**Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*)** ***e-*flash**

**Information for Water Industry Managers and Practitioners in the Queensland Water Industry**

**(Issue #406– 20 September 2019)**

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**1.  Best of the Best Qld Water Taste Test
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We are a bit late in formally announcing the winner of our own competition with plenty of media around this already, but water from Mackay Regional Council’s Marian Water Treatment Plant was selected as top drop in the 2019 Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test held at our Annual Forum in Logan on Wednesday, 11 September.

This means Mackay has claimed the title for the second year in a row! Around 60 forum delegates put their senses to the test, judging entries from around Queensland by colour, odour and taste.

Mackay Regional Council Manager Water and Sewerage Planning, Sarah Lethbridge, was pleased to accept the trophy on behalf of the Mackay water team.

Runners up, again for the second year in a row, were Livingstone Regional Council.

The other entries were from Toowoomba Regional Council, Veolia Aus NZ (Tugun Desalination Plant), Fraser Coast Regional Council, Bundaberg Regional Council, Townsville City Council and Logan City Council.

The winners and runners up received a trophy featuring a mounted piece of copper pipe from Thargomindah in the south-west of the state, where town water drawn from a Great Artesian Basin bore comes out of the ground at 72 degrees Celsius and the water is cooled through evaporative cooling towers and  the copper pipes submerged in ponds before reticulation.

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**2.   Update on last week’s activities
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The second week of September is a very big one for ***qldwater*** members and this is a fairly big update as a result.

Thanks again to Logan City Council for hosting our annual forum.  The feedback on all presentations, but particularly the Cedar Grove Tour was spectacular.

Congratulations to Mackay Regional Council for again taking out the title of the best tasting water in Queensland, albeit for a different community than 2018, and to Livingstone Shire Council for again being runner up.  Commiserations to the other entrants – we hope everybody had a great time and our Technical Reference Group has ensured that the test will again be held at the 2020 forum.

Thanks to all of the Forum speakers including:

* Chris Bradley from Bombardier who gave some great insights into safety in the rail industry with a particular focus on a Lock-Out-Tag-Out procedure which had many attendees jealous.
* Linda Dobe and David Brooker for fascinating keynotes.
* All of the topic leaders introduced in e-flash articles leading up to the event.

Thanks to our small group of committed sponsors – Dial Before You Dig, Royce Water Technologies, McCullough Robertson, Tracwater and Taggle along with Vendor Showcase presenters Aquatec Maxcon and EnviroSonic.  Aquatec took out the “best pitch” prize so you’ll be hearing more about their services in future newsletters etc.

The workshops were great, with strong participation from stakeholders and lots of valuable discussion.  There were a lot of ideas to inform the industry roadmap generated (it’s challenging to fix everything that’s problematic with our sector in a day) and without the background discussion some of these might be a little challenging to interpret but the top 5 themes from the crude voting process at the end of the day were:

1. Regionalisation/ collaboration
2. Salary and industrial relations
3. Mandatory competencies
4. Consistent complaints mechanism
5. Offset delivery broker

TRG met on Friday with a similarly packed agenda, we aim to devote a significant chunk of time to getting the roadmap ready for a draft release after the December meeting.  Importantly, it won’t be 100% complete as there are some important priorities on which we need to consult which could not be addressed last week.

Congratulations to Narelle D’Amico who has been appointed as the new TRG Deputy Chair.  We have sign off on the approach for the majority of our planned 2020 activities with two major workshops with themes around managing services for small communities, and “sweating” assets.  Other new topics under investigation from the meeting include a potential UK study tour, a standardised approach to drinking water and wastewater sampling and analyses, an outreach program working with DNRME for some targeted remote communities, advocacy around drainers licensing, research collaboration with Seqwater and other opportunities with QUU, and investigations around Low Explosive Level (LEL) gases.

There are a number of other investigations commenced through our Zoho Forums site (<https://connect.zoho.com/portal/qldwater>) which will be finalised/ updated in the coming weeks.

Finally, thank you to the member representatives and stakholders who were able to take the time to participate in the discussions.  We were down on numbers a bit and I think it’s fair to say that there was a fair degree of scepticism with our departure from previous years’ formats, but the result was really positive.

View the Annual Forum phots from [Day 1](https://qldwater.smugmug.com/2019-Annual-Forum-Day-1/n-58r7b7/) and [Day 2](https://qldwater.smugmug.com/2019-Annual-Forum-Day-2/)!

Presentations from the event are available for [download](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/qwd-annual-forum-2019/agenda) by delegates and ***qldwater*** members. When you click on a presentation you’ll be asked to log in before you can download the presentations. If you haven’t already set up a ***qldwater*** web account, select ‘register for an account’ and provided your registration uses a member organisation email address or you attended the event, you’ll be able to access the presentations.

If you need help accessing the presentations from the ***qldwater*** Annual Forum, please contact Diana Kislitsyna on 3632 6850 or dkislitsyna@qldwater.com.au.

Dave Cameron

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**3.   *qldwater* TRG Industry Contribution Awards**

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The Two TRG awards were presented at the 2019 ***qldwater*** Annual Forum to recognise outstanding contributions to the Queensland Urban Water and Sewerage industry by going above and beyond the requirements of the day job to champion an important issue impacting the sector.

Anna Whelan from Townsville City Council has been an active member of the SWEAP group for a quite a while. In council, Anna helps supervise a PhD undertaking highly relevant reef and emerging contaminants research, and always looks to share that information.   Anna has been active in the NQ QWRAP technical discussions and drove the agenda and speaker invitations for this year’s *contaminants of emerging concern* workshop – probably the best-reviewed event ***qldwater*** has ever had.

The second TRG award recognises Trevor Dean from Fraser Coast Regional Council whose tenure as TRG chair ended on Friday 13 September. Trevor has been an exceptional meeting chair and contributor to QWRAP activities for his region, event host, and always provides a voice of reason. If there is ever anything FCRC has done which is relevant to the broader sector and can be shared, he is the first to hunt it down.  Finally, he has responded to our parent body, IPWEAQ’s, call for water sector representation on its board and is now “Board member at large” with his first meeting next month.

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**4.  AWA awards**

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The winners of the Australian Water Association’s (AWA) Queensland Water Awards were announced at the Queensland Gala Dinner on 13 September at the Hilton Brisbane.

The Queensland Water Awards recognise the contribution of the AWA’s members for their inspiring leadership and innovative research, programs and infrastructure projects.

We would like to recognise all the ***qldwater*** members, their staff and other people who work with us a lot for being nominated and those who won, with particular acknowledgement of three individuals:

* Daryl Ross from Logan City Council took out the **Water Professional of the Year award**.  Daryl has been associated with the Directorate pretty much since day one, makes a huge contribution to the sector and has been a great mentor to our staff.
* Matt Dawson from Trility received the **Distinguished Service Award**.  It’s hard to think of someone who has contributed more to AWA in Queensland in recent years, and that service has included stints on the ***qldwater*** TRG and Management Committee.
* Arron Hieatt, formerly of LGAQ received the **Regional Service Award.** We have already lamented Arron’s departure in Eflash #399 so won’t delve into detail here, suffice it to say that we are thrilled at this recognition.

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**5.  New Reef protection regulations - Parliament passes Bill**

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On 19 September, the Queensland Government passed legislation designed to help preserve the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

Under this legislation, new Reef protection regulations, which are proposed to commence on 1 December 2019, set minimum practice standards for all sugarcane, beef cattle grazing, grains, banana and horticulture production in Reef regions along the coast of Queensland, excluding Cape York.

The new regulations also apply to direct sources of water pollution from industrial land uses (for example, sewage treatment, aquaculture or intensive animal industries).

The regulations are the result of an extensive consultation process since 2016 and follow recommendations made by the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce. The  requirements are based on industry accepted practices and  proven science that demonstrate water quality benefits while maintaining productivity.

For further information about the new regulations, including drafts of the standards, please visit [www.qld.gov.au/ReefRegulations](https://www.vision6.com.au/ch/79404/18fw6/2859151/FrN2zg_iLgC3qZu97hScAQusmCKWGeF.tqK3zOvd.html)

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**6.   QUICK LINKS – ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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1. **The Queensland Police Service** has released the QPS Security Environment Report May-July 2019 which is now available in the members area of our website -  <http://www.qldwater.com.au/Counter-terrorism>.   The information contained in the QPS documents may be viewed and circulated internally, however it should not be provided to the public / media or forwarded to external third parties.  Members must log in first to access this information.
2. The NSW Water Directorate has just released an updated O&M Manual on Water Supply Service Reservoirs, available for purchase at <https://www.waterdirectorate.asn.au/News/AllyouneedtoknowaboutWaterSupplyServiceReservoirs.aspx>.

The NSW Directorate puts a big effort into technical publications – while some things are specifically contextualised to NSW regulation, many manuals are easily transferrable to the Qld context.  We are in the process of hopefully negotiating special pricing for ***qldwater*** members and will advise if we are successful.

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