



MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIA BUSINESS FORUM GIVES INSIGHTS TO AN UNCERTAIN MARKET

Leading Water Utilities Highlight New Opportunities in an Ever-Changing Water Market

Singapore, 26 May 2010 – Some 200 academics, industry players, and investors are expected to hold intense debates on the future of the water market at the Australia Business Forum this year. A market marked by huge swings in climatic conditions, mega water projects, and intense environmental awareness, Australia can be an extremely challenging market to work in. Yet if the results of the recent Global Water Awards are anything to go by – Australian companies and projects swept three of the 13 top awards – it can be richly rewarding.

As the driest inhabited continent, Australia is most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. A decade-long drought has also meant that up until 2009, the Australian water market, with an annual capital expenditure of more than US\$4 billion, has been an attractive target for the private sector. However, with huge desalination plants and large water supply projects already rolled out in every major state, the future of the Australian water market is starting to be questioned by industry insiders. Torrential rains in 2009 and early 2010 have fuelled further speculation that many large projects may be cancelled or postponed indefinitely.

Fortunately, the government's massive ten-year A\$12.9 billion Water for the Future scheme to secure Australia's water sources is going ahead as

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planned. While the rains have certainly helped to restore Queensland's reservoirs to close to maximum capacity, average reservoir levels in other states like Victoria and Western Australia remain well below 40 percent. In South Australia, some of the reservoirs are practically empty, as the Murray River, a major source of water, no longer flows to the sea without continual dredging. Water restrictions therefore remain a way of life in many cities.

At the Australia Business Forum 2010, leading utilities from major cities around Australia will reinforce the message that Australia is still very much committed to ensuring long term water sustainability. Industry leaders will clarify the business opportunities available across the country. These range from large wastewater treatment plant upgrades to plans for smaller storm water harvesting and water reuse projects. Expertise is also being sought in the lucrative new area of treating brackish water from the extraction of coal seam gas in Queensland.

"With the government's aggressive initiatives in driving water reform across the country and the growing impact of climate change across the globe, Australia is in a unique position to blaze the trail in developing a blueprint that countries worldwide can adapt and localize for their respective water reform programs. We are optimistic that the continued dynamism in the Australia water sector will boost more private and public sector collaboration as well as open up new business opportunities for the market," said Tom Mollenkopf, Chief Executive of the Australian Water Association.

Michael Toh, Managing Director of Singapore International Water Week, added: "The Australia Business Forum will present some unique project opportunities, not just for large industry players, but also for mid-sized companies. It underscores Singapore International Water Week's value as a business platform for all types of companies in the water industry. Australia is also a good example of a country that has rapidly risen to the task of delivering solutions well supported by clear government policies, strong environmental legislation and the latest technologies. They epitomize the spirit of sustainable cities – the theme of the



Singapore International Water Week.”

Besides hearing about the upcoming projects across Australia, a CEO panel comprising leaders from the private sector will share their experiences working in the Australian market. Participants will learn about working under an alliance contracting model, community engagement with a people passionate about the environment, delivering projects under some of the strictest environmental legislations in the world, and other practical issues.

Key delegates who will address the forum include:

- Mr Rob Skinner, Managing Director, Melbourne Water
- Mr Peter Moore, Chief Operating Officer, Water Corporation
- Mr Greg Claydon, Executive Director (Strategic Water Initiatives), Queensland Department of Environmental and Resource Management
- Mr Dan McCarthy, President & CEO, Black & Veatch Water
- Mr Minoru Kikuoka, Global Head (Membranes), Nitto Denko and Chairman & CEO, Hydranautics
- Mr Geoff Linke, General Manager (Environment & Water), Sinclair Knight Merz

The Australia Business Forum will be held on the morning of 1 July at the Suntec International Convention and Exhibition Center, at the Gallery East. It is jointly organized by the Australian Water Association and PUB Singapore. Other business forums which will be held during the Singapore International Water Week will focus on the Americas, China, Europe, India, Japan, Middle East and North Africa, and Southeast Asia. In addition to sharing market details, the eight Business Forums will host the signing of several memoranda of understanding between water bodies and commercial entities to share best practices and boost the development of water solutions and infrastructure.

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About Singapore International Water Week 2010

The Singapore International Water Week is the global platform for water solutions. It brings policymakers, industry leaders, experts and practitioners together to address challenges, showcase technologies, discover opportunities and celebrate achievements in the water world.

Comprising the Water Leaders Summit, Water Convention, Water Expo and Business Forums, it culminates in the presentation of the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize, a prestigious international award to recognise outstanding contributions in solving global water issues.

The third Singapore International Water Week will be held from 28 June to 2 July 2010. The theme is Sustainable Cities – Clean and Affordable Water.

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