**Queensland Water Skills e-Flash #6**

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

**(Issue #6 – 16 May 2012)**

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**1.       Changes to National Water Training Package (NWP07\_V3) and WIAC meeting**

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Version 3 of the NWP07 National Water Training Package has been endorsed by the National Skills Standards Council (NSSC).

The National Water Training Package (NWP07 Version 3) now includes a new qualification – NWP60112 Advanced Diploma of Water Engineering Design and 22 new units of competency. Many of these units can be used as electives in the Diploma of Water Operations.

There are also three new units at Certificate level II and III, these are  *NWP370 Perform water industry calculations,* *NWP279 Demonstrate knowledge of the risk management principles of the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines* and *NWP369 Monitor, operate and control lagoon processes*.

For more information about these units, go to [www.training.gov.au/Training/Details/NWP07](http://www.training.gov.au/Training/Details/NWP07)

A meeting of the Water Industry Advisory Committee (providing input into the training package and related projects) will take place on the 19th and 20th of June. If you would like a topic to be raised at the meeting please contact Michelle Hill on mhill@qldwater.com.au or (07) 3632 6853.

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**2.       Short Course Training Workshops**

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Following up on requests from our members, ***qldwater*** has begun offering some water industry specific short course training workshops.

Two courses we have trialled include Supervisor Training Workshop for water industry and a Water Industry Legislation and SWIM Workshop.

The supervisor workshop is an adaptation of IPWEAQ’s workshop for roads supervisors and is targeted at both existing and aspiring supervisors working in all aspects of water operations.  An initial pilot of the Supervisors workshop was held in Biloela in February this year and a second amended workshop was held in Bowen in May. The training is designed to be an interactive workshop covering topics such as an overview of water industry legislation, planning and organising projects, leadership and managing staff issues.

The Legislation and SWIM training has been specifically developed for an operator and field staff audience to provide an understanding of the various legislation and data requirements relevant to their role.  The first half of the workshop includes a water industry legislative overview focussed on water treatment,  water distribution and supply and customer retail services (topics tailored to Council requirements) and the afternoon covers reporting and compliance and SWIM data basics for Operators.

The agenda for both workshops can be tailored to suit your organisations needs. If you are interested in hosting a workshop at your organisation contact Michelle Hill from ***qldwater*** on mhill@qldwater.com.au or (07) 3632 6853.

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**3.       Queensland Water Skills Partnership call for subscribers 2012/2013**

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A letter will be sent out shortly inviting all Queensland Water Service Providers and relevant industry bodies to subscribe to the Queensland Water Skills Partnership for the 2012/2013 financial year.

The Queensland Water Skills Partnership was created in 2011 as a new initiative to address critical skills needs facing the urban water industry in Queensland.  It extends the work undertaken through the Water Skills Formation Strategy (SFS) which commenced in late 2009 supported by the Department of Education and Training and hosted by the Queensland Water Directorate (***qldwater***).

Organisation benefits for members of the Queensland Water Skills Partnership include;

* Subsidised training fees and priority for onsite courses
* Full access to online industry courses
* Priority preference for involvement in partnership projects activities (e.g. Schools programs)
* Assistance with training, workforce planning and skilling activities.

Other industry-wide benefits of the partnership include providing a vehicle for industry-wide collaboration and knowledge sharing, improved access to funding, industry branding projects such as school engagement programs and national representation on key industry skills bodies.

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**4.       Federal Budget Training and Skills Impacts**

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**Changes to Federal incentive arrangements for Traineeships\***

* Existing worker apprenticeships/traineeships in non-priority skills areas (priority skills areas include traditional trades identified as experiencing a national skills shortage) will no longer receive an employer commencement incentive of $1500. However, the completion incentive for existing worker apprenticeships/traineeships will increase from $2500 to $3000.
* For apprenticeships eligible for the commencement incentive (priority skills apprenticeships) the incentive **payment will now be made six months after an apprentice commences employment**rather than the current three months.

\* Note: Queensland Government Funding for User Choice Traineeships (covering costs for training fees) still exists and is not impacted by Federal Government changes. A guide for accessing User Choice Funding is available on the ***qldwater*** website through the following link <http://www.qldwater.com.au/Skills_State_Initiatives>. Further details on the Queensland funding situation for training post-election will be sent out when it becomes available.

**Skills Centres of Excellence**

* $18.1 million over four years for the **establishment of three Australian Skills Centres of Excellence (ASCE)** to support innovative production processes and teaching and learning methods in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

**Older Workers**

* up to 10,000 jobs bonuses of $1,000 each to employers who employ an eligible mature age job seeker, payable when the employee achieves a 13 week employment outcome;
* expanding the ‘Corporate Champions’ initiative to create an additional 250 projects which will include employers receiving a package of tailored assistance to help with recruitment and retention of mature age staff;
* a centralised process for employers to learn from each other’s experience through ‘Corporate Champions’, to be promoted to other employers through a series of national seminars

**Workforce Innovation Program**

* The Government will discontinue the Workforce Innovation Program from 2015‑16. The program will be closed to new applications from 8 May 2012, allowing final funding decisions to be made by 30 June 2012. Funding will continue to be provided for agreed projects until 30 June 2015.

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**5.       New WSAA Workforce Development Project**

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The Water Services Association of Australia has started a new Water Industry Workforce Development project with financial support from DEEWR.  While the project scope is still to be refined, WSAA has assembled a steering committee including ***qldwater*** to ensure national industry needs are reflected in the planning.

There have been a number of attempts from various organisations to stimulate an industry-led national skills initiative with limited success.  The WSAA program is well-resourced and has a good chance of attracting further industry investment and we are hopeful that it can achieve some real advances (beyond training places) to support critical skills shortages.  Updates will be provided in future e-flashes.

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