



Victoria's Integrated Water Planning Framework – The Goulburn Broken Case Study

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The Victorian State Government through the Department of Environment, Water, Land and Planning released the Integrated Water Management Framework for Victoria in October 2017. This document followed the State Water Plan, Water for Victoria which sets clear direction on future planning and engagement for the water sector. The Framework was created as a guidance document to increase integrated planning between all stakeholders involved in the urban water cycle including water corporations, local government, Traditional Owner groups, catchment management authorities and State Government agencies. The Framework supports the establishment of IWM Forums across Victoria and provides details on structure and forum areas (see Figure 1 below), governance and support in the implementation of the planning process.

Objective

The Goulburn Broken IWM (GBIWM) forum area includes the following stakeholders:

- Goulburn Valley Water
- Goulburn Broken CMA
- Goulburn Murray Water
- Campaspe, Mitchell, Moira, Mansfield and Murrindindi Shires
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- Parks Victoria
- Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation

The Forums objectives is to provide a clear strategic direction for urban water management which is set out in a Strategic Direction Statement (SDS). The SDS outlines the regional vision, objectives, key challenges and priority opportunities that will be collectively delivered in the short and long term.

The Forums terms of reference are defined as:

- consider the collective community needs in the regional context and develop an overall strategic direction accordingly
- complement and feed into existing water and land planning processes, collaborative networks, forums and associations
- ensure multiple benefits can be delivered to the community and the economy
- optimise investment in water management with a focus on urban water
- facilitate multi-party initiatives

Method

The overall GBIWM forum governance model is outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – GBIWM Forum Governance Model

This governance model is supported by stakeholder involvement at two levels within their organisations:

- Executive level through quarterly forums, designed to maximise organisational commitment to the IWM framework
- Practitioner level through bi monthly working group sessions, designed to build capacity and ensure focus on priority IWM opportunities
- The engagement process completed to date includes:
 - Early engagement – defining IWM in each organisation, champions and exploring IWM opportunities
 - Testing IWM opportunities
 - Endorsement of IWM opportunities
 - Project refinement phase
 - IWM opportunities refinement, exploring cofunding of projects and lessons learnt

Results:

The results achieved to date through the GBIWM Forum include:

- Twelve IWM projects that will be delivered over the next 24months, including strategic planning and engagement initiatives as well as design and delivery
- All stakeholder acknowledging value of the process, with demonstrated outcomes through projects that achieve multiple benefits, have investment from multiple organisation and have a reduced capital/whole of life cost
- The understanding of IWM and its potential is being demonstrated through learning by doing
- Organisational support and strategic focus are increasing with all organisations defining how best they implement IWM into their businesses

Conclusion:

The following conclusions summarise the success of the GBIWM Forum to date:

- Regional leaders who are willing to instigate change and who have built strong relationships over an extended period
- In the short to medium term regular engagement is required to build trust, create accountability and continue learning. Early implementation of IWM will require additional engagement (and resources) and support beyond current business as usual practice
- The ability to demonstrate good will and having some 'skin in the game' through project funding or the potential to gain efficiencies in project delivery of lifecycle costs will keep the process
- The longer term success of the forum should be to assess how implemented projects are impacting resilience and liveability of cities and towns in the Goulburn Broken region