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

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

**(Issue #324 – 28 June 2017)**

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**1.  *qldwater*****NQ Conference – Mackay 19 July 2017 UPDATE**

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This is our last regional event for the year and your **last chance** to take on the WaSP Wars challenge – a deck of trading cards for every participant!  Early Bird registrations close Wednesday 5 July.

We have assembled a range of great speakers from Mackay, Isaac, Whitsunday, WSAA, DEWS, Aqseptance/ Unitywater **along with the critically acclaimed “a brief history of urine” from Rob Fearon.**

The conference is being run in conjunction with the AWA North Queensland Branch Conference being held on 20-21 July.  Reciprocal member rates are available for attendees who attend both conferences.  Attendees will include service providers*,*government representatives, as well as AWA members who are also eligible to register at the member rate for our conference.

The event is being held at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre, Alfred Street, Mackay to be followed by an optional dinner and drinks at the Austral Hotel, 189 Victoria Street at 6.00 pm.  An additional charge applies for the dinner which includes two courses from the menu and drinks.

**We would like to again thank Mackay Regional Council for hosting this event, and acknowledge principal sponsor Aqseptance Group, gold sponsors Royce Water Technologies, Lonza and Suez, and of course major sponsors Dial Before You Dig and Ixom.**More information and program is available on the event website.   [Register Now](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/qldwater-nq-conference-2017/qldwater-nq).

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**2.   *qldwater* welcomes new Affiliate Member Solomon Water**

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Solomon Water has recently taken up ***qldwater*** Affiliate Membership.  In response to our request for a summary of current issues:

“Solomon Water has just completed its 30 year Strategic Plan which includes major expansion of its infrastructure to meet the demands of Honiara which is experiencing very rapid growth.  Significant donor funding will be required for the projects which include a new surface water take for Honiara, around 20 sewage pump stations and a deep sea outfall.  There is also much deferred maintenance and pipe renewals to try and combat very high non-revenue water.”

We look forward to catching up with staff at upcoming events and will opportunities to share stories.

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**3.   Your resource library and a comparative study of staffing/ resourcing for STPs**

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The ***qldwater*** [Resource Library](http://www.qldwater.com.au/resource-library) gives members a large range of materials to troubleshoot and support planning activities.  We are always on the hunt for “member sample documents” in particular, so if you have anything in which you’ve invested time and effort which could be of benefit to other water and sewerage service providers, please get in touch.

Recently, Logan City Council kindly forwarded the results of a phone survey conducted by Barry Holcroft which compared operations of their Sewage Treatment Plants with 8 other (de-identified) sewerage service providers.  The comparison examines annual operations and maintenance budgets, staffing, design capacity of the plants and volumes of sewage treated as well as approaches to on-call arrangements.  It is available to members **noting the following caveat:**

Please note that some interviewed practitioners were:

* only able to provide/estimate their annual budgetary figures that may or may not include all corporate business costs
* using equivalent person allowances that varied from 176 to 287 litres per capita per day
* estimating their plant daily flows from memory whilst on the mobile in the field
* using proportioned numbers of staff particularly in the electrical & mechanical workforce where staff often looked after all council functions.

As a result, caution must be exercised when considering “$ per EP” and “FTEs per 100,000EPs”

Click [here](http://www.qldwater.com.au/Planning_Sewage_Treatment) to be taken to the resource library link, enter your password and then the “member sample documents” tab to access the document.

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**4.   Havelock North Drinking Water Incident – Hrudey evidence**

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Thanks to David Sheehan for sharing [this publication](http://www.qldwater.com.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=230233&A=SearchResult&SearchID=103721561&ObjectID=230233&ObjectType=6) – “Converting Hindsight into Foresight – Evidence Prepared for Water New Zealand for submission to Government Inquiry to Havelock North Drinking Water.”  Hrudey’s evidence and recommendations draw on other significant international case studies.

The [Havelock North Inquiry](https://www.dia.govt.nz/Government-Inquiry-into-Havelock-North-Drinking-Water) followed the widespread outbreak of gastroenteritis in Havelock North in August 2016, with more than 5000 people falling ill, following the confirmation of the presence of E. coli in the water supply.  The Inquiry findings included:

* campylobacter bacterium was found in drinking water with sheep faeces the likely source
* highly likely that heavy rain led to water entering an aquifer with bores used as the reticulated water supply (with further contamination possible at the actual bore chambers)
* the failings, most notably by the Regional Council and the District Council and their staff, did not directly cause the outbreak, although a different outcome may have occurred in their absence
* the Regional Council was aware of the aquifer and catchment contamination risks; a similar outbreak occurred in 1998 and the risks were not adequately addressed
* there were notable failures in collaboration and liaison between the two entities

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**5.   Queensland Audit Office report on Security of Critical Water Infrastructure**

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QAO recently conducted a series of audits into cyber security risks and the results (with details of the entities audited remaining confidential) [have been tabled today in parliament](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Documents/TableOffice/TabledPapers/2017/5517T1049.pdf).  The report is designed to support all service providers in assessing and addressing their risks.

The findings detail a number of concerns for managing information technology risks and business continuity planning and the recommendations include specific suggestions for managing these risks, as well as recommending a role for DEWS in information sharing and integration into the existing risk management framework for drinking water services, and in performance reports (Pp 2-4).

***qldwater*** will engage with QAO to discuss the findings.

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