

## Chair's message



Water has featured prominently on both the national and international stage over these past 12 months. Ongoing droughts and flooding rains; massive investments in water infrastructure including desalination plants; ongoing water reform; and formation of the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training are just a few examples. Above average rainfall and flash flooding across the north was the focus of attention in the early months of 2009. This resulted in the Burdekin Dam setting a new record, overflowing for 188 consecutive days from January 5 until July 12, 2009.

BWF members have continued to raise the profile of the Burdekin and sought to increase opportunities for sharing of knowledge and skills for the benefit of the region. Events such as the Groundwater Users and Managers Forum; the Cooperative Research Centre for Irrigation Futures visit; the participation of BWF members at national and international meetings and conferences; and the approval of the Burdekin as an operational basin within the UNESCO-IHP HELP network; have all created opportunities to share experiences, data and knowledge with a range of other catchments throughout Australia and the world. This ongoing interaction is helping the region implement more effective integrated water resources management.

BWF will remain focussed on its mission to support a long-term, strategic, whole-of-system approach to understanding and managing the lower Burdekin water resources and associated systems, and thereby deliver long-term environmental, social and economic outcomes that ensure the region's sustainability.

We extend our best wishes to all for a safe and happy Christmas, and a New Year filled with opportunities to work together for the future of the Burdekin.

*Cr Lyn McLaughlin, BWF Chair*

### **Planning for a sustainable irrigation future**

SunWater is awaiting the outcome of its recently-submitted modernisation plan proposal. The Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) provides funding under its Irrigation Modernisation Planning Assistance Scheme to help irrigation water providers to develop regional plans that identify ways to upgrade irrigation infrastructure and assess options to adapt to a future with less water. The SunWater Modernisation Plan addresses DEWHA's four water priorities:

- Taking action on climate change
- Using water wisely
- Improving water security
- Supporting healthy rivers

and includes these specific objectives:

- Improving water efficiency
- Optimising operational costs and efficiency
- Addressing any identified safety issues
- Upgrading of metering standards
- Incorporation of technology

For more information visit the DEWHA website at

<http://www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/srwui/impa.html>.



**Burdekin Dam**

## New appointments to SunWater

Several new appointments have been made within SunWater.



Scott Spencer (left) was appointed chair of the board on October 1. As a past director-general of the former Department of Natural Resources and Water, Mr Spencer brings to SunWater and the board a broad experience of water resource management, economic policy reform and infrastructure development in Queensland. He will maintain his influence for positive changes in Queensland through his other appointments with high-level boards, authorities and committees.



Barry Jeppesen has been appointed general manager of SunWater's Water Services Business Group. Barry started his water industry career as a cadet with Brisbane Water in the late 1970s. He progressed through the organisation to executive level, before moving on to become the chief operating officer of Ipswich Water in 2006. Barry has been integral in the establishment of the Queensland Water Skills Formation Strategy - an initiative that brings together all of Queensland's major water providers (including SunWater) to address skills needs for the water industry.



Locally, Colin Bendall (left) has been appointed to the position of regional manager, water services in Ayr. Colin held the position of acting manager, services management in Brisbane, after working as the regional manager of water services in Toowoomba. Colin has more than 25 years' experience in the water industry, including a stint in the Burdekin from 1985 to 1987 when he was based in Millaroo and Clare.

## Water Words

### Electrical conductivity

Microsiemens per centimetre ( $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ ) is a measure of the water's ability to conduct electricity. The number reflects the total dissolved solids that are in the water (eg. less than 1000  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  is good quality; ~50 000  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  approximates seawater) Microsiemens per centimetre are the standard international unit for measuring water conductivity. Multiplying the conductivity in  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  by 0.6 is a good approximation of the total dissolved solids. Decisiemens are used as a measure of *soil conductivity* by soil scientists; 1 decisiemen per meter (dS/m) = 1000  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ .

## Burdekin Water Forum

### DATE CLAIMER

**WHEN:** February 15th & 16th, 2010  
**WHERE:** Burdekin Delta Cinemas  
Ayr, North Queensland

Don't miss this opportunity to hear from leading international and national water experts about emerging trends in water resource management.

Register your interest with Burdekin Water Futures on 07 47835 386 or [m.gorizia@nbwb.com.au](mailto:m.gorizia@nbwb.com.au)



### National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training

sustaining a vital water resource

Find out more about the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training by visiting their website at <http://www.groundwater.com.au/>

Visit the BWF website at <http://www.clw.csiro.au/naif/casestudies/burdekin-water-futures.html>