**Queensland Water Skills e-Flash #81**

**Information for Water Industry Managers, Human Resources Personnel and Employees in the Queensland Water Industry**

**(Issue #81 – Tuesday 3 September 2019)**

1. Help us address the water industry’s skilling challenges
2. Regional Water Industry Worker Program kicks off this week!
3. Water Industry Qualifications Update
4. First Aid Training Package Review

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1. **Help us address the water industry’s skilling challenges**

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***qldwater’s*** [Annual Forum](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/qwd-annual-forum-2019/) being held in Logan next week is a little different from previous forums. The focus on Thursday 12 September is to provide an opportunity to gather ideas for our industry roadmap, particularly to inform collaborative opportunities and policy recommendations. As part of this, Narelle D’Amico from Bundaberg Regional Council will be leading a discussion around industry skilling challenges. Narelle has been with council since May 2018, having previously been with WaterCorp in WA and with a number of NSW utilities.

“Asset management is critical to our sector and if we as an industry don’t consider different approaches to the way job roles are structured to support this function, we are going to struggle to continue to provide critical services to our communities.  We need employees who have a commitment to learning and are adaptable, to cope with rapidly changing technology, population growth (and decline) and ageing infrastructure.”

Consultation at ***qldwater*** events and meetings throughout the year has reflected a desire to improve sector-wide workforce planning, the kick-off of some activities around attraction including collaborative approaches to traineeships, and a significant focus on operations roles with a perceived shortage of these critical skills. In some regions, councils are unable to compete in the employment market at all with long term vacancies, and there are limits to what can be achieved with non-financial reward structures.  There are a very large number of small and struggling service providers, and as an industry we are arguably failing to renew our human assets – ageing, losing expertise and so on.

Increasing automation, outsourcing or throwing training money at the problem aren’t going to fix it for everybody, by participating in this topic workshop you have a chance to throw some potential solutions into the mix which might. You can view the forum program on our [event website](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/qwd-annual-forum-2019/agenda). There are options to attend just for the day or both days of the forum. [Register now](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/qwd-annual-forum-2019/registration) before registrations close on 4 September or contact [Diana Kislitsyna](mailto:dkislitsyna@qldwater.com.au?subject=Annual%20Forum%202019) if you have any queries about your registration or the event.

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1. **Regional Water Industry Worker Program kicks off this week!**

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30 employees from Mackay, Townsville, Cairns, Whitsunday and Burdekin Councils have signed up to be recognised as Water Industry Workers as part of a regional pilot program with formal training starting in Townsville this week. View pictures of some of the participants on the [***qldwater*** blog](https://www.qldwater.com.au/qldwater-blog/regional-water-industry-worker-pilot-program).

The program, which has been in operation in South East Queensland for the past ten years, is a practical, competency based training program for field maintenance and construction staff which maps units of competency from the National Water Training Package (NWP) to the specific skills and knowledge required for these roles. It values existing skills and provides a formal mechanism for recognising experience gained on the job and providing training in the latest industry practices and technologies.

With funding support from QWRAP, Kellie Lister (based in Mackay) has been employed to manage the project and support all five councils involved in the pilot. Following a recent tender process, Simmonds and Bristow were selected to provide formal training for participants with blocks of training in units from both the Certificate II and Certificate III in Water Industry Operations scheduled to occur in Townsville, Mackay and Cairns over the next ten months. Congratulations to all involved in developing the program and good luck to all participants as they commence their training!

You can find out more about the Water Industry Worker Program in ***qldwater’s*** case study included in the Technical Competency Handbook for the Water Industry at: <https://wioa.org.au/technicalcompetency/#qldwater> or contact [Carlie Sargent](mailto:csargent@qldwater.com.au?subject=Water%20Industry%20Worker%20Program) on 07 3632 6853.

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1. **Water Industry Qualifications Update**

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***qldwater*** recently provided its support for the revised Certificate II in Water Industry Operations and Certificate III in Water Industry Operations to be submitted to the Australian Industry Skills Committee for approval. The revised qualifications are now in their final stages of review and its expected they’ll be available early in the New Year. The qualifications have been deemed equivalent to current qualifications which means the transition period for RTOs to implement the revised qualifications should be relatively short. [Skills e-Flash #78](https://www.qldwater.com.au/e-flashes-2019) provides details of the most significant changes to each of the qualifications. If you have any queries please contact [Carlie Sargent](mailto:csargent@qldwater.com.au?subject=Revised%20Water%20Industry%20Qualifications) on 3632 6853.

A review of the Certificate IV in Water Industry Operations is due to commence soon and ***qldwater*** will provide details as the review progresses.

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1. **First Aid Training Package Review**

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The First Aid Industry Reference Committee is currently reviewing the First Aid Units of Competency. These units are used by a number of organisations for training their staff and the IRC has invited feedback on eight units of competency. You can view the units and provide feedback on the [project website](https://www.skillsiq.com.au/CurrentProjectsandCaseStudies/FirstAidTPD). Consultation closes at 5.00pm on Friday 20 September 2019.

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