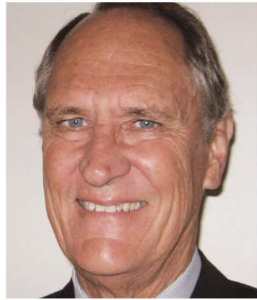


## MY CAREER



### PETER WAY

## Witness to change

With nearly 40 years' involvement in the industry, NAMS.AU Chair Peter Way is ideally placed to oversee the latest trends in asset management.

BY JESSICA GOULBURN

#### How did you decide to become involved in the public works sector?

With two older brothers as engineers, it was a foregone conclusion that I would follow in their footsteps. I started as a cadet engineer in 1965, which meant part-time study for six years to gain my civil engineering degree. After 11 years with various consultants working mainly on bridge designs, including the Brisbane Cross River Rail Link, I took up my first role in local government at Beaudesert Shire Council in 1975.

#### Where has your career taken you?

In the 1970s, I went back to part-time study to complete a Graduate Diploma in Urban and Regional Planning. When the new Logan City was created in 1979, I was appointed Deputy Engineer and then in 1988 appointed City Engineer, City Planner and City Building Surveyor. Wanting to become more involved in the administration of public works, I completed my MBA at UQ in 1990. I focused back on the public works engineering sector at Logan and served as Director of City Works until my 'retirement' in 2006. I also became more involved in IPWEA affairs and served terms as Queensland State President and National President. This has led to my current role as Chair of National Asset Management Strategy Committee (NAMS.AU) allowing me to engage in infrastructure asset management, which has become a passion over my career, and to give something back to the industry.

#### What is your proudest achievement?

Being able to make a difference for the Logan community with a range of projects such as flood mitigation, new bridges, better roads, water and sewerage services, and an improved streetscape – all to cater for a rapidly growing urban community. On a personal front, I was proud to receive a Public Service Medal in 1998 for services to local government engineering. Emeritus Membership of IPWEA in 2003 was another highlight.



**When I started, it was pretty much roads, rates and rubbish, but councils are now taking on responsibility for an incredible array of services.**



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#### Where do you think the industry is heading?

The biggest change has been the widening of responsibilities now assumed by public works organisations. When I started, it was pretty much roads, rates and rubbish, but councils are now taking on responsibility for an incredible array of services. The public works professional needs to be more multifaceted and work as part of a team of professionals.

#### How has the approach to asset management changed?

Infrastructure asset management has undertaken enormous change over the past few decades in the public works arena. The introduction of accrual accounting in the late 1980s recognised just what an enormous responsibility local governments have. I was pleased to be part of the IPWEA team in the early 1990s that developed the first Australian Asset Management Manual. That has morphed into the International Infrastructure Management Manual (IIMM), and I'm fortunate to still be party to the ongoing development of that and the many other resources available through IPWEA and NAMS.AU. The last few years have seen a strong focus on financial sustainability for local government, which has confirmed that asset management really cannot be treated as an optional activity. We are also now seeing legislation introduced requiring asset management planning to be linked to long-term financial planning.

#### What advice would you give to younger engineers coming into the industry?

Hone your communication skills. All of the technical training in the world will not be enough if you cannot get your message across to decision makers, including non-engineers. Also, take advantage of any networking opportunities and resources that are on offer from professional associations such as IPWEA. Be a team player. •••