

Media Release

The Hon Lisa Neville MP
Minister for Police
Minister for Water



Thursday, 16 September 2021

NEW WATER SECTOR BOARD APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED

The Victorian Government has appointed the first Aboriginal Chair of a water corporation in the state's history. Mr Rueben Berg, a Gunditjmara man, will be the new Chairperson at Westernport Water.

Minister for Water Lisa Neville today announced the appointment of 54 new and 65 returning board members to ensure Victoria's 18 water corporations and nine Catchment Management Authorities better reflect the communities they represent.

The new board members will be responsible for guiding Victoria's water organisations through challenges such as climate change, a growing population, bushfire readiness and COVID-19 response.

The selection process was overseen by an independent panel, with the panel for the first time including an Aboriginal Victorian – Seona James – a proud Yorta Yorta woman.

Female representation on water boards was as low as 38 per cent in 2014. The appointments announced today mean 57 per cent of board directors and 59 per cent of CMA board members are now women. The number of Aboriginal board members has also increased to 13 – up from 11 in 2019.

The Greater Western Water board commenced on 1 July, following the integration of City West Water and Western Water to improve services and affordability for customers in Melbourne's growing western suburbs. The remaining water board members begin their terms in October.

Minister Neville thanked outgoing members for their contribution and commitment to the water sector.

Board members can be viewed at water.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Lisa Neville

"Victoria's water entities have a strong history of dedicated representatives and these appointments continue our work in establishing a culture of fairness, diversity, expertise and equity."

"This group of highly qualified directors will continue to provide an excellent service to the community and support the provision of affordable, reliable water services throughout Victoria."

"We expect a lot from our water corps, and they deliver – with low water bills compared to the rest of Australia, efficient use of our water and helping communities face of challenges like COVID, climate change and bushfires."