



# Queensland Water

The Water Industry's Resource for News, Events and Information

Issue 15 - May 2016

## Hervey Bay sets the scene for 2016 events program

The first of our 2016 regional events was a cracker with conference attendees enjoying a variety of interesting talks and panels interspersed with food, drinks and games.

On Wednesday, 13 April 2016 Wide Bay Water Corporation (WBWC) hosted a tour of its facilities including Lenthalls Dam, Burgowan Water Treatment Plant, Nikenbah Wastewater Treatment Plant and Hebblewhite Reuse Farm.

WBWC provides water and wastewater services to Hervey Bay, Maryborough, Tiaro, Torbanlea, Howard, Burrum Heads and other outlying areas, operating and maintaining significant water, wastewater and reuse infrastructure spread over 289 unique sites. WBWC will revert to a central business unit of Fraser Coast Regional Council from 1 July 2016.

Led by the enthusiastic Executive Manager of Operations, Denis Heron, the first stop on the tour was Lenthalls Dam – the main water supply for the Hervey Bay region. Severe drought forced Wide Bay Water to raise the height of the dam wall in 2007 in order to secure water supply for its growing population. The innovative Crest Gate system increased the lake's capacity from 17,800mL to 29,500mL and allows WBWC

to release water to better manage flood events.

WBWC is also responsible for the safe disposal and recycling of 5,200ML of wastewater and 4,000 tonnes of bio-solids per year. It operates six reuse schemes, seven plantations with 480ha of Irrigated Tree Plantations, 10 storages totalling 2,650 ML, 12 pump stations with 1,400km of drip tube, has 28 third party customers irrigating 1,200ha and runs a Solar Farm. Sounds like they keep busy!

Thursday's conference was at the Beach House Hotel on the Esplanade at Scarness overlooking the amazing Hervey Bay. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and we thank our speakers for sharing their interesting stories including the trials and tribulations of the Gordonbrook Water Treatment Plant upgrade near Kingaroy, how sustainable sewage treatment business can deliver more for less, Mackay's journey into innovative data management and Wide Bay Water Corporation's approach to THM management. Kelly Hopewell gave a report on her recent Churchill Fellowship trip to the USA and South America, reflecting on international trends of biosolids management.

Thanks to all our sponsors for making this event possible:

### Principal Sponsor:



### Supporting Sponsors:



Thanks also to Dial Before You Dig and IXOM for again sponsoring our Water Connections Tour and the Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test respectively.



Nikenbah Wastewater Treatment Plant.



## Update from CEO

Busy times for **qldwater** members. While all of our team here have been through at least two local government election cycles now, the last in 2012 did not significantly impact us directly. Reflecting how much our programs have changed in the last four years, we can count this time at least a dozen changes in key personnel on our various reference groups, including QWRAP, Water Skills Partnership and SWIM initiatives with more to come in impending retirements.

There is no question that this equates to a significant loss of knowledge from the sector, however, in the interests of keeping the glass half full, I hope that members are largely through the turmoil and able to focus on the positives that can come from a bit of renewal.

I am pleased to announce that Steve Gray and Dick Went have been elected as the new **qldwater** Technical Reference Group (TRG) Chair and Deputy Chair respectively, commencing in August.

The TRG is made up of Water Managers, Chief Engineers, Chief Executive Officers and Water Operators representing nearly 20 small, medium and large service providers from across the state. They currently meet at least four times per year, overseeing the **qldwater** work program, providing invaluable advice and a strong support network.

The group hosts our Innovation Forum, and more often than not, are individually responsible for hosting our other events. Importantly, the group is actively sought out by other levels of government as the place to get a common sense and largely consistent view on issues impacting the sector.

When you receive your **qldwater** renewals this year, we ask that you consider getting involved. If you can't, remember that the group always welcomes the opportunity to attempt to address concerns raised by any member.

It's important to say something about our outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair, even though John is still around for a while.



John Bett's first TRG meeting was in 2007. Since then, he's served as SWIM Steering Committee Chair, a **qldwater** Management Committee representative for AWA, and TRG Deputy Chair and Chair. He's participated in countless project planning initiatives and reviews and more often than not has played the perfect devil's advocate keeping our approaches balanced and achievable.

John retires in August to tackle a significant job list his wife has been preparing.



Dave Brooker joined TRG in 2010. He is a true innovator and has always been motivated to go beyond his daily role in council to promote, and deliver, a broad range of business improvement initiatives in the sector. He has had a hand in more of our programs than I can count.

Dave leaves Mackay Regional Council in May to join the private sector, although we hope he can find some time within his new role to keep collaborating with **qldwater**.

On behalf of our staff and broader membership – our sincere thanks for your efforts, gentlemen.

Dave Cameron

## Taste Test goes international!

After taking home the top prize for the 2015 Ixom Victorian Water Taste Test and the 2015 Ixom Best Tap Water in Australia competitions last year, a sample from Goulburn Valley Water's Marysville Treatment Plant has come second in the world in the Municipal Water category at the Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting competition in February 2016.

The water's trip to West Virginia, USA, was supported by Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA). It was the first time that tap water from Australia had entered the

international competition, and WIOA Chief Operations Officer Craig Mathisen believes the award will highlight the achievements of all Australian water authorities.

"We know our members are producing high quality drinking water, but we wanted to test it out by putting our National Champion from Marysville into the international competition. We now have worldwide recognition that some of the world's best water is right here in Australia and it should be seen as a celebration for all of the operators around the country."

The new Marysville Treatment Plant, which was commissioned last year, uses an improved micro-filtration treatment process to supply drinking water to the towns of Marysville and Buxton, with raw water for the plant sourced from the Stevenson River.

The results for the best municipal water in the world in 2016 were:

- 1st – Clearbrook, Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada
- 2nd – Marysville, Victoria, Australia
- 3rd – Independence, Missouri, USA

# WaSP Wars

**qldwater** launched the latest iteration of our Fun Stuff trial and error series at the Hervey Bay conference, introducing WaSP Wars: the ultimate benchmarking challenge for water and sewerage service providers.

In an effort to build interest in KPIs and the idea of competition by comparison, WaSP Wars contains real SWIM data reported for the first year of mandatory KPIs.

The indicators were deliberately chosen to give players with smaller service provider cards the same chance at winning a round as larger ones.

The aim of the game is to get the highest score in any of the indicators on your card. Indicators include:

- Value = Current replacement (a new one with a few problems, so use at your peril!)
- Connections = per km mains (broadly the size of the community served)
- Potable water = volume supplied per connection per annum
- Sewage = volume treated per connection per annum
- Data points = number of schemes x number of indicators x number of years reporting (so a reflection of overall system complexity, how many regulators you report to, and how long you've been diligent)
- Distance = average from communities to "major" urban centre – a measure of overall remoteness.

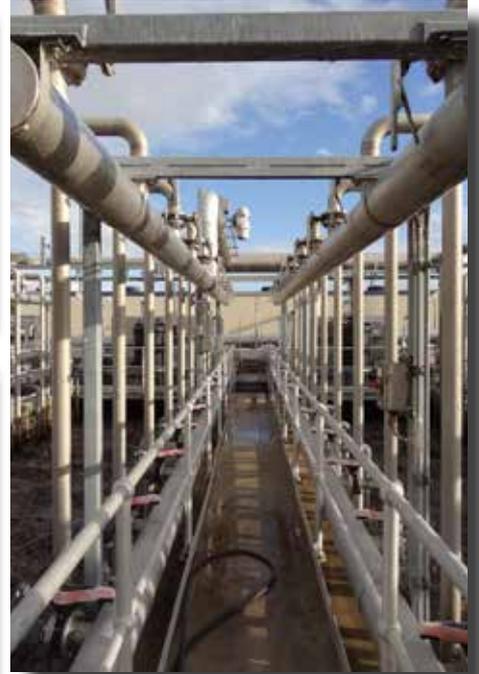
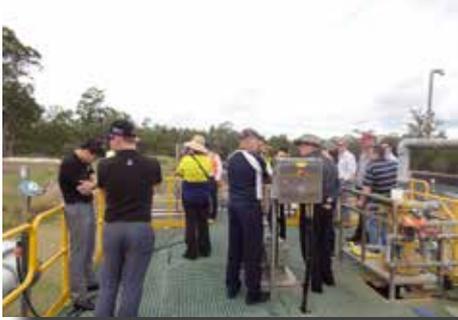
The game was well received by delegates with lots of laughs and excellent feedback including "We'll be able to use it as a drinking game! Seriously though, good way to get stats across and I enjoyed it" and "Card game is amazeballs!" (Really!)

Congratulations to Nerida Airs, Manager Water and Waste Water at South Burnett Regional Council, who walked away overall winner on the day.



## Out and about...

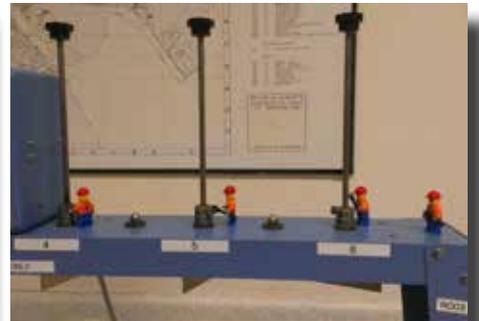
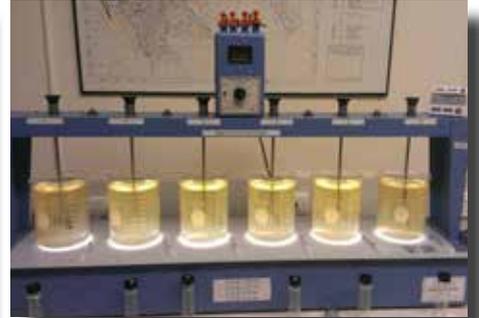
This page: Various images from the SEQ Conference including the technical tour of Burgowan Water Treatment Plant and Nikenbah Wastewater Treatment Plant and the conference at Beach House Hotel.



## Lego figure photo competition

The little Lego men and women have been out and about with some interesting photos arriving from all over Queensland. These little dudes and dudettes have been seen playing WaSP Wars, out on site at the Mount Morgan Water Treatment Plant, in the lab and at our office.

Send us images of your Lego person and go in the draw for a prize – the winning entry will be announced at the **qldwater** Innovation Forum in September 2016.



## WIOA Bowls Day

**qldwater** entered a team in the WIOA Queensland Advisory Committee Charity Bowls Day in Yandina on Friday, 18 March.

We finished a very respectable third, plus Dave got to tackle an IDIOT with Marcus Boyd being Inducted as Delegate of the Inextricably Obstructed Tap Society (IDIOTS) in recognition of his commitment to the vision and philosophies of the Association. Just over \$1,500 was raised on the day.



## Skills Update

### Certification Framework for Operators within Drinking Water Systems 2016

The Water Industry Skills Taskforce (WIST) met on 15 April to approve a number of amendments to the Proposed National Certification Framework 2012 (Operators within Drinking Water Systems) and formally appoint a Certifying Body.

The key amendments to the Framework include:

- A new name, 'Certification Framework for Operators within Drinking Water Treatment Systems 2016'.
- Inclusion of specific requirements and conditions around appointment and operation of 'Certifying Bodies'.
- Recognition of the 'Framework Coordinator' role.
- Adoption of 2 System Rating levels for treatment plants (instead of the previous 3):
  - Low Complexity for plants with one barrier, or treatment process, or less, and
  - High complexity for plants with two or more barriers, or treatment processes.
- Inclusion of a procedure for certification of contractors.
- Updated unit requirements to reflect the new National Water Training Package (NWP). Units from NWP01

that have equivalence to NWP07, are also deemed acceptable in the Framework.

- Alternative to completion of the ADWG unit (previously NWP279A) – may now be attained by another 'Framework Owner and Certifying Body-approved training course.'
- Addition of details around continuous improvement/ review.
- A number of editing and other minor amendments.

The new Framework document is available on the Australian Water Association (AWA - [www.awa.asn.au](http://www.awa.asn.au)) site and Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA - [www.wioa.org.au](http://www.wioa.org.au)) site.

The WIST is pleased to announce that the Water Industry Operators Association (WIOA) was formally appointed as the national Certifying Body at the WIST meeting on 15 April. WIOA will initially be appointed for a period of 5 years.

Further information on how to apply for certification through WIOA is available at [www.wioa.org.au](http://www.wioa.org.au).

### Implementation of the New National Water Training Package

A number of Queensland Water Skills e-Flashes have outlined ongoing issues with the new training package. In brief, all previous National Water Training Package (NWP07) qualifications have been deleted and no further enrolments can take place in the old NWP07 qualifications under Government funding.

Despite efforts to have the old qualifications amended to 'superseded' to allow a 12 month transition to the new training package, the federal Department of Education and Training has stated that no changes will be made. Therefore, new enrolments in a National Water Training Package qualification can only take place when RTOs have added the new NWP training package qualifications to their scope for delivery. Further, Queensland Government funded qualification enrolments can only take place once the RTO has the new qualification on scope and has applied to the Queensland Government to deliver the new qualification under Government funding.

Students currently enrolled in an NWP07 qualification will be able to complete their qualification under any Government funding that they are already receiving.

Implementation issues with the Diploma Water Operations have been raised through the new Skills Service Organisation for water (Australian Industry Standards). Members who have any issues with implementing the new training package are encouraged to contact **qldwater** so that we can raise the issues through the Industry Reference Committee for water.

### Water Industry Skills Taskforce - Secretariat and Chair

In March 2015, **qldwater** took on the Secretariat role for the WIST, with Dave Cameron acting as Chair.

The **qldwater** Secretariat and Dave Cameron chair roles were renewed at the WIST meeting on 15 April for a further 12 month period.

### Extension of small contract to provide water industry training advice to DET

In August 2015 **qldwater** signed a six month contract to provide water industry advice on vocational education and training-related activities to the Department of Education and Training (DET). DET has recently extended this small contract until end October 2016.

A number of briefing papers and updates have already been provided to DET covering topics such as the National Water Training Package changes and implementation issues and funding issues and barriers to water industry training in Queensland.

**Interested in training on water quality and networks maintenance, filter optimisation or coagulation, flocculation and jar testing?**

**Looking for assistance in coordinating a regional training course for water operations?**

**Contact us and we can assist in coordinating and assisting you with your training needs.**

# SWIM Update

## SWIMLocal

With the 2014/15 reporting now complete and the SWIMLocal annual data tool well established, the focus shifts to further enhancements for the release of the new version in June. This will be followed by extensive training and an update to the user manual.

Due to the rapid growth in automation processes, SWIMLocal will provide the ability for more frequent recording and improved functionality on tablets and phones.

The SWIM web pages have received a well deserved update and have been incorporated into the **qldwater** website at [www.qldwater.com.au/swim](http://www.qldwater.com.au/swim)

## Benchmarking

Queensland's fifth water and sewerage benchmarking report has been completed using 2014/15 data and is available from the **qldwater** website at [www.qldwater.com.au/reporting](http://www.qldwater.com.au/reporting)

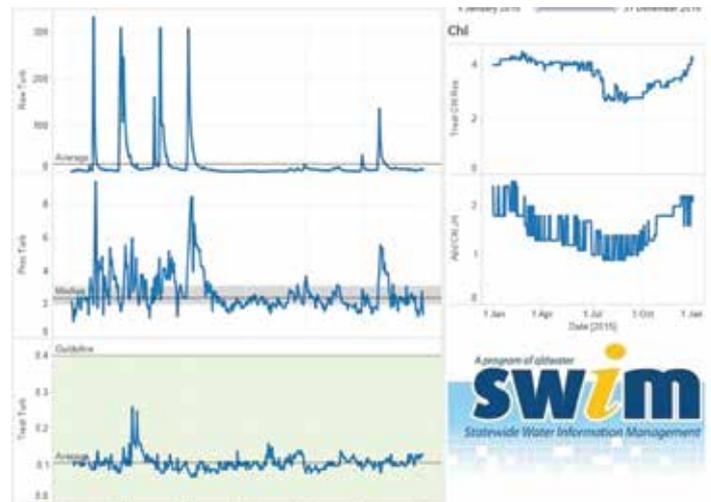
The report provides data from 58 Service Providers across the State.

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.

## Visualisation trials

**qldwater** is starting to capture "critical infrastructure data" and invested in a Tableau Licence to use graphing functionality for industry-wide comparisons.

We are also trialling other software for the SWIMLocal subscription tool with a view to offering it as an add-on to give users the ability to prepare their own "dashboards" – meaning the chance to visualise things like water quality parameters for treatment in real or near-real time.



# QWRAP Update

The QWRAP program has maintained its focus through the turbulent times of local government elections with five regions now at different stages of considering joint initiatives. Together, the QWRAP regions comprise more than 50% of Queensland's area and nearly two thirds of the population outside of the south east corner.

Three of the regions have formed Regional Alliances and three have regional coordinators funded partly through the QWRAP funding. All regions are undertaking projects aimed at exploring regional economies of scale and the benefits of joint action (see examples below for each region). For each group it has been clear that collaborative activities can save money for individual councils and improve customer service but that these benefits may not be evenly distributed across all participants. A common issue is that there are often only small financial gains in the short term and significant long term benefits can be difficult to quantify.

**Outback Regional Water Alliance** is developing a strategic plan for future joint work and to set priorities for the region. Recent projects include: reservoir cleaning across the region, regional oversight of KPI reporting, joint water main air scouring and a regional investigation of water disinfection and drinking water quality management.

**FNQROC** Region is developing a Terms of Reference and Work Plan for the regional coordinator which spell out the projects and

milestones to be achieved over the coming year. Projects include a workshop on automatic metering, joint training (regional hub model), and a biosolids management review.

**Wide Bay Burnett Water Alliance** is soon to appoint a regional coordinator. Their first task is finalisation of a TOR for the Alliance and a workplan for the coming year. The Region's Operations & Control group is meeting regularly and the ROC has formed a Water Environmental group charged with developing approaches for regional cooperation. Projects include a joint regional training schedule, SCADA standardisation and a regional MoU for sewer relining.

**Whitsunday-Isaac-Mackay Alliance** is developing a Master plan and considering a range of projects run jointly across the three councils. Projects include joint laboratory services, shared automated meter data and technologies and a proposed Asset Maintenance (ISO55000) readiness review.

The recently formed **Downs and Surat group** has commenced a range of collaborative activities under a draft Terms of Reference for consideration by the region's new councillors. Initial projects include: aligning DWQMP reporting and auditing requirements, joint activities for water security and demand management, regional issues, performance benchmarking, collaboration on maintenance/ upgrade programs and joint skills development.

## Events Calendar

### May

16-20 Water Connections Tour visiting Ingham, Palm Island, Townsville, Ayr, Proserpine and Mackay

### June

1-2 WIOA Conference, Rockhampton

9-10 IPWEAQ Branch Conference, Emerald

### July

20 NQ Conference, Townsville

21-22 AWA FNQ Conference

### August

11 CQ Conference, Emerald

17-19 IPWEAQ Branch Conference, Lucinda

### September

14-15 2016 Innovation Forum and Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test

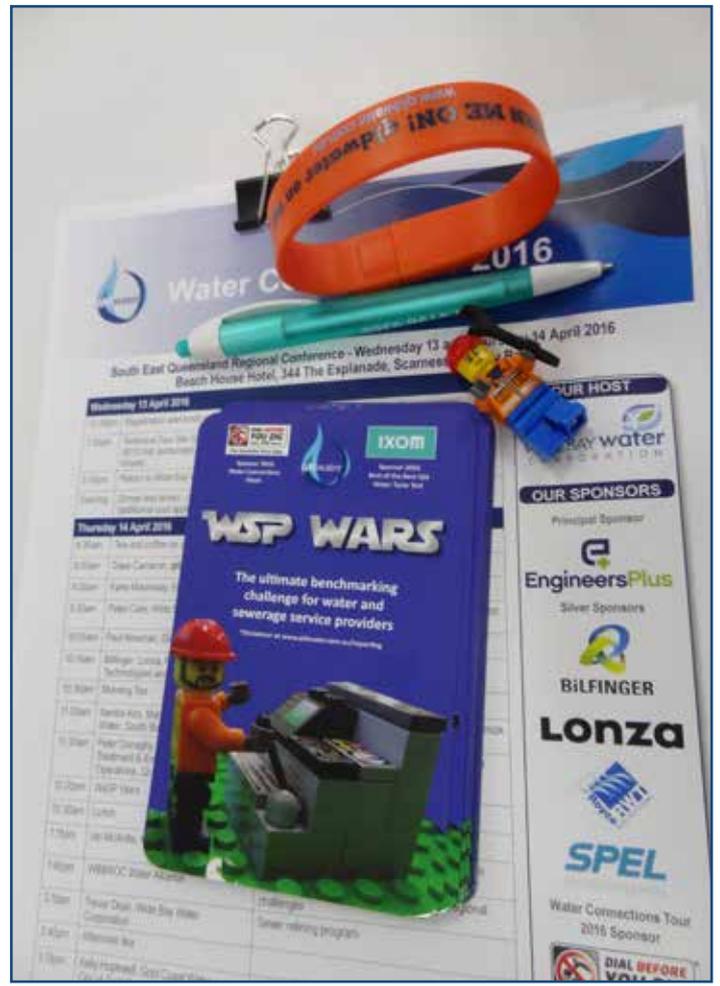
### October

9-13 World Water Congress, Brisbane

18-20 LGAQ State Conference

### November

8-10 IPWEAQ State Conference



## \$70 million infrastructure funding brought forward

The Palaszczuk Government's \$70 million critical regional infrastructure fund has been accelerated by six months to stimulate jobs and economic growth in regional Queensland, and applications for the second funding round are now open.

Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines Dr Anthony Lynham said the funding was part of the Queensland Government's \$200 million Building our Regions program to support jobs, foster economic development and improve liveability in regional communities.

"We want councils to get the ball rolling on applications for eligible infrastructure projects that will benefit their communities through real jobs and long term economic opportunities," Dr Lynham said.

"As well, we have listened to the Local Government Association of Queensland and streamlined the application process."

In this round, councils will only initially need to prepare an expression of interest. The department will assess those EOIs, shortlist projects and then give councils four weeks to prepare a detailed business case for their project.

More information and how to apply is available at [www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/regional-development/building-our-regions.html](http://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/regional-development/building-our-regions.html)

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"The Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*) is the central advisory and advocacy body within Queensland's urban water industry and represents members from Local Government and other water service providers across Queensland."