

# STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY STRATEGIC PLAN

2015 - 2025











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# INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

South Australia is a national and international leader in many aspects of stormwater management, particularly in regard to harvesting and re-use.

However, the lack of a historic commitment to the management of stormwater, and some confusion of roles between governments on the issue means that much remains to be done in both avoiding flood damage and maximising the potential benefits of urban stormwater. Moreover, with an increase in extreme events associated with climate change, and with the continued growth in urban areas (and the proportion of impervious spaces) we can expect stormwater and its management to be an increasingly important issue.

In this context it is important that key stakeholders take a more strategic and long-term approach to stormwater, so that community, economic and environmental benefits can be achieved.

There is a broad range of entities and stakeholders with either a role or interest in stormwater management across the State. These include the local government sector, various State Government agencies, industry, the research sector, not for profit organisations and the broader community.

The management of flooding is central to State and local governments' collective responsibility for stormwater.





A more strategic approach to stormwater management across South Australia can also:

- provide for green space that can support healthy communities
- support future water security for the population and industry growth
- ensure more liveable and productive urban environments
- reduce environmental impacts from urban run-off entering urban streams and the coastal environment.

The Stormwater Management Authority ('the Authority') has prepared this Strategic Plan as a requirement of the 2013 Stormwater Management Agreement between the South Australian Government and the Local Government Association. The Strategic Plan sets a direction for the Authority's activities over the next 10 years.

The Strategic Plan positions the Authority as the lead entity for supporting, facilitating, coordinating and advocating a more strategic approach to stormwater across the State. In doing so it establishes a vision, key goals and specific deliverables for the Authority over the short, medium and long term that will be the basis for its engagement with local government, industry, State agencies and the broader community on stormwater issues.

The Strategic Plan also proposes activity to ensure that the management of stormwater takes place in the context of its linkages with other urban water resources across the State, including in Adelaide where six major sources of water interact with each other in the urban environment (water resources of the Mount Lofty Ranges, River Murray water, desalinated seawater, groundwater, wastewater and stormwater).



# STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In South Australia, stormwater is not managed by a single entity but many different organisations and groups, including private landowners.

In addition, responsibility for the various issues and opportunities associated with stormwater is spread across organisations, including in regard to flood mitigation, water quality improvement, and harvesting and re-use.

It is against this background that the Authority has considered its priorities and key deliverables that are the foundation of this Strategic Plan.

Such responsibilities are outlined below.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

According to the Local Government Act, councils have a requirement to take measures to protect their areas from natural and other hazards, and to mitigate the effects of those hazards.

Such hazards include flooding by stormwater runoff. Councils also have a role in ensuring that their areas are managed in an ecologically sustainable manner, which extends

to how stormwater is managed, driving much of the activity in harvesting across the State over recent decades.

Local councils play an important role in South Australia's land use planning process through their administration of development plans, which determine where and what kind of development can occur, including in flood prone areas.

## STATE GOVERNMENT

The State Government has a range of legislative and policy responsibilities that relate to stormwater management, including through statutory organisations, such as the Natural Resources Management boards and the Stormwater Management Authority.

The State Government has specific duties in the areas of State emergency management planning and coordination of emergency responses (including but not limited to flood emergencies). The State Government also manages certain stormwater infrastructure, including some Patawalonga assets (such as the Barcoo outlet), Sturt River flood control dam, and parts of Adelaide watercourses as a consequence of historic 'Drainage Acts'.





In addition, the State Government has a key role in ensuring future water security for the State, with stormwater seen as a valuable resource that can be harvested for fit for purpose uses, offsetting demand on our drinking water supplies.

The State Government also has responsibility for environmental protection, both under legislation and policy, as well as for development and land use planning across the State, which intersects with approaches to the management of stormwater.

## COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY

The community has a strong interest in how stormwater is managed across the State, in terms of the protection of private property, water security and environmental impacts. Specifically, landowners, including owners of strata title property and other private landowners, have responsibilities for the condition of watercourses which pass through their land.

The community has also demonstrated a strong level of support for the consideration of stormwater as a precious resource that can be harvested and used for the watering of open space and private gardens. Further, there is a level of community concern regarding the impacts of uncontrolled stormwater run-off on coastal environments, including seagrass loss in Gulf St Vincent.

Similarly, industry has an interest in the protection of property and critical infrastructure on which they rely. In addition, industry opportunity has been leveraged out of the construction, design and maintenance of stormwater infrastructure across the State.



# THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

The Authority was established on 1 July 2007 as a statutory corporation under the Local Government Act.

Its establishment was a key element of the 2006 agreement between the South Australian Government and Local Government Association on the management of stormwater entitled '*Agreement between the State of South Australia and the Local Government Association on Stormwater Management*'.

This Agreement was driven by the need to improve clarity in the respective roles and responsibilities between the State and local government sectors and to promote a more coordinated and collaborative approach to stormwater management.

In particular, the Agreement:

- outlined responsibilities for stormwater management in the form of key actions for State and local government
- aimed to support catchment scale stormwater planning in South Australia to ensure adequate consideration of flood mitigation, water quality, amenity and re-use opportunities
- provided for the establishment of the Authority as a statutory corporation to which the Public Corporations Act may apply and whose Board comprises members nominated by State and local government





- provided for the establishment of a Stormwater Management Fund that may receive contributions from various sources
- provided for ongoing funding from the State Government of \$4 million per annum from 2007 (indexed) for 30 years for the Stormwater Management Fund
- provided for the establishment of a legislative basis for the Authority (*Schedule 1A – Implementation of Stormwater Management Agreement to the Local Government Act 1999*).

The key roles of the Authority, established through legislation, are to operate as a stormwater planning, prioritising and funding body and act as the administrator for the Stormwater Management Fund. The Authority provides funding for stormwater planning and infrastructure projects from the Fund under specific guidelines.

This arrangement seeks to promote a collaborative approach to stormwater management across State and local government.



# STATUTORY FUNCTIONS OF THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

The functions of the Authority as set out in Schedule 1A to the *Local Government Act 1999* are:

- a. to liaise with relevant public authorities with a view to ensuring the proper functioning of the State's stormwater management system
- b. to facilitate and co-ordinate stormwater management planning by councils
- c. to formulate policies and provide information to councils in relation to stormwater management planning (including policies and information promoting the use of stormwater to further environmental objectives and address issues of sustainability including the use of stormwater for human consumption, for the maintenance of biodiversity and other appropriate purposes)
- d. to facilitate programs by councils promoting the use of stormwater to further environmental objectives and address issues of sustainability including the use of stormwater for human consumption, for the maintenance of biodiversity and other appropriate purposes
- e. to undertake functions in relation to stormwater management plans
- f. to administer the Fund
- g. to ensure that relevant public authorities co-operate in an appropriate fashion in relation to stormwater management planning and the construction and maintenance of stormwater management works
- h. to undertake stormwater management works in circumstances provided for by this Schedule
- i. to provide advice to the Minister in relation to the State's stormwater management system.





In August 2013, the Minister for Water and the River Murray and the President of the Local Government Association signed a new State-Local Government Stormwater Management Agreement (2013), setting a new and more strategic direction for collaborative stormwater management arrangements between State and local government.

The Agreement recognises the importance of managing stormwater in regional areas and in Adelaide.

A key element of this agreement is the establishment of a number of new requirements and operational arrangements for the Authority, including the development of a 10-year strategic plan and 3-year business plans for its activities.

In addition, the Agreement provides that the Authority will contribute to the development of a proposed 'Urban Water Plan for Greater Adelaide', a high-level integrated urban water management plan for Greater Adelaide, and lead the implementation of relevant stormwater elements established in that plan.

It is expected that approaches or outcomes that are developed for the urban water plan may also be relevant to the State's regional areas, with adaptation for local circumstances and local input where necessary/appropriate.

The intention behind these new arrangements in the agreement is to provide greater alignment between the activities of the Authority and agreed State directions in the urban water sector more generally, with the aim of transitioning South Australia to a more integrated model of urban water management.

The preparation of this Strategic Plan by the Authority aligns with this direction of the 2013 State and Local Government Agreement.

The Authority is committed to integrating a risk management-based approach into its governance framework so that it is part of the Authority's planning processes at both strategic and operational levels.



# THE STRATEGIC VISION AND ROLE FOR THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

The Authority has set the following Vision and Goals to guide its activities and set its key priorities and deliverables over the next 10 years.

These are directed at moving the role of the Authority to one of facilitating a broader approach to stormwater across South Australia, not just a sole focus on flood mitigation.

## STRATEGIC VISION

The Authority will drive a strategic and long-term approach to stormwater management across South Australia, in collaboration with key stakeholders, that maximises social, environmental and economic outcomes and leads to a more integrated approach to urban water management and planning across the State.





## GOALS

In delivering on its Strategic Vision, the Authority will work with all levels of government, their agencies, and other relevant stakeholders to pursue the following goals:

- 1 Stormwater planning and infrastructure investments target the highest priority areas of the State and appropriate levels of investment are leveraged across all stakeholders.**
- 2 Policy and legislative instruments support effective stormwater management, so as to maximise public value through social, environmental and economic outcomes, and require stormwater to be a key component of integrated urban water management across the State.**
- 3 All stakeholders are engaged effectively in stormwater management decision making and are informed about the role stormwater plays in integrated urban water management.**

# STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY DELIVERABLES

(2015 - 2017)

The Authority will focus on the following key activities and deliverables over the next three years to deliver on its Strategic Vision and Goals. These activities have been based on consultation with key stakeholders.

1

**Stormwater planning and infrastructure investments target the highest priority areas of the State and appropriate levels of investment are leveraged across all stakeholders.**

- Drive the finalisation and implementation of the Brown Hill and Keswick Creek Stormwater Management Plan.
- Drive the development and implementation of stormwater management plans for high priority projects.
- In consultation with local government identify and prioritise those areas across the State in need of stormwater management plan development and implementation, including in regional areas.
- Develop a list of specific stormwater management plan priorities and associated resourcing requirements for leadership by the Authority over the next five years.
- Assist State and local government to implement sustainable funding approaches for the timely development and implementation of stormwater management plans in those areas identified and categorised by the Authority as being of highest priority.
- Facilitate the consideration of different funding models for individual stormwater management plans.



**2**

**Policy and legislative instruments support effective stormwater management, so as to maximise public value through social, environmental and economic outcomes, and require stormwater to be a key component of integrated urban water management across the State.**

- Provide advice to State Government on policy and legislative matters regarding stormwater management in South Australia.
- Review stormwater management planning policies and approaches in other jurisdictions to determine possible improvements applicable in South Australia.
- Review the current stormwater management planning guidelines to ensure their ongoing rigour and to encourage greater consideration of multi-criteria stormwater management objectives in new stormwater management plans.
- Support the development of the proposed integrated urban water management plan for greater Adelaide.
- As part of the development of the integrated urban water management plan for Greater Adelaide, work pro-actively with State Government and others to identify and evaluate options for managing urban watercourses on public and private land to minimise flooding risk and support environmental and social outcomes.
- Provide an annual briefing to the State Government, LGA and Minister on key policy issues and strategic direction for stormwater management in South Australia.

**3**

**All stakeholders are effectively engaged in stormwater management decision making and are informed about the role stormwater plays in integrated urban water management.**

- Establish guidelines to assist in stakeholder identification, collaboration and engagement in stormwater management planning and project delivery, reflecting the State Government's Better Together engagement philosophy.
- In collaboration with the LGA and State Government, develop a community information module on stormwater management in South Australia that details respective roles and responsibilities.
- Establish an advisory committee to the Authority to assist with the provision of advice on Authority business.
- Engage State government agencies to promote a whole-of-government approach to stormwater management across the State.
- Communicate the Authority's role, activities and achievements to public authorities, relevant stakeholder groups and the public.

