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

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

**(Issue #231 – 6 June 2014)**

**1.   Queensland defeats NSW in Water of Origin Taste Test**

**2.   *qldwater* 2014 Operator of the Year Awards**

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**1.   Queensland defeats NSW in Water of Origin Taste Test**

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Queenslanders devastated by the first State of Origin game loss to NSW can revel in the knowledge that we have some of the best tasting water in the country.

Bundaberg Regional Council (BRC) yesterday laid claim to the “top drop” title when attendees at the Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA) Conference in Logan gave its sample the nod in the 2014 Orica Australia Water of Origin Water Taste Test, beating the 2014 NSW Taste Test Winner, Bega Valley Shire Council.

Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*) CEO Dave Cameron said that this is the second year WIOA had run the Origin event, taking advantage of strong interstate rivalry to promote the industry, with support from Orica.

“The winning sample from Bundaberg’s “Lover’s Walk” scheme was a last minute entry due to unfortunate difficulties in transporting the sample from 2013 state-wide winner Cooktown, however as Bundaberg was last year’s state-wide runner up and winner of two regional finals we knew we had something good.”

“In the 2013 Origin our sample from Ayr went down to Taree by a whisker and with due respect to our colleagues in NSW, even NRL refereeing couldn’t have made a difference to the result with a margin like this year’s.  I only hope the Maroons can replicate our form for Game 2,” Mr Cameron said.

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**2.   *qldwater* 2014 Operator of the Year Awards**

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Congratulations to Matthew Cook from North Burnett Regional Council and Sarah Walton from Seqwater who won the 2014 Operator of the Year Civil/ All Rounder and Young Operator of the Year Awards respectively at the WIOA State Conference in Logan yesterday.

Our 2014 Operator of the Year Civil/ All Rounder Matthew Cook was involved in restoring water and sewerage services in North Burnett during the 2013 floods, which saw five water schemes out of operation and three sewerage schemes severely affected.  Matt worked with his skeleton crew and a relief team from Townsville to restore water and sewerage services to the region.   In charge of the day to day operation of seven water schemes (intakes, treatment and reticulation) and five sewerage schemes (reticulation, treatment and disposal) with water supplies ranging from artesian, ground water and surface water, Matt has achieved respect from his workforce through his knowledge and dedication to the job.

Sarah Walton, our Young Operator of the Year, had a Bachelor of Science under her belt when she joined the Seqwater trainee program. She has since completing a Cert II in Water Operations, commencing a Cert IV in Occupational Health and Workplace Safety and soon to start a Cert III in Water Operations as well as completing a Masters in Environmental Studies at the University of Queensland.  Her team members at Seqwater nominated Sarah for her delivery of exemplary service and her very practical and enthusiastic approach to workplace health and safety, customer service standards and operational systems.

Matthew and Sarah will join the WIOA delegation on the New Zealand Study Tour in 2015 which includes the Water Industry Operations Group Annual Conference.

Congratulations must also go to Julie Smith from Isaac Regional Council who received the AWA Queensland Leon Henry Operator of the Year Award – a great achievement for Julie and her council.

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