

Implementing WSUD: Facilitating connections to build organisational capacity in councils

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Outline



- **Who we are and what we do**
- **Our changing focus**
- **Organisational capacity – what is it and why important?**
- **Clearwater’s approach to address this**
- **Feedback to date**
- **Conclusions**

About Clearwater

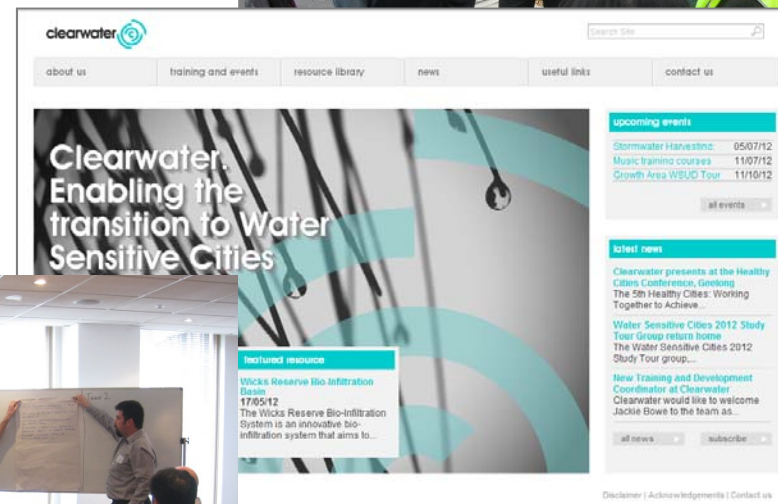
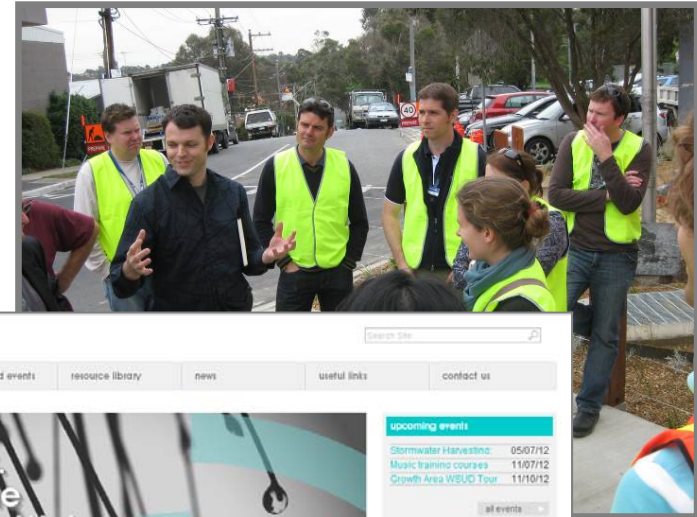


Capacity building program for the water industry

Focussed on sustainable urban water management

Not for profit organisation, currently hosted and funded by Melbourne Water

10+ year history



The Clearwater Team



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Manager



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Training & Development Coordinator



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Communications and Events Officer



Michael Thompson
Project Development Coordinator



Clearwater: three principal goals



Capacity Building



Knowledge Brokering



Strategic Networks

From Clearwater Strategic Plan 2012-2014

Clearwater: what we do

‘Principles to practice’

- **Events:** trainings, site tours, knowledge-sharing events (seminars and workshops), tailored events
- **Resources:** case studies, video clips, interactive online tools
- **Fantastic website:** extensive online resource library and information sharing platform www.clearwater.asn.au
- **Online collaboration portal**
- **Monthly e-newsletter**
- **Advocacy/policy advice**



Our changing focus



Stormwater

Integrated Water
Cycle Management

Greater
Melbourne

Vic regional centres
and rural

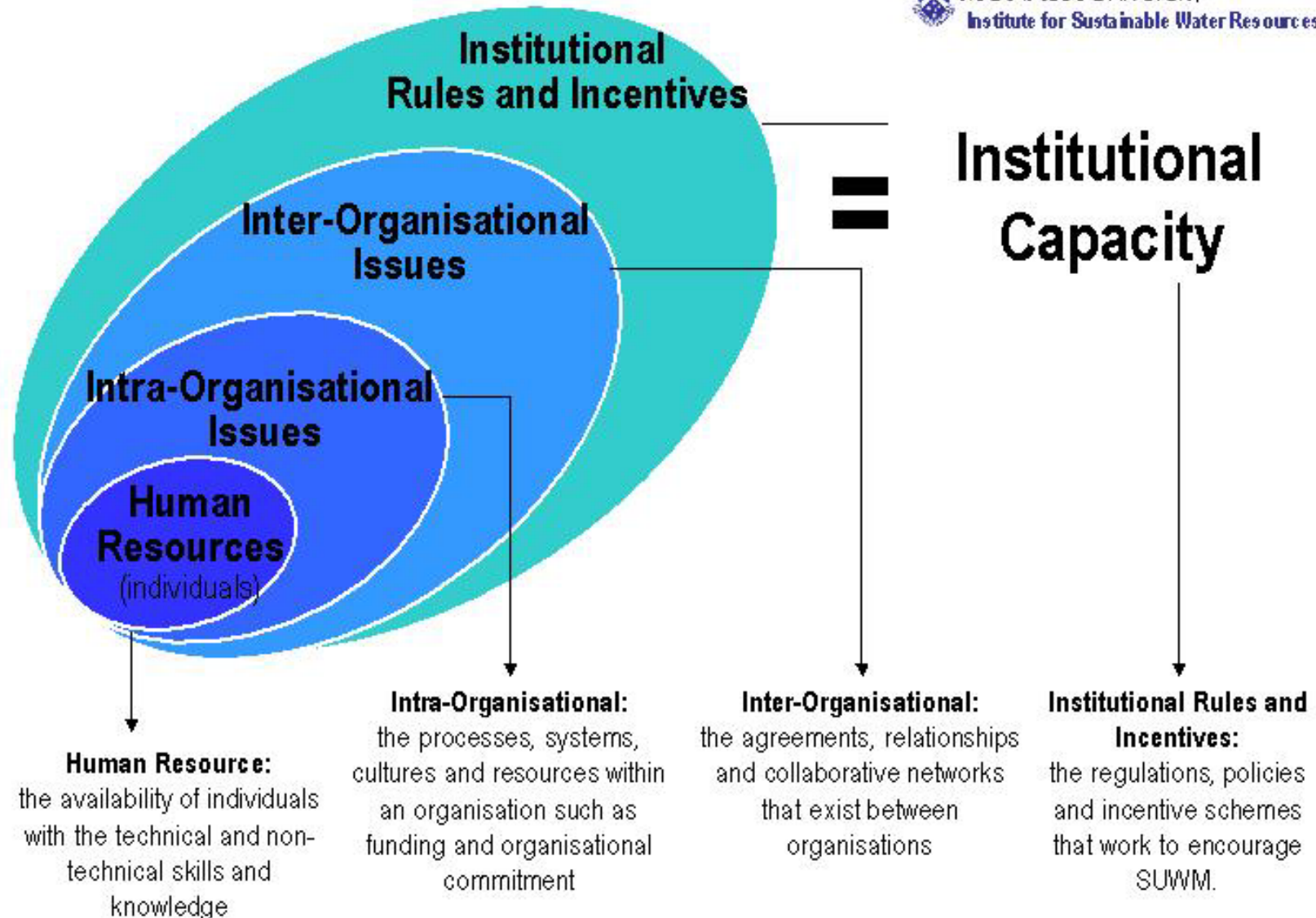
Individuals

Organisations

Why focus on organisational capacity?

- **Research over last decade – organisational administration is most significant barrier to IWCM (eg. Rebekah Brown’s work)**
- **IWCM requires multi-disciplinary collaboration both within organisations and between organisations**
- **Maintenance of WSUD assets is an example of this – cannot be addressed by improving knowledge/skills alone**





From Brown 2003 and Brown *et al* 2006

Clearwater's approach



- **Building knowledge and skills – via public training and tours, case studies, interactive online tools, website**
- **Building intra-organisational capacity - via in-house training workshops to individual councils**
- **Building inter-organisational capacity - via knowledge sharing and network building events, site tours**

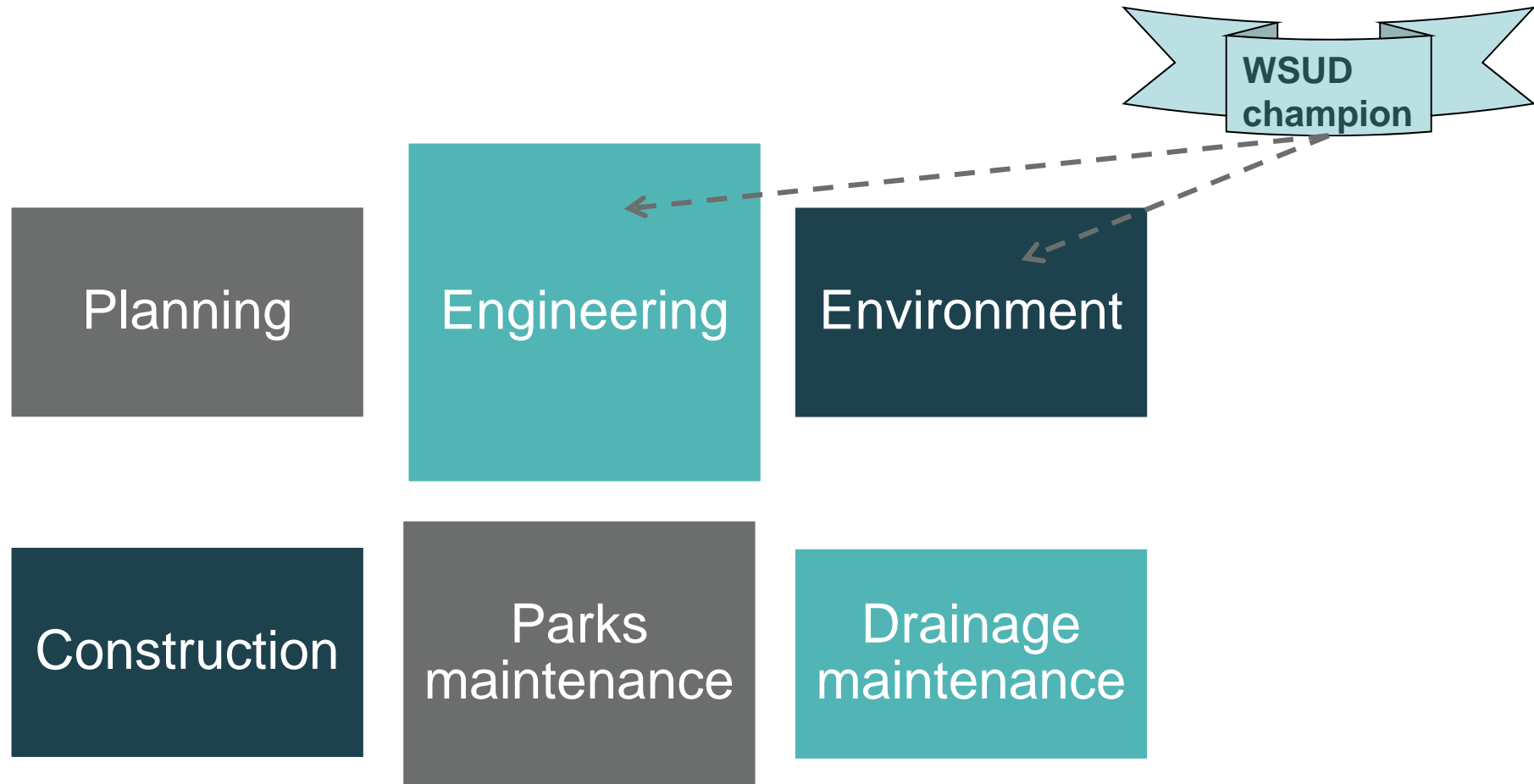
Building intra-organisational capacity

- Delivery of training sessions in-house to councils across Greater Melbourne
- Understanding Water Sensitive Cities (Intro to WSUD) and Maintenance of WSUD Assets
- 16 sessions delivered since 2011



Photos courtesy J Sonneman

Relevant sections across councils



Maintenance of WSUD Assets – in house training

- 
- **Bring together staff from across council (icebreaker)**

- 
- What is WSUD and why are we doing it?

- 
- How do WSUD assets work?

- 
- What maintenance needs to be done and how often?

- 
- **Hands-on session at field sites, including networking**

- 
- **Discussion sessions to talk through issues and identify next steps**

Aims of in-house training

Building the knowledge base across council

- Knowledge of WSUD policies & technologies
- Available tools/people to assist

Building staff skills

- Ability to manage WSUD assets on-ground, using tools available

Strengthening council's capacity to implement WSUD

- Improved relationships and collaboration across different divisions
- Better clarity around roles and responsibilities
- Improved staff culture towards WSUD
- Improved processes for managing WSUD assets

Improving policies and standards for WSUD set by council

- For example, standard drawings for WSUD assets

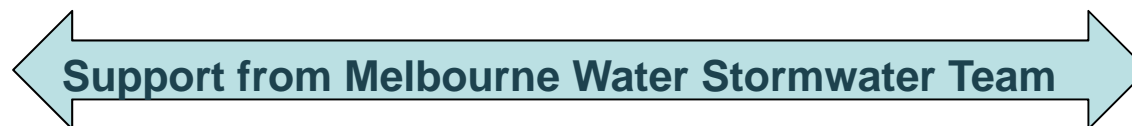
Evaluation and follow up methods

At end of session

- Improved knowledge base?
- Improved skills?

Several months after session

- Improved knowledge base?
- Improved skills?
- Strengthened organisation?
- Improved policies/standards?



Significant increase in knowledge base

‘Courses were really excellent in exposing the maintenance staff to WSUD concepts. It was fantastic. The feedback was really positive, even now several months on, particularly since they now understand how these WSUD assets work and why we are doing it.’

‘You could see their Aha! moment about what these raingardens were actually trying to achieve’

‘In house sessions are really good because they are located where council staff feel comfortable’.



Less impact on skills – ‘use it or lose it’



- **Very positive feedback immediately following session - field component and use of checklist to build hands-on skills**
- **However, a lot of councils not yet practicing maintenance on-ground – ‘use it or lose it’. May need skill refreshers.**

Overwhelming improvement in relationships and collaboration

‘We had a lot of people sceptical of WSUD. A lot of ignorance. The issues needed to be discussed.’

‘It got people talking and venting. Having a 3rd party facilitator allowed us to do that.’

‘It showed that we were serious about involving them [the maintenance staff]. They had been feeling that they were abandoned - burdened with an ever increasing number of assets to maintain.’

‘It has been useful in engaging with our drainage maintenance coordinator. When we are constructing assets, I now get them on site to have a look and provide input to design refinements if needed.’

Better clarity around roles and responsibilities

‘The training was really successful [in the organisational strengthening aspect]. Both the parks maintenance and drainage maintenance were there. They generally don’t interact.

They were able to discuss the issues and talk through roles and responsibilities.

They were also able to interact with the engineers and urban design sections.’

‘It really helped with understanding each other’s role and how important they each were.’



More supportive culture towards WSUD



‘We have had much better buy-in [from across council since the training]. When we are putting new raingardens in, I no longer have a fight on my hands.’

‘It has increase morale and interest in WSUD within the open space maintenance team leaders. Their view of WSUD has changed. They are now very onboard.’

Increased support for improving policies and standards

‘At the time I was putting together our new WSUD Design Manual. The maintenance guys now supported the idea of having standardise designs.’

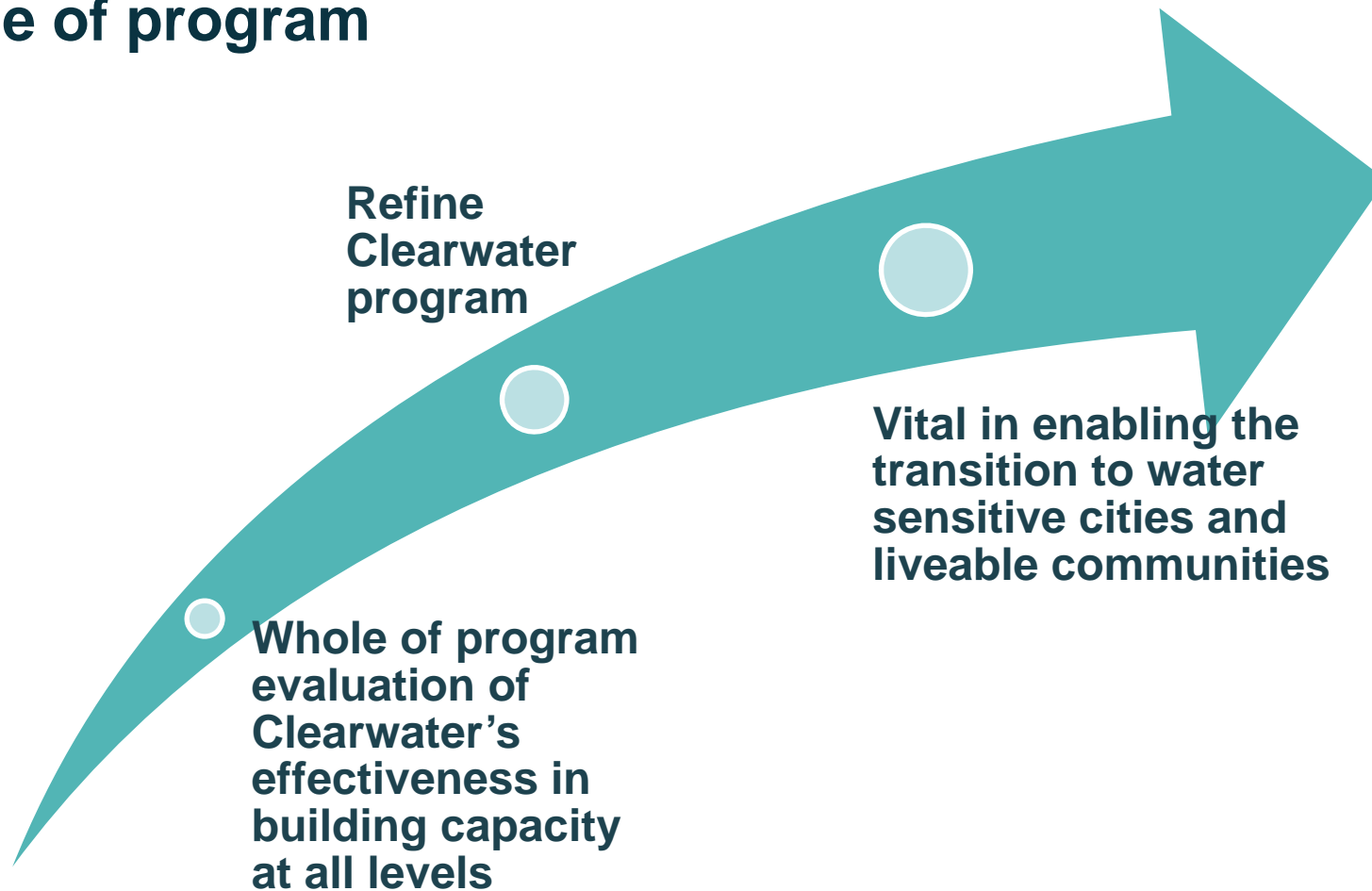
‘I am currently drafting a business case for maintenance funding for WSUD. I have been meeting with our maintenance and operations managers and they have been very responsive. They understand the importance of resourcing it properly.’



Photo courtesy J Sonneman

Evaluation: next steps

Whole of program



Conclusions

- **Successful implementation of WSUD very much about relationships – strong connections across council**
- **Getting people talking and able to get on the phone to each other → 1st critical step in improving processes for WSUD**
- **Clearwater's new training approach providing catalyst**



Photo courtesy J Sonneman

→ **Councils moving forward and working more closely together on WSUD**

Questions?

www.clearwater.asn.au