



# Business Streams

*Business Protecting Streams & Attracting Steams of Business*  
 action • peer partnerships • award

In a logical reflection of what's happening across the community, a growing number of business people are ready and eager to do what they can to help protect local waterways. They are joining together to make a difference.

The Business Stream Approach begins with **action**, grows through **peer partnerships** and is fortified through **acknowledgement and business reward**.

Businesses work as a group to "audit" themselves and make commitments, entitling them to display the **T.U. Platypus Award** in order to, rightly, attract new business. And so the cycle begins ... the responsible businesses grow stronger and

becomes Beacons for others.

The Business Streams Approach, created and developed by Vox Bandicoot, has been implemented with great success for the City of Greater Dandenong Springvale Road retail business district (*Business Streams - Retail*) and the Shire of Nillumbik's Eltham Light Industrial Precinct (*Business Streams - Industrial*).

See [voxbandicoot.com.au](http://voxbandicoot.com.au) for more details.



**TU Platypus**  
 Business Streams  
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 environment training culture education theatre  
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 engagement transformation community etc etc etc

# The Business Streams Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program Pedagogy & Methodology

**The Business Streams Approach achieved remarkable success in 2004.**

*"Business Streams highlights best practice examples of waste management and has assisted in raising community awareness of stormwater pollution issues"*

**~ Cr Clare O'Neil, Mayor, City of Greater Dandenong**

*"The Business Streams Approach has been the most effective way of reaching local small businesses and educating about stormwater pollution. Council is extremely excited about the momentum and enthusiasm that is growing in that business precinct. They have become a cheer-squad for the Diamond Creek!"*

**~ Donna Stoddart, Environment Coordinator, Nillumbik Shire Council**

**Business Streams is an innovative capacity building approach to Stormwater Pollution Prevention for small business operators and their staff. The Business Streams Approach works also to create and strengthen partnerships between local industry and the EPA, Water Authorities, Councils, Waterwatch, etc.**

The Business Streams program features a number of key elements:

- **Pounding the beat** – a process which takes time to talk and create relationships with local business people.
- The "**Splash Course**" – basic training in stormwater pollution issues including a simple, action based education and audit kit with local relevance. Council, EPA, Waterwatch, etc, are invited as guest presenters.
- Businesses commit to at least three stormwater pollution prevention measures to receive the **TU Platypus Award** at a creek walk celebration or during a theatrical public presentation on the street in front of their premises. The Award can be displayed to communicate their local environmental responsibility to their customers.

The Shire of Nillumbik has been so impressed with the level of engagement and environmental outcomes attributed to the Business Streams Approach, continued support of the program is planned for 2005.

# Key Pedagogical and Methodological Elements

**1. Action driven ...** the Business Streams Approach is fundamentally based on participants committing to hands on, effective and site specific stormwater pollution prevention action.

**2. Style and focus -** the less that's written – the more that's read ... The Business Streams educational support material offers a non-complex explanation of the surface-drain-waterway connections with an emphasis on pictures and engaging art. Understanding and behaviour are targeted through a focus on the "low hanging fruit (LHF) ". The LHF are the easy wins or the common sense things which people can readily do in their businesses to prevent pollution. It is motivating for people get sense that it's "doable" without having to read a huge tome. On the other hand however, detailed, technical, legal and regulatory information is available via the excellent City of Kingston stormwater manual that is available at [www.voxbandicoot.com.au/businessstreams](http://www.voxbandicoot.com.au/businessstreams) as an adjunct to the Business Streams Program.

**3. Peer to peer ...** The Program builds a "local business pollution prevention team" who collaborate on actions and projects and, most importantly, reach out to others in their business precinct. The power of receiving "the message from a "known and trusted other " is well appreciated.

**4. Interaction, participation and reward ...** the kit includes a "workplace self-audit", in which participants are asked to "have a look around their shop" to plug the "stormwater" leaks. This will then become the stuff of their three commitments, entitling them to receive the "TU Platypus Award" which they display to send a message to their customers about caring for the environment.

**5. Enviro•Links ...** Every business precinct drains into a local waterway. The Business Streams Program builds strongly around the creek as a beacon, mascot or specific purpose. Local traders are introduced to the life that lives in the local stream. This connection with nature assists in making it real. It also enables developing a motivating and inspiring "strap line" or "slogan" truly relevant to the participating businesses.

**6. Regulations and technical information ...** While the education kit focus is on the everyday achievable, low hanging fruit, participants have web access to comprehensive stormwater technical detail which serves state regulations and includes important specifications in reference to hazardous materials storage, bunding, emergency procedures etc.

**7. A Pat On The Back Feels Good...** by recognising and celebrating the action and contribution of participants as the program unfolds ensures that we sustain the gain! Celebrating achievement of program participants (before, during and after) is extremely important and has huge paybacks in terms of lasting culture change. Acknowledgement of the proactive businesses and their achievement via media articles, advertisements, websites, signage, etc rewards and embeds positive behaviour change. More importantly, the promotion and celebration of participating businesses has the de facto effect of educating and recruiting other local businesses not previously involved.



23 September 2004

Vox Bandicoot Pty Ltd  
5 Railway Place  
Fairfield  
Victoria 3078

Dear Sir

I would like to thank the team from Vox Bandicoot for working with Council to implement community environmental education for our traders and shoppers in the Springvale Shopping Precinct.

I recently had the opportunity to meet some of our local traders who have committed to promoting clean streets and the elimination of litter and was proud to be able to present the Mile Creek Protection Award to them during a Street Theatre event with Vox Bandicoot environmental theatre. The Street Theatre performance developed and conducted by Vox Bandicoot was very effective in raising community awareness of stormwater pollution issues.

The education kit that was developed by Vox Bandicoot in partnership with Council highlights best practice examples of waste management and has assisted in raising community awareness of stormwater pollution.

Thanks for working with Council and our traders to raise environmental awareness to keep our streets and creeks clean.

Yours Sincerely

Cr Clare O'Neil  
Mayor