke Treatment Plant and Sugarloaf Reservoir as requested.</i>
Melbourne Museum Open Sewer Tour and Forest Gallery/Water Zone exhibits at Melbourne Museum.			✓	Opened Sewer Tour in October 2000 and Forest Gallery/Water Zone in December 2000. Signage and education support materials were inadequate for several months. This has been addressed. <i>Continue sponsoring these exhibits to increase community awareness and understanding of the water supply and sewerage systems and our management role.</i>
Melbourne Aquarium Upgrade Rock Pool exhibit.			✓	Refurbished exhibit with fresh signage designed to lift the visual impact. <i>Continue sponsoring this exhibit to increase community awareness and understanding of the Port Phillip Bay ecology and our management role.</i>



We funded the Rock Pool exhibit at the Melbourne Aquarium, to educate visitors about life in Port Phillip Bay.

Below: Our interactive, virtual Sewer Tour at the Melbourne Museum takes visitors into Melbourne's sewers and explores the complexity of our sewerage system.

Major exhibits

Forest Gallery and Sewer Tour—Melbourne Museum

During 2000/01, we spent \$200,000 establishing two exhibits at Melbourne Museum.

The Forest Gallery/Water Zone captures the tall mountain ash forests east of the city that are home to Melbourne's water supply catchments. The exhibits help visitors appreciate how water shapes the environment and how the forests act as a natural filtration system for Melbourne's clean and safe drinking water.

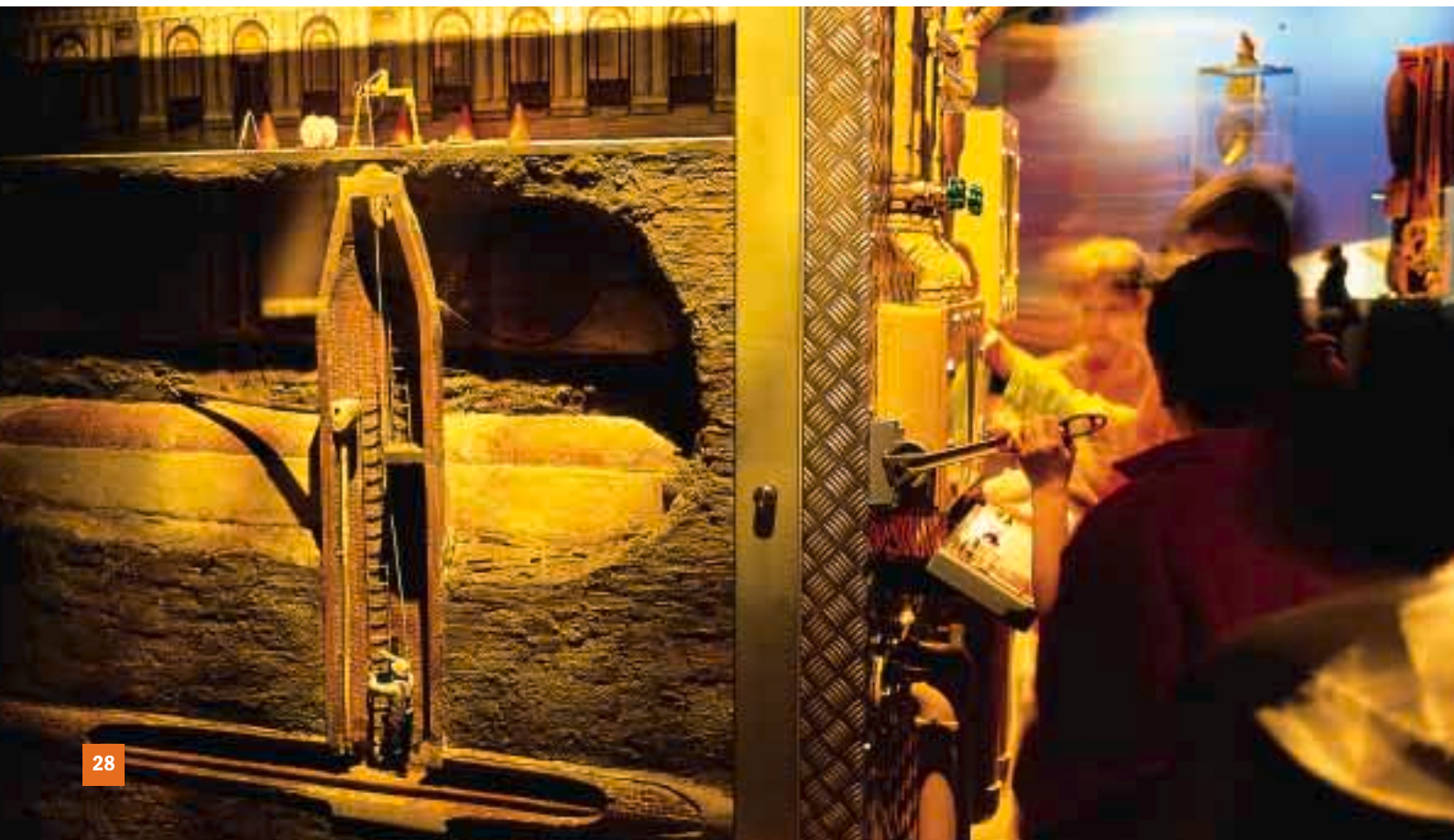
The interactive Sewer Tour takes visitors on a virtual journey through Melbourne's sewers, helping them understand the importance and complexity of the sewerage system. It has been designed to capture the interest of children and young teenagers. The tour features computer graphics based on footage from closed circuit cameras in the sewers and two large-scale models of the services under the city streets.

In June 2001, we installed a copy of the Sewer Tour exhibit at Scienceworks Museum's Spotswood Pumping Station site, at a cost of \$60,000. About half of the 300,000 people visiting Scienceworks each year are school students.

Rock Pool—Melbourne Aquarium

We are a major sponsor of the Melbourne Aquarium, which was voted the major tourist attraction in Victoria for 2000.

During the year, we spent \$25,000 on the Rock Pool exhibit, which educates visitors about life in Port Phillip Bay. The exhibit features animals, plants and algae including sea urchins, crabs and even baby Port Jackson sharks that were born in the aquarium. Visitors can also watch a documentary we sponsored on the Yarra River. More than 780,000 people visited the aquarium during the year.



Raising awareness

At home with conservation

In April 2001, we established a water conservation display as part of the Sustainable Energy Authority Victoria exhibit at the Home Ideas Show at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre.

Our display included information on water savings that could be made by taking shorter showers or fixing leaking taps. We distributed discs that reduce the flow from showers and taps to 4,500 people who visited the display. About 90,000 people attended the show over nine days.

Sustainable living

We established a display as part of our \$1,000 sponsorship of the Western Region Environment Centre's Sustainable Living Expo, at Werribee in March 2001. The expo raised public awareness of sustainability. Our display featured information on sustainable practices such as water recycling at Western Treatment Plant.

Seagrass conference

We provided \$2,500 sponsorship to a conference addressing the decline of seagrass in Western Port and developing strategies to restore seagrass communities. The two-day workshop and conference, held in Melbourne and Hastings in March 2001, brought together marine biologists and botanists, ecologists, researchers, environmental and resource managers from across Australia.

Stimulating debate

As part of our commitment to stimulating community debate on the future of water, we provided \$5,000 to sponsor an Alfred Deakin lecture as part of the Federation Festival in May 2001. More than 1,300 people attended The Politics of Water lecture, which was later broadcast on Radio National. Speakers included Don Blackmore, of the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, and Graham Harris, of CSIRO Land and Water.

SPONSORSHIP SCORECARD

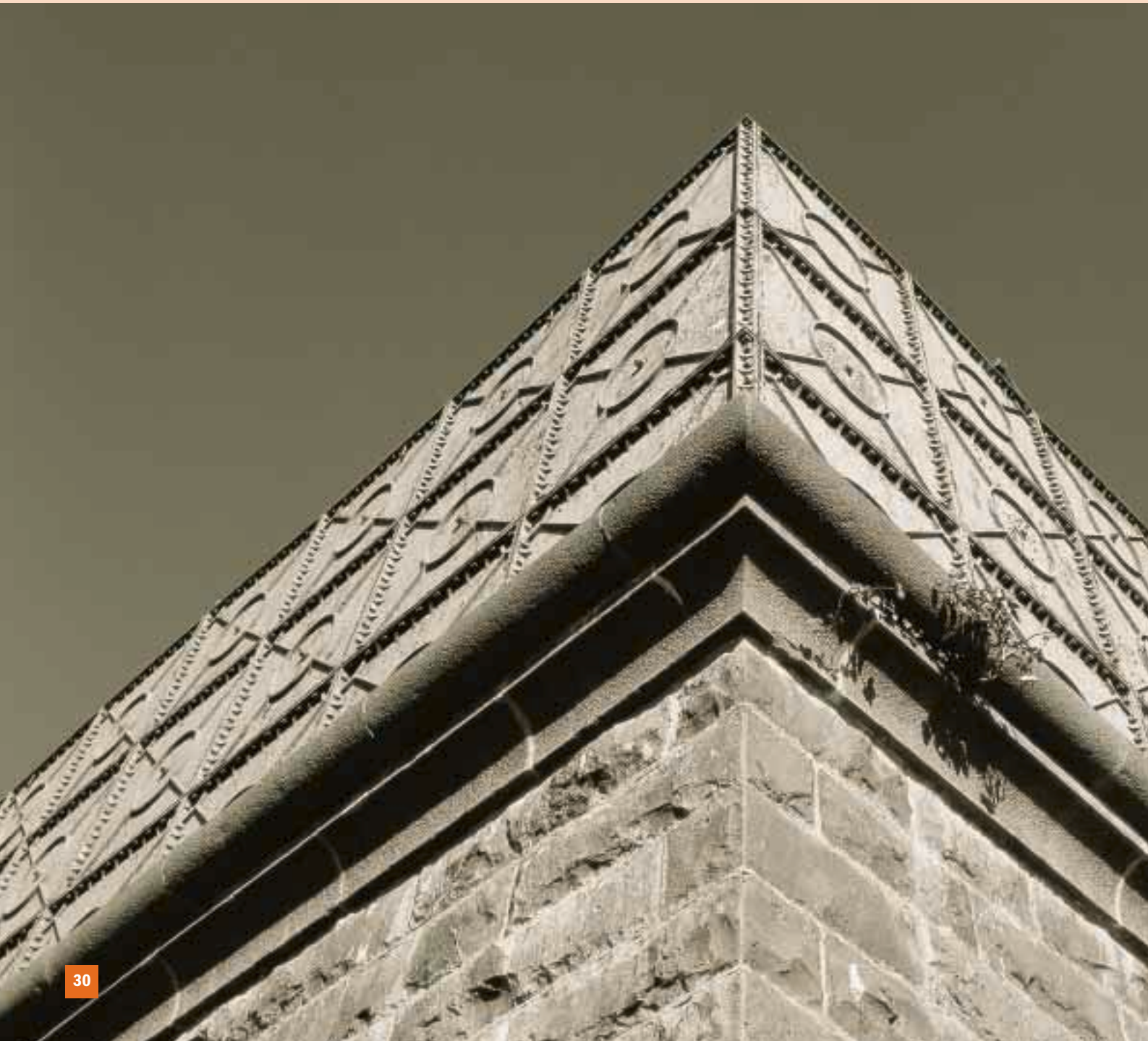
Target for 2000/01	Progress			Performance <i>Target for 2001/02</i>
	Little or no progress	Some	Achieved	
Western Treatment Plant history Commission and complete a history of our Western Treatment Plant.			✓	Completed the history during the year.
Supporting surfers Continue funding Gunnamatta Surf Lifesaving Club rescue boat. Hold surf/environment event for Peninsula schools.			✓	We funded a new engine for the surf rescue boat. Held schools environment challenge at Point Leo. <i>Continue supporting Peninsula surf lifesavers to build relationships, enhance public safety and increase environmental awareness.</i>
Supporting schools Continue using artwork from local primary students for school calendars. Provide academic awards for secondary students.			✓	Produced and distributed calendars in December 2000. Distributed Melbourne Water Awards for science and technology students at 14 schools in December 2000. <i>Continue supporting schools near our facilities to enhance community relationships, improve water education and encourage academic excellence.</i>

Community support

Melbourne Water supports projects, exhibits, events and publications that provide the community with readily accessible information on our activities and services, and which support our community education programs.

During the year we spent \$264,000 on sponsorship programs ranging from major long-term commitments to smaller community-based projects.

The historic water tower that served the Cocoroc town.



A rich and fertile history

Werribee history project

For Helen Penrose, recording the 108-year history of the Werribee Farm—now known as the Western Treatment Plant—proved a genuine surprise.

“It really is an amazing story and even though I live not too far away in Newport, I didn’t know anything about it,” the historian says.

Werribee Farm was built in the 1890s, as the first major project by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, our predecessor. It was a recommendation of the 1888 royal commission into typhoid and diphtheria epidemics in Melbourne.

Penrose spent six months compiling the history, scouring archives and listening to the recollections of former employees. The huge property, which grew to its present size of 10,850 hectares in 1960, was their backyard.

The Werribee Historical Society approached us when the plant’s archives—containing thousands of documents, photographs and slides—were due to be transferred to the Public Record Office Victoria. We decided it was an appropriate time to commission a history of the plant and spent \$30,000 on this joint project with the Public Record Office.

The result is a 56-page history of the place of family farming in Australian history and of how generation after generation of men worked at the site, variously known as Metropolitan Farm, Werribee Farm, Werribee Treatment Complex and the Western Treatment Complex. Locals still refer to it as “the farm”.

The history tells the highs and lows of a facility that did much more than treat sewage. It was

home to hundreds of employees and their families, who had their own town of Cocoroc, four schools, a hall, swimming pool and sporting fields and teams.



The Warfe Family, Keith, Mavis, Henry and Ray, who lived and worked at the Werribee Farm, at the book launch of the farm’s history.

The highs included stock winning prizes at the Royal Melbourne Show; civil engineering journals describing it as a world leader in sewage treatment; and hundreds of visitors, many from overseas, coming to see the protected birdlife. Lows included beef measles, storms, floods and the Great Depression.

We also felt the Werribee Historical Society should hold and manage these archives, which are of local significance. “I think it’s fabulous especially for family history researchers that the records will be retained locally,” Ms Penrose says. “This history means a huge amount to hundreds of local people who are proud of the farm—and rightly so.”



Racing for the water during a surfing competition for senior students at Point Leo.

Supporting surfers

During the year, we spent \$5,000 sponsoring surfing on the Mornington Peninsula. Over the past three years, we have sponsored the Gunnamatta Surf Lifesaving Club and its surf rescue boat, which provide a valuable community service. During 2000/01, we funded a new engine for the boat.

We also sponsored the Schools Environmental Challenge in October 2000. This event, organised by the Mornington Peninsula branch of the Surf rider Foundation, involved environmental activities and surfing competitions at Point Leo beach for senior school students from the Mornington Peninsula.

Supporting schools

During the year we spent more than \$67,000 on annual projects to assist school communities.

Local primary school students highlighted the importance of using water wisely in illustrations for 2001 calendars for our Eastern, Western and Winneke treatment plants. In December 2000 we distributed these calendars to local schools, councils, local Members of Parliament, the treatment plants and their community liaison committees and our people.

Melbourne Water awards for academic excellence were presented to 53 secondary students. These awards recognise achievement, especially in science and technology, at schools near our Eastern and Western treatment plants.

We have also begun an education sponsorship program for six Mornington Peninsula secondary schools to monitor bay and ocean water quality and the wider ecosystem. This project, Seaquest, is based on the Waterwatch program, which helps schools and community groups assess the quality of their local waterways.

Community research

We undertake market research to ensure our activities are consistent with community attitudes. Interviews, in October 2000, found that seven in 10 people believe that Melbourne has good-quality water. More than nine out of 10 people were aware of the need to conserve water, up from 75 per cent in December 1998. Eight out of 10 people believe litter from stormwater drains causes serious pollution in Port Phillip Bay.

Other market research we undertook on attitudes to water conservation indicated that some 91 per cent of Melburnians were aware of the city's water storage levels. A survey of community attitudes to Gunnamatta and St Andrews beaches indicated a positive attitude to the beach's amenity. However, some 33 per cent of respondents considered water at Gunnamatta beach as not clean, 25 per cent believed it was clean while 42 per cent did not have an opinion.

We are also planning a study of community and consumer responses to environmentally sensitive residential developments.

Our people

Our continued success depends on the commitment and expertise of our people. We are focused on recruiting and retaining the right people and developing their potential.

We strive to provide a work environment where people can learn and perform to their full potential, are committed to achieving corporate goals and regard Melbourne Water as their preferred employer. Our goals include:

- attracting and retaining the right people
- providing opportunities for talented people in an organisation that has limited potential for growth
- harnessing the potential of our people
- empowering our people to take decisions that can add value to their working groups and our organisation.

People profile At 30 June 2001, Melbourne Water employed 488 people, comprising 383 men (78 per cent) and 105 women (22 per cent). This compares with 481 people, comprising 388 men (81 per cent) and 93 women (19 per cent) at 30 June 2000.

Mugette Stevenson-Marelic, Graham Daff and Camille White, who all have responsibility for managing our assets, check property map references.





Gordon McFarlane, Yarra Maribyrnong catchment planning team leader, and environmental scientist Mugette Stevenson-Marelic discuss the impacts of land development on drainage.

Aligning with our vision

During the year, we reorganised our working arrangements to more adequately address management of the entire water cycle. The new arrangements, which came into effect on 1 May 2001, will make our business more efficient; give a more coordinated approach to service delivery, capital works, asset management and planning; and increase our emphasis on research and development.

The structure aims to be responsive to changing community expectations and more relevant for sustainable resource management.

Our new working groups are:

- Asset Management and Capital Delivery
- Commercial Services
- Communications
- Corporate Secretariat
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Planning
- Pricing and Strategy
- Research and Technology
- Service Delivery.

As part of moving towards a more coordinated business, we signed a lease agreement for a building in East Melbourne. We expect most of our people will move to the new building in early 2002. This will help us maximise synergies and share knowledge.

Fostering innovation

During the year, as part of our actions to develop leadership competencies, our people were invited to participate in an innovation development program. The program aims to encourage and support people who are prepared to search for, evaluate and implement innovative, value-creating ideas consistent with our business objectives.

The program consisted of three workshops where participants explored ideas, prepared business cases and were taught techniques for gaining approval for their ideas. As a result 10 initiatives will be supported or further investigated in the next year, these include:

- Options for reusing basket willow and desert ash as a timber resource. Currently, we remove these invasive weeds from waterways and burn or dispose of them as landfill.
- Exploring an incentive program for river diverters to reward efficient water use.
- Setting up a “one stop shop” for property information on the Internet to enable fast and easy access to information and online transactions.
- Further developing our triple-bottom-line reporting, in which the financial, environmental and social aspects of our business are given equal importance.

A popular training ground

In June 2000, we employed five trainees to:

- support succession planning in our critical water supply operations
- provide young people with career opportunities
- develop skills in our organization
- as our contribution to the community-based Apprenticeships Victoria scheme.

In April 2001, a water supply operator's job at Silvan became available. After internal advertising, one of the trainees, Nick Stuart, gained the position.

Mr Stuart, who is 20, says that every day is different in his new job, which includes working at five treatment plants, managing the water supply at Silvan and Cardinia reservoirs and regular stints of after-hours duty. "Working on call has been great—when things go wrong, you learn how to fix them and that has given me the confidence to make decisions," he says. "There's a bit of freedom in the job and you get a chance to show initiative."

Mr Stuart says the course was always relevant to the job, and most of the training took place at the workplace. "This is the best way of learning," he says. "At the beginning, I felt like I couldn't take in all the information, but my colleagues have helped me a lot."

Under the scheme, trainees gain experience by working with water supply teams in the field. They also undertake classroom study in 18

modules including water treatment and storage, flood routing, structural surveillance, environmental principles, chemical dosing, manual handling and confined-space training. These modules are part of Certificate II in Water Industry Operations, which our trainees completed at the end of June 2001.



Nick Stuart, 20, one of our trainees, is training as a water supply operator.

The National Utilities and Electrotechnology Industry training advisory board, and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs developed the training program. Qualifications are recognised nationally.

We will continue our involvement in the scheme during 2001/02 and are considering employing trainees in other parts of our business.

New enterprise agreement

During the year, we negotiated a new three-year enterprise agreement. Some 84 per cent of the people who voted were in favour of the agreement, which supports skills and career development and flexible working arrangements.

The general salary increases in the agreement are based on reaching corporate performance targets, which focus our people on our business objectives and allows them to share in our achievements. The agreement also supports remuneration based on individual skills, performance and contribution to our business.

The enterprise agreement allows for general salary increases for eligible people of up to four per cent, one percent effective 1 July 2001 and three percent effective 1 December 2001, based on the corporate targets for 2000/01.

The enterprise agreement allows for general salary increases for eligible people of up to four per cent for our corporate performance in 2000/01. Public health targets were met but

others, relating to the licence breach at Eastern Treatment Plant, capital project delivery and correspondence, were not achieved, resulting in a general salary increase of about three per cent.

Values revised

We revised our values during the year to support our vision, reflect our focus on consultation, meet community expectations and work towards sustainable resource management.

Our new values

We are people who:

- recognise that we achieve more by working with others
- feel privileged to be the custodians of our water resources
- behave with integrity
- attain excellence through creativity and innovation
- celebrate our achievements and learn from our experiences.

Making sure that a large city like Melbourne has sufficient future water supplies is a role for planners, from left, John Woodland, Ilona Jung and Bruce Rhodes.



Communicating with our people

During March 2001, we conducted forums to bring together our people and help set directions for the organisation.

Speakers presented a range of views on water, the environment, the community and sustainability to stimulate debate among our people on issues affecting the business and its future.

The forums, attended by 78 per cent of our people, provided an opportunity to learn about other parts of the business and work together with colleagues in workshops.

During the year, we introduced a questions forum on our Intranet so our people could pose questions directly to our executive team. We also issued news releases on the Intranet as we sent them to the media.

Our Managing Director delivered quarterly presentations to all our people on the organisation's business performance. These presentations will continue in 2001/02, with a more interactive focus.

Other human resources initiatives

Succession planning

We again reviewed our succession planning for key management and technical roles.

The review showed us to be well placed with potential candidates available to fill key management and technical positions.

Induction program

We enhanced our induction program to ensure a greater awareness of our role in managing the water cycle. The new process includes tours of key assets and a greater focus on safety and risk.

Contract and project management

During the year, we introduced a contract/project management training program in conjunction with the Australian Institution of Engineers. The program consists of six modules. Its aim is to provide our people with skills and techniques to work successfully on projects or contracts.

Employee Representative Committee

Our Employee Representative Committee, which comprises elected employee representatives and nominated management representatives, continued to meet regularly and represent the views of all Melbourne Water people.

Equal employment opportunity

We are committed to providing a working environment in which all our people are judged on their merits and treated with respect. We do not tolerate any form of workplace discrimination or harassment.

During the year we delivered equal employment opportunity awareness training throughout our organisation to highlight rights and responsibilities concerning workplace harassment and discrimination.

OUR PEOPLE SCORECARD

Target for 2000/01	Progress			Performance Target for 2001/02
	Little or no progress	Some	Achieved	
<p>Restructure the organisation Develop new working arrangements to enable us to more adequately manage the entire water cycle, consistent with our vision.</p> <p>Source new central building to improve efficiency, maximise synergies and increase knowledge sharing.</p>			<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>New working arrangements came into effect on 1 May 2001.</p> <p><i>Consolidate new business structure in 2001/02 and begin identifying tangible benefits.</i></p> <p>Signed lease for building in East Melbourne in May 2001.</p> <p><i>Move is likely to occur in early 2002.</i></p>
<p>Fostering innovation Introduce Innovation Development Program to develop value-creating ideas for the organisation.</p>			<p>✓</p>	<p>Introduced program in October/November 2000 and 10 projects were developed.</p> <p><i>Support and complete these projects and run program again for another 10 projects.</i></p>
<p>Training ground Continue supporting Apprenticeships Victoria scheme to help with succession planning, bring younger people into the organisation and provide career opportunities.</p>			<p>✓</p>	<p>One of five trainees employed in the Water Supply operations business gained a full-time position with Melbourne Water.</p> <p><i>Continue to support program during 2001/02, when trainees may work in other parts of the business.</i></p>
<p>Enterprise agreement Negotiate new three-year enterprise agreement.</p>			<p>✓</p>	<p>Certified a new agreement in December 2001.</p> <p><i>This agreement supports skills and career development, flexible working arrangements and pay based on individual and corporate performance. The agreement runs until 2004.</i></p>
<p>Communicating with our people Conduct employee forums to bring together our people and set future directions for the organisation.</p>			<p>✓</p>	<p>Held employee forums in March 2001 with speakers bringing a range of perspectives on issues affecting the business.</p> <p><i>Continue program to stimulate debate, foster participation in setting directions for our business, and help our people work together more closely and effectively.</i></p>

Verification statement



SIRIS



SMEC

Melbourne Water commissioned jointly the Sustainable Investment Research Institute (SIRIS) and the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation Victoria (SMEC Victoria) to verify the data and content of this Annual Community Review 2000/01 (the 'report'). This is Melbourne Water's first separate community report. Melbourne Water has the responsibility for the preparation of the report and this statement represents the auditor's independent opinion. Neither SIRIS nor SMEC Victoria was responsible for preparation of any part of this report.

Verification scope

There are currently no statutory requirements or generally accepted standards for the preparation, public reporting and attestation of non-financial stakeholder reports. In the absence of such standards, our approach to verification is based on emerging international best practice and this statement is constructed based on the recommended approach by the Global Reporting Initiative's Sustainability Reporting Guidelines.

The verification scope included:

- a review of the report for any major anomalies
- an examination of Melbourne Water's measurement and reporting procedures, background documentation and data collection and reporting procedures
- an execution of an audit trail of selected claims and data streams to determine the level of accuracy in collection, transcription and aggregation processes.

The scope of the verification process this year has been extended to include separate verification of each of the environmental, public health, community and safety reviews by the auditor.

Verification process

The report verification was undertaken in August 2001, using an audit process that is based on annual rotation of assessing parameters and sites. The audit involved:

- a series of interviews with key personnel responsible for collating and writing various parts of the report in order to ensure selected claims were discussed and substantiated
- a review of Melbourne Water's policies, objectives, management systems, monitoring and reporting procedures and examination of selected data sets including several drafts of the report
- an examination of the aggregation and derivation of, and underlying evidence for, data presented and statements made in the report.

Our opinion

- A high level of data accuracy is presented within the report. The minor anomalies that were found were attributable to human transcription errors.
- Each of the data trails selected was easily identifiable and traceable and the personnel responsible were able to reliably demonstrate the origin(s) and interpretation of data.

Overall the auditor is satisfied that:

- the report is a fair and honest representation of the organisation's policies, management systems and performance. The report is fairly presented and materially not mis-stated
- the report is a strong reflection of management commitment towards stakeholder engagement and a fair description of outcomes achieved during 2000/01
- the systems and processes in place to generate the numerical data presented in the report are sound
- the written statements made in the report accurately reflect the results and progress achieved during the reporting period.

General findings and recommendations

The following observations and recommendations are made as a result of the verification process to assist in further improving the standard of reporting.

- By separating community and public health reporting, Melbourne Water has achieved the outcome of emphasising the importance of successfully engaging stakeholders in its day to day operations.
- Any engagement of Melbourne Water's other stakeholder groups such as suppliers, contractors and alliance partners have not been covered within this report. These stakeholders need to be moved out from Melbourne Water's reporting 'blind spot'.
- Melbourne Water's stakeholder reporting process has evolved over the past five years and this year is moving towards a triple bottom line reporting framework.
- Further analysis of key business issues from a triple bottom line perspective is recommended. This is necessary to continue developing a relevant and responsive performance measurement and reporting mechanism that comprehensively addresses Melbourne Water's triple bottom line aspects and impacts.

The above findings represent a summary of a more detailed assessment report presented to Melbourne Water.

On behalf of the audit team, 4th September 2001,
Melbourne, Australia

Terence Jeyaretnam
Accredited Environmental Auditor (EPA Victoria)
Senior Environmental Auditor (QSA)
Principal, SIRIS

Glossary

Catchments (or water supply catchments): Areas of land, which collect rainfall and contribute to streams, rivers, wetlands or groundwater. Melbourne's water supply catchments are in the Yarra Ranges from where water flows to streams and then to reservoirs for distribution to the community.

Drainage The system of local and regional drains, floodways, retarding basins, wetlands, pollution traps and other facilities designed to contain, convey and manage stormwater to prevent flooding and protect environmental values.

Effluent (or treated effluent) Water discharged after processing of sewage at a treatment plant.

Megalitre One million litres.

Outfall Pipeline at the shoreline or beyond the shoreline discharging treated effluent.

Retail water companies The metropolitan retail water companies providing water and sewerage services to Melbourne consumers—City West Water, South East Water and Yarra Valley Water.

Sewage Waste from households (from kitchen, laundry and bathrooms sinks as well as toilets) and businesses that is sent to a treatment plant.

Sewerage The system of mains and pipelines that transports sewage from households and businesses to treatment plants.

Stormwater Technically, all runoff is stormwater, however the term is generally used for urban runoff in constructed stormwater drainage systems.

Sustainability Sustainable activities are those that can continue into the future, reduce impacts on the environment over time and balance environmental, social and economic factors.

Water conservation Efforts to encourage households and businesses to reduce water use to defer or decrease the need for new storages. Water conservation campaigns are based on water being a precious resource.

Water cycle The circulation of water on Earth as it evaporates from the sea and lakes, condenses into clouds and falls again as precipitation (rain, hail, sleet, snow).

Water supply system All aspects of the system from the water collection point to consumers, including catchments, storage reservoirs, treatment and distribution systems, and consumption.



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