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

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

**(Issue #342 – 2 February 2018)**

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**1.   Welcome to 2018**

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Thank you for continuing to subscribe to the ***qldwater*** e-flash and welcome to the first for 2018.  Most of our staff enjoyed some extra enforced leave during January but we are all back and firing.  There are a number of topics on which to provide updates over the coming few weeks of e-flashes.

We are excited to welcome our newest staff member who is filling our project coordinator - skills role, Carlie Sargent.  Carlie joins us from our parent body, IPWEAQ, and brings with her extensive project management and event experience.   She formally commences on 26 February.

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**2.   Havelock North Inquiry**

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Eflash #324 made reference to this Inquiry which followed the widespread outbreak of gastroenteritis in Havelock North (NZ) in August 2016, with more than 5000 people falling ill, following the confirmation of the presence of *E. coli* in the water supply.

The [Stage 2 report](https://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/Report-Havelock-North-Water-Inquiry-Stage-2/%24file/Report-Havelock-North-Water-Inquiry-Stage-2.pdf) was released in December, and in the terms of the Inquiry focussed on “improvement of the safety of drinking water in New Zealand, lessons to be learned from the Havelock North outbreak, and changes which should be made to achieve those goals.”

The report calls for “urgent and early action,” recommending a range of measures from improved communication of the importance of safe drinking water principles to “mandating universal treatment” for all supplies, mandating collaboration and a “mandatory qualification system.”

“The potential for contamination of drinking water to cause widespread illness and, potentially, deaths was clearly seen from the August 2016 outbreak at Havelock North.  With only slightly different circumstances and/or a different pathogen, the outcomes of this outbreak could have been substantially worse.”

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**3.   Upcoming Events**

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The end of February and early March is a busy period with our [Skills Forum](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/water-skills-forum/event-info-site) on 28/2 and other TRG workshop activities immediately following.  The skills forum program is nearly finalised.

More to follow soon on regional events, but as a “taster” we are about to sign off on the order for “Livingstone Lager,” the first beer to be brewed from winning water from the Ixom Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test.  A very limited edition, highly collectible and the best way to secure your small sample is to volunteer presentations for our upcoming regional events in Cloncurry, Goondiwindi, and Bundaberg.

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**4.**   **Operator of the Year Awards – Nominations now open!**

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Nominations are open for the annual ***qldwater*** sponsored water industry operators’ awards which recognise the achievements of operational staff employed in the Queensland water industry.   The award winners will be announced at the WIOA Annual Queensland Water Industry Operations Conference Awards Night to be held at the Logan Sports Centre in Brisbane on 7 June 2018.  The awards aim to encourage outstanding operational performance of Queensland water industry employees and will be presented to operators who showed excellent performance, initiative and all round attention to detail.  All employers are encouraged to nominate their operators for these awards.    Applications close on **4 May.**

The two categories available for nomination are for:

* 1. Queensland Young Operator of the Year
	2. Operator of the Year Civil/All Rounder

The **Queensland Young Operator of the Year** winner will receive an all-expenses paid trip to join the WIOA delegation on a tour of water and wastewater facilities in New Zealand as well as attending the Water Industry Operations Group New Zealand conference in May 2018 and an individual trophy.

The **Operator of the Year (Civil / All Rounder)** winner will receive up to $1500 towards professional development opportunities such as attendance at other WIOA conferences, ***qldwater*** training or for funding expenses for exchange opportunities at neighbouring councils and an individual trophy.

It’s easy to nominate - please visit <http://www.qldwater.com.au/qldwaterAwards> for more information, application form and to see previous winners.   More information on the Queensland Water Industry Operations Conference and Exhibition is available here:  <http://wioaconferences.org.au/qld/>.

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**5.   DNRME Update**

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* The former DEWS has effectively been absorbed into DNRME, and while there are no substantial functional changes at this point, we have been advised to expect some reviews in the longer term.  DDG Benn Barr has returned to Energy, Linda Dobe is A/DDG and David Shankey is Acting General Manager in Linda’s substantive role.
* The Water Supply Regulation Group recently distributed an update including details of a proposed cyber security trial for interested service providers, an opportunity to participate in a guideline development group and an expression of interest to participate in a waterwise workshop in March.  Please contact us if you haven’t received a copy and are interested.
* The water “policy” group led by Dan Harris has had a name change to “Strategic Water Supply Policy and Reform.”  The group is progressing a number of key projects, including:
	+ The Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program review.  Deloitte Access Economics Pty Ltd is undertaking the work which will include interviews with a number of key service provider stakeholders over the next few weeks.  This is a critical part of the process to see funding for the program continued beyond the current financial year.
	+ A service provider “Sustainability Project.”  This work is in response to a number of concerns raised about the challenges facing smaller providers in delivering services to their communities.  Investigations have commenced with 8 councils, and the department intends to work further with those councils to determine its future course of action.

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

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The Queensland Police Service has released the latest Security bulletin which is now available in the members area of our website -  <http://www.qldwater.com.au/_literature_237641/QPS_Security_Forecast_-_February_2018>.  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.

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