**Queensland Water Skills e-Flash #58**

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

**(Issue #58 –   24 July 2017)**

1. **Water Industry Skills Taskforce Meeting Communique**
2. **Certification Framework for Operators of Wastewater and Recycled Water Systems Released**
3. **Drinking Water Operator Certification Position /Regulatory Options Paper**
4. **Quick links -  Associated organisations, training events and announcements**

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1. **Water Industry Skills Taskforce Meeting Communique**

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The Water Industry Skills Taskforce (WIST) met via teleconference on 22nd June, a communique from the meeting is available [here](http://www.qldwater.com.au/_literature_230895/Water_Industry_Skills_Taskforce_Communique_-_July_2017).

The following items from the meeting are covered in the Communique.

* Reappointment of Chair and Secretariat.
* Finalisation of *Certification Framework for Operators within Wastewater and Recycled Water Treatment Systems.*
* Appointment of Certifying Body for *Certification Framework for Operators within Wastewater and Recycled Water Treatment Systems.*
* Amendments to *Certification Framework for Operators within Drinking Water Treatment Systems 2016.*
* Drinking Water Operator Certification Position /Regulatory Options Paper.
* Custodian of Government Skills Australia National Water Training Package Learning Resources.

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1. **Certification Framework for Operators of Wastewater and Recycled Water Systems Finalised**

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As per the Water Industry Skills Taskforce Communique, the national *Certification Framework* *for Operators within Wastewater and Recycled Water Treatment Systems* was finalised and endorsed by the WIST following an industry consultation period that was conducted earlier in 2017.

The Framework was developed by ***qldwater***, the Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (George Wall) and David Sheehan (Coliban Water), with funding support from the now concluded Australian Water Recycling Centre of Excellence.

The Certification Framework is underpinned by the need to ensure that the environment and public health are protected from poor wastewater treatment practices, and that wastewater and recycled water that is provided to end users is safe and fit for purpose.

The Certification Framework provides a set of nationally consistent criteria that define and recognise the minimum level of competency and capability required by those Operators who treat wastewater or recycled water to ensure that the final product does not have an adverse impact on the environment or public health, and that its quality is fit for purpose and safe to use.

This national Framework will replace the existing *Queensland Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Operator Certification Framework V2* developed through the Queensland Water Skills Partnership and released in 2015. The overarching principles and standard requirements have been aligned in the new Framework to allow for a simple transition of any operator who is currently certified under the Queensland Framework.

The final Framework is available [here.](http://www.awa.asn.au/AsiCommon/Controls/BSA/Downloader.aspx?iDocumentStorageKey=8bf7193a-21c8-4d87-95f0-14ffd52ece15&iFileTypeCode=PDF&iFileName=Certification%20Framework%20for%20Operators%20of%20RW%20and%20WW%20Systems%202017)

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**3.   Drinking Water Operator Certification Position /Regulatory Options Paper**

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Also included in the WIST Communique are details on the Drinking Water Operator Certification Position /Regulatory Options Paper prepared by ***qldwater*** on behalf of the WIST.

The WIST continues to support mandatory Certification for water treatment operators as an important long-term goal, in order to “provide assurance to regulators, communities and consumers that operators are competent to manage drinking water quality, as well as being capable of identifying and responding to water quality risks and incidents.” Notwithstanding this position, the WIST recognises that there are a number of other regulatory and quasiregulatory approaches that could also achieve positive outcomes in the short- to medium- term, and these are the focus of the paper, along with international case studies.

The WIST has prepared the paper as a means of encouraging and promoting a positive dialogue among the urban water industry, regulators and other stakeholders around next steps to progress this important initiative to support the ongoing provision of safe drinking water.

The position/regulatory options paper is available [here.](http://www.awa.asn.au/AsiCommon/Controls/BSA/Downloader.aspx?iDocumentStorageKey=e7d866d2-edfd-4024-add7-26c7a1339a05&iFileTypeCode=PDF&iFileName=Certification%20Regulatory%20Options%20Paper%20-%20FINAL)

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**4.   Quick links -  Associated organisations training events and announcements**

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* **User Choice 2017/18 Price List Released –** the 2017/18 User Choice subsidy price list has been released and is available [here](https://training.qld.gov.au/providers/funded/userchoice/pricing). Certificate II and III qualifications from the National Water Training Package continue to receive subsidies, there have been small increases to the subsidy price for each qualification.

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