

PWWA NEWSLETTER

04th Edition, 01st October – 31st December 2024



Caledonienne des Eaux

Calédonienne des Eaux (CDE) committed to serving its customers in times of crisis

Since May 13, New Caledonia has faced a major crisis. Thirteen direct fatalities have been reported, including two members of law enforcement. Damages across the territory are estimated at 265 billion CFP francs (€2.2 billion), with 165 billion CFP francs (€1.3 billion) affecting the private sector. More than 200 homes and 800 businesses have been impacted by fires or acts of vandalism, primarily in Greater Nouméa. Eight thousand students have been affected by the partial or total destruction of their schools, and the structural deficits of healthcare facilities have worsened. Additionally, 20,000 people are experiencing total or partial unemployment.

Site Management and Reorganization

Some sites managed by Calédonienne des Eaux (CDE), such as production plants, reservoirs, and certain wastewater treatment stations, were directly impacted (fires, vandalism), and access to them was challenging. A total of 28 vehicles (10% of the fleet) were set on fire. However, CDE managed to reorganize quickly within the first hours following these events.

Service Continuity and Extended Collaboration

While prioritizing the safety of its employees, the company worked closely with local authorities and law enforcement to implement a water service continuity plan across all affected areas. The customer service agency also established a special program to assist affected businesses by offering tailored solutions to meet the specific needs of individuals and professionals. To reduce travel, remote services were prioritized.

Internally, Calédonienne des Eaux provided psychological support to all employees who requested it as activities gradually resumed.

The management team remained fully engaged and maintained constant communication despite the challenges. Continuous coordination with employee representative bodies was also ensured.

Luc Bourgade, CEO of Calédonienne des Eaux: « *During these riots, we never wavered in our mission: to provide an essential service to the population, ensuring that everyone, without distinction, has access to clean drinking water. Our customers, users, and local authorities, as well as Prony Resources NC, are deeply grateful to us!* »

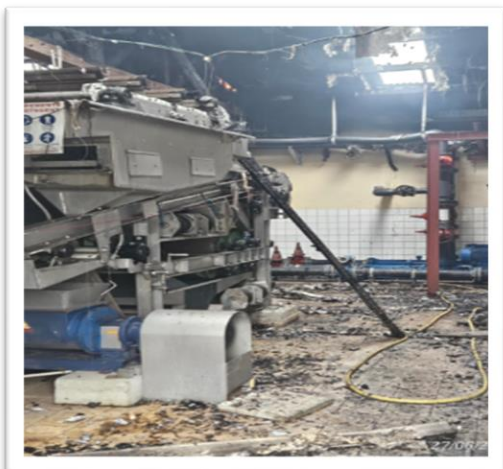
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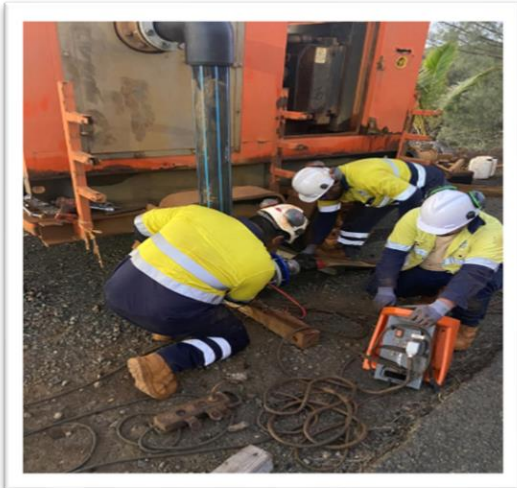
Le Réservoir Marconi (Nouméa), a été occupé par les émeutiers dès le début de la crise.
Transfert de pièces de fontainerie de gros diamètre vers un site sécurisé.



**The Marconi Reservoir (Nouméa) was occupied by rioters from the very beginning of the crisis.
Large-diameter water pipe components were transferred to a secure location.**



**File boue incendiée de la Station d'épuration de Dumbéa
Sludge from the Dumbéa sewage treatment plant**



**Usine métallurgique de « Prony Resources NC» - Mise en place d'une pompe pour alimenter en eau de mer le système de défense incendie victime de sabotage
Prony Resources NC Metallurgical Plant - Installation of a pump to supply seawater to the fire defence system, which was the victim of sabotage**

Calédonienne des Eaux closer to users

In the current context of New Caledonia, the customer team of Calédonienne des Eaux is now moving closer to users to allow them to carry out their procedures such as payments, payment schedules, cancellations, etc. by organizing “Ephemeral Receptions”.

Each situation is studied on a case-by-case basis and, if necessary, adapted deadlines and schedules are offered to subscribers. The first “Ephemeral Receptions” were organized at the office of the Maison de Quartier in Dumbéa-sur-Mer on 30/07 and 6/08 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. More than a hundred users were received, allowing their files to move forward very quickly. Other temporary receptions were planned once a month in two different municipalities.

With these new provisions accessible to the greatest number, Calédonienne des Eaux has made every effort to enable its customers to complete their formalities in a simplified manner, for the benefit of users.



The Calédonienne des Eaux: New Services for Simplified and Fast Payments

With a constant focus on improving customer experience, the Calédonienne des Eaux (CDE) has introduced several new services that allow its subscribers to pay their water bills more easily and quickly.

Payment by Phone with Credit Card

For those who prefer simplicity and speed, CDE now allows customers to pay directly by phone, securely, using their credit card. This option enables bill payments in just a few minutes, without the need to go anywhere, directly from a smartphone or landline.

Payment via Payment Terminals at Gas Stations

CDE is also expanding its payment points by installing payment terminals in several gas stations. These terminals offer great flexibility, allowing customers to pay their bills at any time, even outside of agency opening hours.

Online Agency and Express Payment

Finally, for those who prefer managing their transactions online, CDE offers an express payment option through its online agency. With this platform, customers can view their bill and make a quick payment in just a few clicks, without needing to visit a physical agency. The interface is simple, intuitive, and secure, saving time and avoiding unnecessary trips.

Services Designed for Your Comfort

These new payment options are part of Calédonienne des Eaux's commitment to offering its customers modern and practical solutions, while meeting their needs for flexibility and simplicity. With these services, CDE simplifies the management of water bills and helps its customers manage their payments more efficiently.

With the introduction of these new payment methods, Calédonienne des Eaux once again demonstrates its commitment to making its subscribers' daily lives easier and more accessible.



Vanuatu Earthquake

(source RNZ Pacific Vanuatu)

At 12:47:26 VUT (01:47:26 UTC) on 17 December 2024, a 7.3 magnitude earthquake struck Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu. At least 14 people were confirmed dead, while 265 others were injured, and many others were still missing. Of the casualties, two of the fatalities were Chinese, one death and three of the injuries were Thai, and another fatality was French. Two children were also among the dead. Thousands of homes collapsed or suffered damage, including 245 which were completely or partially destroyed, although former Prime Minister Ishmael Kalsakau claimed that almost every single house on the island of Efate suffered damage.

In Port Vila, at least 10 buildings collapsed, including some in a pancaking manner. A building housing the United States, United Kingdom, French and New Zealand embassies and high commissions collapsed on its ground floor. The United States, France, New Zealand and Australia said that their diplomatic personnel in Vanuatu were in safe condition. Many landslides occurred, including some that blocked roads and buried a wharf in the city. Two bridges also collapsed. The earthquake struck at a time when the center of Port Vila was busy with lunchtime shoppers.

A landslide struck the international shipping terminal of Port Vila, while the runway and control tower of Bauerfield International Airport was damaged, leading to the cancellation of multiple flights and its closure to non-humanitarian flights for 72 hours. Another landslide buried a bus, resulting in multiple deaths. Two reservoirs and the Port Vila Central Hospital were also damaged, forcing the transfer of patients to a military camp. Landslides were also reported in outlying villages and islands, while three bridges were damaged to a point that they were at high risk of collapsing in case of heavy rain. Two power lines were also damaged. The earthquake also triggered landslides that blocked airfields in surrounding islands and damaged water supplies.

A 25 cm (9.8 in) tsunami was observed. The submarine cable providing internet service to Vanuatu was damaged, causing outages. Websites of Vanuatuan government agencies went offline, while communication lines for police and related authorities were rendered unserviceable. The Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation went off air due to damage to Broadcasting House. Despite connectivity issues, people were able to go online through Starlink. The Vanuatu Red Cross Society building was also damaged. Power and water outages occurred in the city, leading to an increase in diarrhoea cases.

The main utilities provider, UNELCO, said it could take two weeks to fully restore water supplies. Extensive crop damage was recorded in Mataso due to landslides that buried gardens, sparking concerns over food shortages. Some residents in Port Vila were too scared to return to their homes due to aftershocks, with some families erecting tents in open places to sleep outside due to fear of further earthquakes.

In Malorua, closest to the epicentre, six buildings were damaged, and 20 hectares of land were affected by landslides. A landslide destroyed multiple homes and caused water outages in Mele Maat.

The USGS estimated that the earthquake could cause economic losses measuring between 1–10% of Vanuatu's GDP.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated that 116,000 people had been directly affected by the earthquake, equivalent to a third of Vanuatu's population. Among them were 14,000 children. At least 2,435 people were displaced, while 20,000 were without water. The Recovery Operation Centre estimated that the amount needed to recover from the earthquake reached 29 billion vatu (US\$231.7 million). The education ministry said 45 schools were damaged, including Malapoa College, with rebuilding costs estimated at more than US\$8 million. Save the Children said nearly 13,000 children required temporary learning solutions.



Our Prayers and Thoughts are with the Government and the people of Vanuatu



IWSA - Independent Water Schemes Association

(source IWSA)

The Independent Water Schemes Association (IWSA) is excited to announce the official launch of the Aufaga Independent Water Scheme (IWS) water tank project, made possible by the generous support of the Government of Japan.

This new water storage tank marks a crucial development for Aufaga's water system. Historically, the community has faced challenges due to seasonal fluctuations in water availability. The upgraded tank will significantly enhance Aufaga's ability to capture and store water, ensuring a consistent and reliable supply throughout both wet and dry seasons.

This project is in alignment with Samoa's Pathway (FY21/22 - FY25/26) for the Development of Samoa, contributing to vital areas such as alleviating hardship, empowering our people, and building climate resilience. It also supports sustainable community development and the responsible management of natural resources.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Government of Japan and His Excellency the Ambassador for their support and partnership.

We also recognize the hard work and dedication of the Aufaga Water Committee in the operation and management of the Aufaga community-managed water supply.



Australian Water Association

(source AWA)

Transforming water access in Solomon Islands through partnership

Solomon Water Manager of Retail Lucy Habu participated in the Australian Water Association's AWP-funded [Partnerships for a Resilient and Climate Smart Water Sector Program](#). Here, Lucy shares her insights on the impact of collaboration and the lessons learned, highlighting the importance of access to clean water for Solomon Islands communities.

Lucy Habu, Manager of Retail, Solomon Water

When I joined Solomon Water in 2018, I never imagined how much my work would come to mean to me – not just as a job, but as a purpose. As the Manager of Retail, responsible for our customer services division, every day I see the impact water has on the lives of people in our community.

Water is essential – it is life. As a mother myself, I know all too well the struggles many women and children face in accessing clean water. I've lived it, and it's why I care so deeply about my role at Solomon Water. Every time we solve a customer's issue or connect a new family to the water supply, I feel like I'm helping to lift a weight from someone's shoulders, to ease the burden that so many carry when water is scarce.

Leading a team that manages new supply connections, handles customer complaints and maintains day-to-day operations is huge responsibility. There are days when it feels like a constant challenge to meet service level standards. But I see this work as part of something bigger – part of a global humanitarian effort to bring clean, safe water to everyone.

I've found that engaging with customers, listening to their concerns and working to improve our services creates a strong bond with our community. Every interaction builds confidence and trust, and that trust is the foundation of our success as a water utility.



This is why [partnerships like the one between Solomon Water and Goulburn Valley Water](#) (GVW) are so vital. The learning I gained through that partnership program was invaluable. Seeing how GVW operates, with state-of-the-art technology and innovative practices, was both inspiring and eye-opening. It showed me what's possible when we collaborate across borders – when we share not just resources, but knowledge, expertise and experience. What amazes me most was the level of sophistication in their systems, particularly in water treatment and distribution. We face many of the same challenges, but their solutions are often ahead of where we are. The hardest part of the program was absorbing everything during the short time we had together – it was a lot to take in! But every second was worth it because it wasn't just about seeing what they do; it was about learning how we can apply those lessons back home, to make changes on our processes and systems and overall to benefit the people of the Solomon Islands.

One of the biggest impacts of the partnership was on the development of our own Hardship Policy at Solomon Water. Through the deep-dive sessions with GVW's customer services team, we learned proactive ways to support customers struggling with bill payments. Inspired by their Customer Support and Customer Violence policies, we customised our approach, and our first Hardship Policy was approved in July 2024. This policy allows us to help residential customers who are in financial difficulty, ensuring they stay connected to water services. It's a huge step forward in making ease of payment for customers and water accessible to everyone, and I'm incredibly proud of this achievement.

This partnership program was not just a learning experience; it was a reminder of the importance of solidarity in the water sector. We all face similar challenges, whether it's financial hardship, water scarcity or the rising threat of climate change. But when we come together – whether it's through partnerships between Australia and the Solomon Islands or across other parts of the Pacific – we become stronger. We bridge gaps, we innovate, and we create sustainable solutions that can make a real difference in people's lives.

These opportunities are so valuable not just for me, but for everyone in our sector. They allow us to grow as professionals, to test our leadership, and to gain the confidence to push forward new ideas. They remind us that we are not alone in our mission to provide clean, safe water. Together, we are better equipped to tackle the immense challenges we face – especially the global issue of climate change, which is threatening the very sources of our water.

Partnerships like this create lasting impact. They bring us closer together, empowering us to work hand in hand to combat the rising tide of challenges ahead. And in doing so, they help us fulfil the most important mandate of all: providing our communities with access to safe, clean water.

As I reflect on my purpose and value at Solomon Water and everything I've learned, I am reminded of something simple but powerful: water is a precious resource, like gold. It enhances life, it sustains health, and it drives economic activity. By supporting partnerships like this, we can ensure that future generations will have access to this vital resource and that we continue to build stronger, more resilient communities across the region.





Moerk Water 1st Quarter 2025 Update

2025 has gotten off to a brisk start for Moerk Water. Our engineers are hard at work finalising a containerised seawater desalination unit capable of delivering 336,000 L per day of WHO standard drinking water. We have also delivered groundwater and surface water treatment systems utilising membrane filtration and UV disinfection in the past few months. In October, our Director of International Business Development, Barbara Brezger, headed back to PNG to showcase our solar powered treatment units. While there Barbara finalised the training program Moerk Water is running with the Don Bosco training centres in 2025. This training program will train local students in the operation and maintenance of solar powered reverse osmosis systems. Some other things Moerk Water has been up to recently:

PWWC'24 Wrap Up

As ever, Moerk Water was excited to attend the Pacific Water and Wastewater conference. In 2024, this important conference was held in the beautiful Cook Islands. At the conference, Dr Mat Francis presented a technical talk focusing on ensuring communities and local expertise and materials are considered before projects even start. Dr Francis also delivered a workshop on different methods of chemical free water treatment methods for groundwater, surface water and seawater treatment where chemical-based treatment methods are not an option – something very common in remote settings. Looking forward to PWWC'25!



American Samoa Drinking Water Units Ship Out

Moerk Water are currently putting the final touches on their 4th containerised drinking water treatment unit bound for American Samoa. The treatment systems, which all utilise membrane filtration, will firm up water security across American Samoa. In total, the four systems will produce ~1.5 MLD of drinking water. The first three systems, all of which are designed to treat increasingly brackish groundwater, were shipped in Q4 2024. The last unit, a seawater desalination system destined for the main island off American Samoa, will be shipped during Q1 2025. These units have begun to arrive in country and Moerk Water are very excited to begin the installation of these units in partnership with the American Samoa Power Authority.

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Moerk Water Wins Sustainability Award

The Australian Water Association (WA) Awards Night held in November was a bumper night for Moerk Water. Not only was our inspirational director Martin Brezger highly commended in the Water Professional of the year category, but Moerk Water were also successful in bringing home two other awards. The Organizational Excellence Award went to Water Corporation, DWER, Murdoch University and Moerk Water for the WaterSmart Farms Water Security project. Moerk Water were also awarded the Innovating for Sustainable Water and Environmental Outcomes Award for their solar powered groundwater treatment unit which supports students at an Indigenous Australian Vocational school near Esperance, Western Australia.



Lastly our thoughts and prayers are with the 80,000 people effected by the Vanuatu earthquake in December. We have heard reports that some people from Port Vila have found refuge in Uripiv, where they can access safe water. We are currently working with our local partners to see how we can further support the recovery efforts. Wishing everyone a safe and happy 2025!

Please reach out to us: info@moerkwater.com.au www.moerkwater.com.au





Pacific Water and Wastewater Association

The 2024 GWOPA Assembly in Cairo and World Urban Forum.

PWWA was proudly represented by CEO Pitolau Lusía Sefo-Leau at the 2024 GWOPA Assembly prestigious event in Cairo, Egypt and World Urban Forum 2-6 November. During this event, a new Steering Committee was elected, and PWWA is now part of this esteemed committee. Earlier in the end of October, PWWA had signed an MOU with GWOPA for four years.

Below is the media release from the GWOPA Assembly:

A Vibrant Gathering: The 2024 GWOPA Assembly in Cairo Urban Week.

The 2024 GWOPA Assembly at the Triumph Luxury Hotel brought together a vibrant mix of about 100 water and sanitation leaders, advocates and experts representing GWOPA's membership for the first such gathering since the endorsement of the new Charter. The event, that also welcomed several new members and newly elected Steering Committee representatives, was as inspiring as it was impactful. This hybrid gathering provided a dynamic platform to get updated on GWOPA's governance structure and strategic direction and to reflect on accelerating action to advance Sustainable Development Goal 6 through Water Operators' Partnerships (WOPs).

Celebrating a legacy of impact: The Assembly opened with welcoming remarks by the newly elected GWOPA Assembly Chair, Dr. Rose Kaggwa. Key speeches from distinguished leaders, such as Ms. Anacláudia Rossbach, Executive Director of UN-Habitat, and H.E. Prof. Hani Sewilam, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of Egypt, underscored the importance and recognition of the work that GWOPA is doing and the opportunities for further scale-up and partnerships on WOPs in global cooperation. Echoing this at the evening reception, Dr. Alexander Solyga, Country Director of GIZ Egypt, highlighted Germany's strong commitment to GWOPA's work and its financial support for initiatives such as the Assembly.

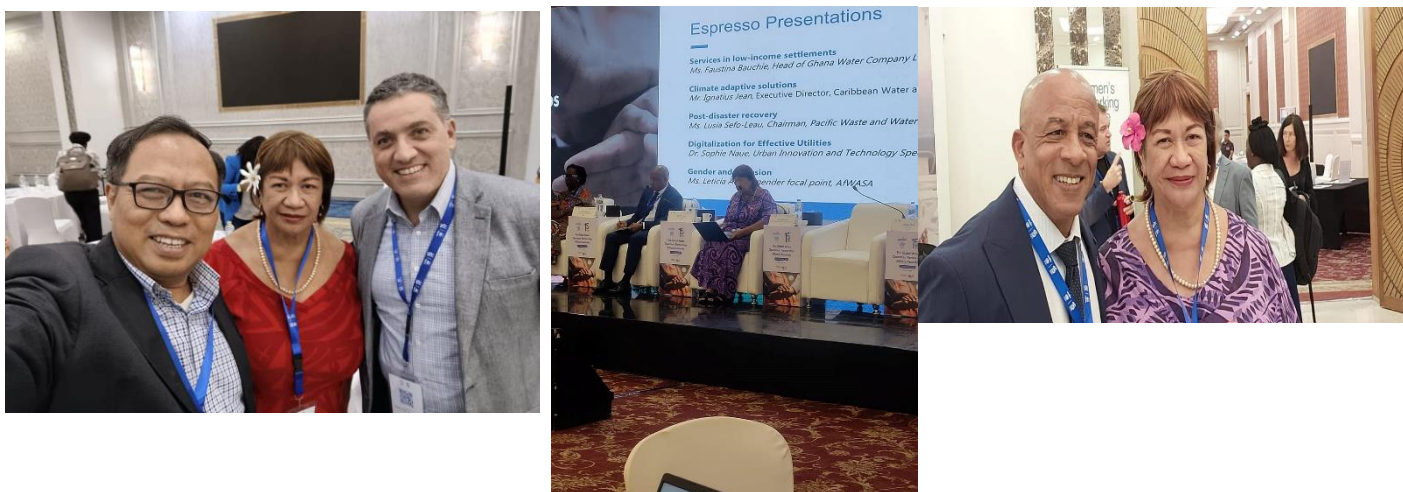
Deep dives into emerging trends: GWOPA members and partners gained valuable insights from panels that tackled urgent topics for utilities like climate resilience, digitalization, post-disaster recovery and inclusive service strategies in low-income areas. The Assembly included a series of engaging Espresso Presentations, offering participants fast-paced insights into transformative water and sanitation strategies, such as South-South and triangular WOPs, financial linking, operationalizing SWOPs, full water-cycle WOPs, and strategic collaboration and vision. Engaging breakout sessions allowed attendees to explore themes critical to the future of GWOPA's work on advocacy,



alliance-building, and effective knowledge management. These interactive discussions laid the – groundwork for scaling up partnerships and aligning efforts to achieve the 2030 water pledge “100 utilities for 100 million people”, fostering an environment where ideas turned into actionable strategies.

Looking forward: With renewed enthusiasm and a strengthened network, the Assembly concluded with a set of recommendations that will inform GWOPA’s priority areas and strategic direction as it begins preparations for its 2026-2029 Strategy. Participants left with a shared commitment to championing sustainable water and sanitation solutions, empowered by a sense of collective mission and partnership.

The 2024 GWOPA Assembly was not just a meeting – it was a milestone event that brought the membership together to celebrate achievements of its 15-year journey, meet old friends and make new ones, sparked new ideas and set a proactive course for its upcoming work.



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