

NSW Technology Reference Group

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Overview

In NSW, there are nine (9) major state agencies that collect, manage and share water resources data with other state and Federal organisations. This represents around 95 percent of the water data that is collected in this state. In addition, there are another 70 organisations (CMA's, local government, irrigation corporations, and power utilities) that are also involved in some level of water data monitoring.

The Bureau's \$80M *Modernisation and Extension of Hydrological Monitoring Systems Program (M & E)* has provided the Australian water resources industry with an opportunity to make quantum improvements in key areas of water monitoring, especially instrumentation, data acquisition, transmission, data management and QA/QC processes. This significant cash stimulus has allowed the NSW state agencies to upgrade much of their ageing and outdated instrumentation and software systems.

To manage the *M & E Program* and related Bureau activities, NSW established two committees;

- the *SWIMP Steering Committee* – to addresses strategic planning issues, and
- the *NSW Technology Reference Group (TRG)* – to coordinate technology issues.

With so much 'activity' taking place as a result of Bureau initiatives, a *knowledge management* approach was considered essential to achieve full benefit of the investments being made. As a result, the *NSW TRG* was formed to provide a focus for technology adoption, to provide a forum for communication between organisations and to assist with information sharing in key areas of water resource monitoring.

The areas of special interest in NSW include – telemetry, instrumentation, Doppler technology, real time QA/QC processes, data management, sharing and dissemination. External speakers with knowledge in these areas will be invited to the meetings.

The Group does not;

- deal with the development of *Standards* (takes place in other forums),
- dictate on instrument selection or databases (up to individual agencies),
- duplicate areas already well covered by the AHA or the Bureau

The TRG aims to have strong focus on the Bureau M & E Projects especially in the area of cooperative *Funding Applications* and will look to develop linkages to the AHA where appropriate.

To date we have held three meetings of the SWIMP SC and the NSW TRG. These are held about two weeks after the Bureau SWIC / JRGWI workshops. Generally the morning sessions are devoted to the SWIMP SC matters and the afternoons to the TRG. There is some change in personnel attending the two sessions.

A draft Terms of Reference for the NSW TRG have been proposed:

- Provide a forum for agencies to discuss the application of technology in water resources monitoring,
- Share knowledge and experience in the areas of instrumentation, telemetry, data transfer and management,
- Identify cost effective solutions to water monitoring activities, (e.g. cost saving in new telemetry)
- Link with similar committees established by the Bureau and other jurisdictions,
- Develop joint Funding Applications to the Bureau under the M & E Program,
- Report to the SWIMP Steering Committee on actions.

Some suggestions for extending these actions at a national level, if supported include;

- hold half yearly, Bureau sponsored, National TRG meetings during the period of the Bureau's M & E Program,
- have the Bureau establish and manage a web site for dissemination of project information that;
 - lists all the 'projects of interest',
 - provides project aims, outcomes and 'lessons learned',
 - includes PowerPoint presentations and reports (if available),
 - provide a blog space for Q & A communication.
- establish Special Interests Groups (SIG) in areas of key technologies, e.g. Doppler systems, telemetry options etc

It is hoped these and other suggestions will be discussed and further developed at the first National TRG in Canberra on 23rd March 2010.