**Queensland Water Skills e-Flash #22**

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

**(Issue #22 – 21 August 2013)**

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**1.      Supporting Women Scholarships Applications Open**

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Applications for the second round of the Newman Government’s $10 million Supporting Women Scholarships opened in August.

The Supporting Women Scholarships provide financial support to assist women to take up study and, ultimately, employment in fields which are male dominated and where there are skills needs.

Scholarships are  worth up to $20,000 each and will assist QLD women to gain qualifications in traditionally male-dominated industries, including the water industry. Scholarships of up to $5,000 each year are available for residents studying agricultural, environmental, architecture, building, engineering, earth sciences and information technology courses. The funding can be used to offset costs associated with study such as fees, textbooks and course materials. Scholarships are available for vocational education and training as well as university qualifications.

Applications close 11 October 2013 for scholarships commencing at the beginning of the 2014 academic year.

For more information about the Supporting Women Scholarships program, visit [www.supportingwomen.qld.gov.au](http://www.supportingwomen.qld.gov.au).

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**2.      Water Industry Training Package Demand Survey**

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The Water Industry is undertaking a national project to identify future demand for training from the Water Industry Training Package (NWP07) and the capacity of the RTO network to service this demand. This project is being conducted by the Australian Water Association and the NSW Public Sector Industry Training Advisory Body on behalf of the Water Services Association of Australia.

***qldwater*** is trying to encourage a positive response from industry as there is useful data likely to come from this work to support other activities, including operator certification and a project we are scoping with the Smart Water Research Centre to improve training offerings for waste water treatment.

To assist in measuring the size and type of demand for training by water industry employees over the next 3 years, industry representatives are asked to complete a 10 minute survey at the following link

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TrainingDemandWaterEmployers>

It is possible that some of these questions may need input from both HR and Water Management staff, however it is requested that one survey is completed on behalf of your organisation.

Please note that this survey is different to one recently distributed by Government Skills Australia which focuses on workforce issues that are broader than the training focus of our survey. Your responses to both surveys will help the Water Industry identify current and future workforce development needs.

If you have any questions about this project or the Employer Survey, please contact Jennifer James from the NSW Public Sector Industry Training Advisory Body on (02) 9499 3168 or jajames@psitab.com.au.

If we are able to assist in any way, please contact Michelle Hill or Dave Cameron from ***qldwater.***

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**3.      Changes to Australian Apprenticeship/Traineeship incentives**

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The Federal Government Incentives for employers enrolling existing workers in an Apprenticeship or Traineeship have changed. The commencement and completion incentives for employers ($3000) will no longer apply to existing worker trainees undertaking Water Operations Qualifications as these roles are not listed on the National Skills Needs List.

Employers may still be eligible for other trainee incentive payments such as Mature Aged Worker, Declared Drought Area, or Rural and Regional Skills Shortage Incentive.  Please note new worker incentives still apply.

For more information visit the Australian Apprenticeship website - <http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/>.

State Government funding for training (User Choice Funding) is still available for both new and existing worker trainees in Queensland. User choice funding will cover $3510 of the training costs for  Certificate II Water Operations and $5960 for Certificate III Water Operations qualifications. Additional regional location loadings may also be applicable.

For information on how to access User Choice Funding visit the guide on the ***qldwater*** website - <http://www.qldwater.com.au/Skills_Funding>.

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**4.      IWC scholarships currently on offer (water leadership and integrated water management)**

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The International WaterCentre (IWC) is currently offering a range of scholarships for Australian professionals interested in joining either the Water Leadership Program or Master of Integrated Water Management next year. IWC has a strong track record of delivering high quality, industry-relevant programs designed to increase the skills profile of today's water practitioners and future water leaders.

•             Water Leadership Program Scholarships - close 18 September

Several full ($10,000) and half ($5,000) scholarships for emerging leaders at the project to middle management level to gain access to this nine-month professional development program.

•             Master of Integrated Water Management Scholarships - close 1 October

Full-tuition scholarships ($46,200) for full-time or part-time/distance study commencing at The University of Queensland in Semester 1, 2014. The degree is co-badged and co-delivered by four leading Australian universities.

More information:  [www.watercentre.org/iwc-scholarships-on-offer-for-australian-water-professionals](http://www.watercentre.org/iwc-scholarships-on-offer-for-australian-water-professionals)

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**5.      Banana Shire Council takes on school–based trainees in water operations**

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Several trainees from Banana Shire are getting to directly experience the challenges of water and sewerage operations through a range of traineeships including school-based and work-based traineeships.  Banana Shire experiences significant difficulties in attracting and retaining skilled water operations staff and this program is designed to give hands on skills towards a career in the water industry along with some accredited training through Wide Bay Institute of TAFE.

Manager Water Services Anthony Lipsys says that the trial has a lot of potential.  The aim is to expose the trainees to the water industry and hopefully spark some interest that will lead to a long term career.

“We’re participating in the ***qldwater*** Technical Assessment, Capacity Building and Mentoring Program for Regional and Remote Queensland Drinking Water System Operators and hope that a bit of formal training, on the job mentoring and exposure to industry experts will lead to some enthusiastic new recruits down the track” Mr Lipsys said.

School-based traineeships are mainly designed for Year 11 and 12 students and allow students to work for an employer, train towards a nationally recognised qualification and complete their secondary school studies at the same time. School-based traineeships are eligible for funding under the Queensland User Choice funding arrangements. For training contracts commencing 1 January 2013 and after a minimum of 50 dayspaid employment is generally required.

For more information about employing school based trainees visit the Queensland Government Apprenticeships Info website - <http://apprenticeshipsinfo.qld.gov.au/school-based/facts-employers/employing.html>.

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