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MEDIA RELEASE

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MIRIAM VALE OPTS FOR DESALINATION AND REUSE

Miriam Vale Shire Council has engaged United Utilities Australia (UUA) to provide and operate state of the art water and wastewater infrastructure for local residents through a contract valued at more than \$40 million.

“Yesterday was a momentous day for Miriam Vale as Miriam Vale Shire Council entered into a contract with UUA”, Mayor Tom Jeffery said.

Located between Gladstone and Bundaberg in Central Queensland, with its foreshores bordering the Great Barrier Reef National Park, the Shire is experiencing substantial population growth, partly from those keen to exchange the stresses of city living for its relaxed and attractive rural environment.

A highly successful water conservation program which has delivered one of the lowest per capita consumption figures is, on its own, not sufficient to deal with future water and wastewater demands. So the Shire Council has adopted a bold strategy that will both meet future needs and provide a new water resource through reuse of treated effluent.

The new facilities will service the population centre of Agnes Water and Seventeen Seventy township.

They include a new wastewater treatment plant utilising world-leading membrane technology. Treated water from this facility will be used for irrigation of Council reserves.

A reverse osmosis desalination plant, drawing from the ocean, will provide residents of Agnes Water and Seventeen Seventy township with a new source of drinking water, reducing reliance on local bores.

New potable water and sewage networks will also be provided under the contract, with UUA also having responsibility for the operations of the new and some existing facilities, including a bore field, water treatment plant, lagoon, irrigation and some distribution systems for an initial period of 10 years. Council has retained an option to extend the term for an additional five years at the end of 10 and then 15 years.

The new infrastructure is being provided in modular form so that augmentations can be readily installed as required.

Construction work is expected to commence in April with the new facilities being commissioned by mid 2009.

Mayor Tom Jeffery said that he is sure that water problems in the Agnes Water area will be overcome once this project is up and running.

UUA is a wholly owned subsidiary of UK based United Utilities PLC, which provides utility services mainly in water, wastewater, electricity and gas and has operations around the world.

Mayor Tom Jeffery said that "Miriam Vale Shire Council looks forward to a positive relationship with world renowned company UUA."

The Australian arm is involved in water and wastewater and has contracts in five states and territories. These include projects with a number of local government authorities and industrial concerns involving treatment and beneficial reuse of effluent and process water.

Further information:

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