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

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

**(Issue #383– 4 March 2019)**

**1.   *qldwater* CEO update**

**2.   Wannon Water Wins!**

**3.   Presentation Videos from DNRME Water Quality Forum November 2018**

**4.   SCADA/ Cybersecurity Discussion Paper released**

**5.   Time to register for Bilo!  Seriously.  It’s good stuff.  Earlybird rates close 8 March.**

**6.   New Reef Regulations**

**7.   Release of Queensland’s Urban Potable Water and Sewerage Benchmarking Report – 2017/18**

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

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**1.  *qldwater* CEO update
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Best wishes to all our member representatives recovering from major flooding events in half the state, and drought elsewhere.  Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you think there is some assistance we can offer, the best part for me in working in this industry is the support our members and other stakeholders are prepared to offer in tough times.

Here is a brief summary of what’s on the go, and some things coming up.

*An Industry Roadmap*

You may have heard the term “Roadmap” starting to be bandied about and we expect to release more information soon.  It essentially encapsulates our strategic direction for 2019 and beyond and will be prominent at all of our events.  In a sentence, we will be consulting with members and stakeholders to develop a strategic document based on our 10 identified Key Priorities for the Urban Water and Sewerage sector, which includes details of the ***qldwater*** work plan, opportunities to address priorities through further investment, and policy recommendations.

*TRG Workshops*

On 2 May we will be holding an Emerging Contaminants workshop involving industry representatives and other stakeholders, including researchers.  It is intended to enable our sector to be more proactive in addressing these issues, and we anticipate the creation of a Standing Group to help manage technical responses, and advocacy.

On 13 June we will hold an Asset Management workshop, with an opportunity for members to compare approaches on standards and principles, systems, renewal planning, and accounting among other themes.

*Awards and Scholarships*

Our web site will be updated soon and we will be releasing calls for nominations for 2019 awards and scholarships including our Operator Awards (Young Operator and Civil/ All-rounder) with WIOA, and QWRCIP scholarships.  We expect to launch two new scholarships, supported by DNRME at the Skills Forum this week.  In addition, there will be industry contribution awards in conjunction with this year’s Annual Forum, and details of other AWA and IPWEAQ offerings.

*Submissions*

Aside from submissions detailed in recent Skills Eflashes, we have this year submitted on behalf of members to the Department of Health on proposed recycling guidelines and participated in a range of reference groups.  The National Performance Report process review is also well underway.  We have been interviewed, lodged a written submission, and will attend a workshop on 3 April.  There is an ongoing piece of advocacy work around biosolids and the current End of Waste Code.

*Other*

* QWRAP activities continue with gusto with most regional groups having met at least once this year and a range of collaborative projects commenced.  For those attending OzWater in Melbourne this year, we will have a small contingent there with fingers crossed for QWRAP as a finalist in AWA’s national awards.
* We anticipate announcing soon details of a Reef Stewardship project being negotiated among DES, LGAQ and ***qldwater.*** We have lodged applications for other collaborative projects to support key industry issues.
* Most details for this year’s Water Connections Week have been finalised and we have 16 “tourists” representing ***qldwater,*** LGAQ, DES, DNRME, and DLGRMA visiting Murweh, Paroo, Bulloo and Quilpie in May.  Our host councils have been most welcoming, and the tour will include discussions with each council, site visits, and a forum with all four councils in Charleville on the final day.
* The commercial version of the Aqua Card (particularly targeted at contractors) is in the final throes of user testing and is expected to be released in March.  We’ve learnt a lot about the challenges of hosting online courses which require a “qualification” to be issued and an e-commerce component – it will be a relief to have it finalised.

Feel free to contact me (dcameron@qldwater.com.au; 0407 761 991) if you want any more information on these topics, or updates on other matters.

**~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ 2.   Wannon Water Wins!**

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Congratulations to Victoria’s Wannon Water which took out second place for municipal water in the 2019 Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting Competition.  Details of all the winners are available here.

WIOA conducts the national competition to determine the international entrant, (held in Toowoomba last year).  At least Livingstone Shire was pipped by a quality sample…

Further congratulations to John Harris from Wannon who was fortunate to be able to chaperone the sample on its US trip.  John retires soon after a long career in the industry, and he’s been a great champion and supporter of qldwater initiatives, particularly in the skills area.

**~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~3.   Presentation Videos from DNRME Water Quality Forum November 2018**

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Part 1 (Setting the scene) – <https://youtu.be/CizEyMdvGhE>

Part 2 (Risks to consider) – <https://youtu.be/WYosGs7gbV8>

Part 3 (Common themes from Queensland site visits) – <https://youtu.be/aXQr0MKXXls>

Thanks to Des Gralton for all her efforts with the recording and editing, and to the Department for collaborating with us to deliver the event.

Peter also presented a video he developed in conjunction with WIOA on safe water main repairs, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BZ_oWg0nNM>

While the forum was well attended, we know that there were many people unable to make it for a variety of reasons and we hope that this format proves useful.  Please provide any feedback to dgralton@qldwater.com.au.

**~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~  4.   SCADA/ Cybersecurity Discussion Paper released**

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The discussion paper follows from the TRG workshop held in 2018 and aims to provide advice to members on ways of dealing with emerging cybersecurity risks as they relate to SCADA and ICS, and to inform government approaches to policy and regulatory frameworks to mitigate those risks.  It is a relatively detailed guidance document but also includes simplified checklists for members starting the journey to address these emerging threats.

We’d like to acknowledge Chris Dawson as primary author of this publication, Alan Kleinschmidt as editor, and reviewers/ case study contributors including Quentin Rider (Fraser Coast Regional Council), Jaek Passier (Toowoomba Regional Council) and Leigh Cook (Western Downs Regional Council).

**~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ 5.   Time to register for Bilo!  Seriously.  It’s good stuff.  Earlybird rates close 8 March.**

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The final detailed Biloela [regional conference](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/qldwater-cq-conference-and-training-biloela-march-2019/cq-conference-2019/Agenda) program is now available. The conference on **28 March** will be held at the Biloela Civic Centre, Supper Room, 96 Rainbow Street.  The Optional dinner on 27 March will take place at Hotel Settlers, 58 Dawson Highway. An additional charge applies for the dinner; it is very modest thanks to our sponsor, 360 Engineering.  We have a nice selection of quality presentations, and as always, a great, cost-effective networking opportunity.

We would like to again thank Banana Shire Council for hosting this event, and acknowledge Gold Sponsors Royce Water Technologies, Aquatec Maxcon, Lonza Water Treatment, andWater Connections Tour sponsor Dial Before You Dig**.**

To maximise your opportunities in Biloela we are offering [training](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/qldwater-cq-conference-and-training-biloela-march-2019/cq-conference-2019/ExtraContent/ContentPage?page=2) in key safety topics in the days preceding the conference, delivered by Murray Thompson, a highly experienced water professional and trainer.

**Tuesday 26 March** is designed for **water workers and field personnel** and will cover a number of topics including working with high pressure water jetting equipment and systems, pressurised pipelines, chemicals and hazardous substances.  It will also cover water hygiene considerations, particularly relating to water main repairs, construction and renewal activities.

Training on **Wednesday 27 March** will offer **supervisors, managers and others responsible for considering organisational risk** an overview of the risks and considerations for safely accessing reservoirs, safety for the lone/remote worker, working with high pressure water jetting equipment and systems, pressurised pipelines, chemicals and hazardous substances and water hygiene concerns relating to water main repairs, construction and renewal activities.

Register [here](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/qldwater-cq-conference-and-training-biloela-march-2019/cq-conference-2019/ExtraContent/ContentPage?page=1).

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Last week the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 was introduced to Parliament. As forewarned last year, if it passes, there will be a staged roll-out of new requirements for agriculture “as well as direct sources of pollution from industrial land uses” - which includes public sewage treatment. The key impact on STPs is the requirement for ‘no net decline’ in Reef water quality standards from any additional nutrient and sediment loads. This means that new or expanded STPs will need to be designed to operate within current EA limits or seek a point source water quality offset. Of interest, there has as yet been no news on the release of the (vastly improved) update of the DES Offsets Policy, despite it being a key component of the proposed changes.

The new [Decision Regulatory Impact Statement](https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0028/94636/broadening-enhancing-reef-protection-decision-ris.pdf) does recognise that “The industrial sector (point source nutrient and sediment contributors) believe they are already heavily regulated, and additional requirements are disproportionate to the risk posed from the sector compared to the agricultural sector” and “acknowledges the efforts of local councils within Reef regions to support improved land management for water quality outcomes.”  However, it still uses a very coarse estimation method to derive potential costs for STP upgrades and a similarly high-level review to claim that “nutrient pollutant loads from point sources could be higher proportionally than the contribution reported in the 2017 Scientific Consensus Statement.*”*

Despite these problems the new Reef Regulations can benefit the urban sewerage sector as well as the Reef. They focus on the diffuse sources that are major contributors to reef runoff and acknowledge the efforts that have gone into improving ‘industrial’ sources, particularly STPs.  Offsets are strongly supported and will improve over time and the RIS explicitly states that councils can use them to save on costs of expensive upgrades. We will continue to work with the Department and with the LGAQ Major Integrated Project to help clarify the contribution of STPs and identify and support innovative options (like offsets) for STPs in growing communities that are affordable while protecting the GBR and local environments.

We will also be providing a submission on the Bill highlighting the real impacts and costs for STPs and the need for renewal of the Department’s Offsets Policy. If you wish to contribute to this feedback please contact rfearon@qldwater.com.au **by the 13th March** or write to the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee directly using the [Government guidelines](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/committees/guidelines/Guide_MakingASubmission_WebVersion.pdf) and emailing your response to ITDEC@parliament.qld.gov.au by **5:00pm on Friday 15 March 2019**.

Further information on the proposed Regulations is available at the following sites:

* [DES webpage on past and future Reef Regulations](https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/agriculture/sustainable-farming/reef/reef-regulations)
* [DES webpage on these new Regs](https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/agriculture/sustainable-farming/reef/reef-regulations/strengthening-regulations)
* [Decision Regulatory Impact Statement](https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0028/94636/broadening-enhancing-reef-protection-decision-ris.pdf)
* [The Bill](https://www.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/94517/strengthening-reef-regulations.pdf)

**~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~  7.    Release of Queensland’s Urban Potable Water and Sewerage Benchmarking Report – 2017/18**

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[**Release of Queensland’s Urban Potable Water and Sewerage Benchmarking Report – 2017/18**](https://www.qldwater.com.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=247989)

Queensland’s eight water and sewerage benchmarking report has been completed using 2017/18 data and is available from the ***qldwater*** website – <http://www.qldwater.com.au/reporting>

The report provides data from 71 Service Providers across the State.

Benchmarking of Queensland’s water and sewerage data is important for the Queensland urban water industry as it allows competition by comparison and helps provide transparency for our communities.

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**The Queensland Police Service** has released the latest QPS Security Forecast for December 2018which is now available in the members area of our website -  <http://www.qldwater.com.au/Counter-terrorism>.   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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