**Queensland Water Skills e-Flash #74**

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

**(Issue #73 – 21 March 2019)**

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1. **Water Skills Forum Wrap-Up**

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Thank you to everyone who participated in our recent Water Skills Forum in Brisbane. It was a very productive day with more than 80 delegates in attendance and almost half stayed on for dinner with our special guest speaker, Neil Brennan, CEO Seqwater. [View the event photos!](https://qldwater.smugmug.com/2019-Water-Skills-Forum/i-xfsGjwz)

There is so much great work being done throughout Queensland to address the industry’s workforce challenges and we are very grateful to all of the presenters who shared their experiences. Presentations from the event are available for download by delegates and employees of Water Skills Partnership members and ***qldwater*** members at: <https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/queensland-water-skills-forum/event-info-site/Agenda>. When you click on a presentation you’ll be asked to log in before you can download the presentations. If you haven’t already set up a ***qldwater*** web account, select ‘register for an account’ and provided your registration uses a member organisation email address or you attended the event, you’ll be able to access the presentations. Videos of the presentations are currently being edited and will be added in due course.

From discussions during the forum it is clear that industry sees its greatest workforce challenges as attracting talent, building capability, an ageing workforce, a shortage of operators and the need for workforce planning and the presentations provided a number of ideas and opportunities to address these. Water Skills Partnership members will consider the outcomes of the day and continue developing initiatives to help respond to the challenges.

If you would like to know more about the Water Skills Partnership or need help accessing the presentations from the Water Skills Forum, please contact Carlie Sargent on 3632 6853 or csargent@qldwater.com.au.

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1. **Water Industry Skills Forecast 2019**

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Australian Industry Standards (AIS), on behalf of the Water Industry Reference Committee (IRC), has released the draft 2019 Water IRC Skills Forecast and Proposed Schedule of Work. You can download the document at: <https://www.australianindustrystandards.org.au/industry-reference-committee-irc-skills-forecasts-2019/>.

The Skills Forecast provides a national industry outlook of new and emerging skills and associated training needs. It informs the development of a four-year rolling schedule to review and develop the National Water Training Package (NWP), with the Certificate II and Certificate III qualifications currently under review.

The draft forecast highlights many of the workforce challenges discussed at our Water Skills Forum, including the shortage of operators, with water and wastewater treatment operators identified as the highest priority skill shortage facing the water industry. Reasons given for this shortage include low wages, competition from other organisations, location of vacancies, ageing workforce and poor industry image. AIS is keen to hear feedback from industry about the content of the Skills Forecast.

***qldwater*** holds a position on the Water IRC and will be providing feedback on the draft and we encourage you to provide your feedback directly to AIS by **Monday 8 April** to enquiries@australianindustrystandards.org.au or to ***qldwater*** by contacting Carlie Sargent on 3632 6853 or csargent@qldwater.com.au.

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1. **Awards and Scholarships in 2019**

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The annual ***qldwater*** awards and scholarships program recognises the significant contributions and achievements of those who work to provide safe, secure and sustainable urban water services in Queensland.

Nominations are now open for ***qldwater’s*** Young Operator of the Year and Operator of the Year (Civil/All-Rounder) Awards, offered in conjunction with the Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA). These awards recognise the outstanding operational performance of employees of either ***qldwater*** full members or Water Skills Partnership member organizations.

Nominees for the Young Operator of the Year Award must be under the age of 35 years and be responsible for operating community water and wastewater treatment plants or industrial water or wastewater plants, operation and maintenance or construction of water and wastewater reticulation networks etc. They must have been employed in their role for four years or less. Nominees for the Operator of the Year (Civil/All-Rounder) must be responsible for the operation and maintenance or construction of water and wastewater reticulation networks.

Nominations are due by **Friday 3 May 2019** to csargent@qldwater.com.au. Full details about the nomination process along with nomination forms are available at: <https://www.qldwater.com.au/qldwaterAwards>.

A number of scholarships to assist those working in small and remote communities address their water and sewerage challenges are available again in 2019.

The Queensland Water Regional Communities Innovations Program (QWRCIP) will provide up to four scholarships to employees of ***qldwater*** full member organisations with 10,000 or fewer connections to attend ***qldwater’s*** Annual Forum (September) at Logan City and participate in other activities during that week, including spending time with a technical specialist at an SEQ utility and participation in the ***qldwater*** Technical Reference Group meeting.

This year, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) has agreed to provide support for an additional two scholarships, funded through QWRAP. These scholarships will include time with technical experts at a regional council and participation either in a ***qldwater*** regional event, QWRAP meeting or a range of training activities.

More information about the scholarships and application conditions are available at: <https://www.qldwater.com.au/qldwater-Scholarships>. Nominations are due by **31 May 2019** to csargent@qldwater.com.au.

For all awards or scholarship enquiries please contact Carlie Sargent on 3632 6853.

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1. **Aqua Card coming soon!**

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We know a number of organisations are ready to implement this course as part of their employee and contractor inductions and we’d love to hear from you to discuss how that can be implemented. We can also acknowledge you as a participating organization on the site. Please contact Carlie Sargent on 3632 6853 or csargent@qldwater.com.au to discuss further.

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1. **Online and Social Media Training Package**

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SkillsIQ, on behalf of the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC), is undertaking a cross-sector project to address the common skills needs of industries through the development of an Online & Social Media Training Package. New Units of Competency and Skill Sets have been developed to meet skills gaps identified by industries. We will keep you informed as this progresses.

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