

State of the Aquatic Pollution Prevention Partnership (A3P)

Sept 2025

Strategic goals

Addressed **10 Key Research Areas** and **16 Regional Performance Objectives** in the Healthy Waterways Strategy (2018-2028), improving Melbourne Water's operations through the A3P projects

In 2023 contributed substantively to the **Mid-term review** of the Healthy Waterways Strategy, including technical and stakeholder engagement. Contributing to **RMIT Strategic Core Goals** as a go-to for industry consultation.

Collaborations

In 2024, active involvement of **42 Melbourne Water employees** in >26 project team meetings. Training of **3 students** and development of novel analytical techniques at **National Measurement Institute (NMI)** and **EU Joint Research Centre (JRC)** and a secondment to **RMIT Europe**

Participation of five **Melbourne Water senior managers** and one **RMIT senior manager** in the Partnership's Research Management Committee. Broadening collaboration within **RMIT** – Biology, Engineering, WETT, Biosolids, RACES, ACES

Building staff capacity

Introduction to pollution monitoring, assessment and management delivered to **11 Melbourne Water staff**. RMIT Ecotoxicology Course attended by **6 Melbourne Water staff**. Traditional Owner engagement with **Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung**. Supported **14 PhD, 2 Masters, and 5 Honours students**. Also, Partnership research has been integrated in multiple undergraduate courses, including supervision of 3rd Year research projects.

In 2020, released **6 on-line education videos for Melbourne Water** (over 900 views) and videos demonstrating how to monitor sediment and water quality for **RMIT students**. In 2022, provided Work for Victoria **litter assessment training**.

Mobilising research findings

Since inception, the partnership has produced > 25 journal publications and 100+ technical reports. Media exposure includes a PFAS article in The Conversation with 38,000+ readership worldwide

From 2018, delivered **22 MW Lunchtime Seminars**, with over **400 attendees** plus further **post event views on Workplace**. Presented at > **70 local and international conferences and strategic workshops**

Supporting the Water Industry

Expertise within the Partnership has enabled **15 additional projects** for other parts of Melbourne Water, including Ramsar obligations, drinking water, wastewater and recycled water. Partnership expertise has also supported >**35** broader water industry projects, including for 5 water utilities, EPA and DEECA

Significant innovations developed by the Partnership and adopted by the broader water industry include: improved screening for micropollutants (E.g. pesticides, pharmaceuticals) in water using passive samplers, new laboratory methods to scan for 40,000+ chemicals in the environment, and trialling of stir bar technology to enable quantification of micropollutants that are otherwise difficult to detect in water; discovering emerging contaminants of management concern

Citizen Science

Since 2018, the Partnership has delivered >**30 events** that build the capacity of volunteer groups, including primary and secondary students, Friends Groups, Riverkeepers, individuals, Waterwatch and Estuary Watch

In 2024, our Litter Trackers Program was a finalist in the **Victorian Marine and Coastal Council Awards**. In 2025, > **65 volunteers** engaged in the Exploring Unseen Threats project

Continuous improvement in waterway management

2022 review of the Partnership identified other value delivered including frameworks for investment, improved service delivery, new policy and regulation, leveraging funds, proactive risk management e.g. GED, OH&S, environmental incident response

Notable management achievements since inception include influencing the new EPA urban construction guidelines regarding termite control, baseline assessments of emerging contaminants of concern in waterways to support Melbourne Water's Contaminants Framework, development of new field sampling and laboratory methods

