**Queensland Water Skills e-Flash #53**

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

**(Issue #53 –  18 November 2016)**

1. **Queensland Urban Water Industry Workforce Snapshot Report 2016 Released**
2. **SEQ STP Operator Certification Pilot Progress Update**
3. **Qld Apprenticeship and Traineeship Discussion Paper – *qldwater* submission**

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**1.  Queensland Urban Water Industry Workforce Composition Snapshot Report 2016 Released**

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The fourth *Queensland Urban Water Industry Workforce Composition Snapshot* is now available to view online on the ***qldwater*** website [**here**](http://www.qldwater.com.au/Skills_Workforce_Resources_and_Publications). A published hardcopy version of the report will be available early in the new year and will be sent to all Queensland Water Skills Partnership Subscribers.

For the 2016 report ***qldwater*** received responses from eleven organisations of varying sizes covering a total of 3323 employees (which we estimate reflects approximately 56.5% of the Queensland urban water industry workforce). ***qldwater*** would like to thank all the organisations that contributed data.

A number of trends since the first report was published in 2010 have begun to emerge in the 2016 report. In particular, changes in many job families are evident, possibly as a result of outsourcing trends for operations staff. A gradual trend towards a more ageing workforce is also observed. Full details and commentary on potential trends are provided in the report.

While this series of snapshot reports can only provide a glimpse into ongoing change in the sector, they remain an important initiative to support both sector-wide attempts to focus efforts on skills needs, and individual organisations in developing their analyses of external environments to support workforce planning. The ***qldwater*** Technical Reference Group and Water Skills Partnership Industry Leaders’ Group are currently considering options for improving data collection and analysis to enhance future reports.

To receive a hardcopy of the published Snapshot report contact Michelle Hill on mhill@qldwater.com.au.

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**2.  SEQ STP Operator Certification Pilot Progress Update**

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Unitywater has now joined the SEQ Sewage Treatment Plant Operator Certification pilot. There are now a total of 16 participants in the pilot activities including representatives from all SEQ water service providers/ distribution entities.

The initial treatment process and training mapping against the Certification Framework has been undertaken and gap training requirements confirmed.  Enrolment in the gap training will commence shortly.

The costs for the gap training will be offset by the ‘second chance training’ funding from the Department of Education and Training which was created to support operators to gain the units of competency required to apply for Certification.

As each operator will have varying gap training requirements, final completion dates will vary. It is still anticipated that we will see the first operators certified against the STP Operator Certification Framework at the WIOA Queensland Conference and Exhibition in June 2017.

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**3.  Qld Apprenticeship and Traineeship Discussion Paper – *qldwater* submission**

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The discussion paper ‘Positive Futures: Apprenticeships and Traineeships in Queensland’ was launched on Tuesday 15th November by Minister for Training and Skills Yvette D’Ath. Responses to the discussion paper will inform a report to be developed by Jobs Queensland and delivered to the Government next year.

Jobs Queensland is inviting stakeholders to make initial submissions by the deadline of 20 December 2016, and will maintain a program of engagement into 2017. A number of workshops are also available in various regional locations (schedule available on the Jobs Queensland website - <https://training.qld.gov.au/employers/engage-government/jobs-qld/engagement>).

User Choice funding to support both existing and new trainees is currently used extensively by the water industry in Queensland. ***qldwater*** has prepared a submission to the discussion paper which highlights key considerations from the water industry perspective, the submission is available on the ***qldwater*** website [**here**](http://www.qldwater.com.au/_literature_222395/Apprenticeship_and_Traineeship_Discussion_Paper_-_qldwater_Submission).  Key highlights of the ***qldwater*** submission include;

-              Providing an overview of the water industries current engagement with the apprenticeship and traineeship system.

-              Highlighting the unique issues faced by the industry, including regional and remote water service providers.

-              Emphasising the need for flexibility in the system to respond to changing industry needs e.g. Certification requirements.

-              Outlining opportunities to respond to the changing needs and complexities through the apprenticeship and traineeship system.

-              Stressing the importance to the sector of user choice traineeships.

-              Stressing the need for stability in funding arrangements (and training packages) to help foster long term workforce planning.

-              Looking for opportunities to deal with the growing need for qualifications + (i.e. support beyond the basic 11 units in a qualification to reflect changing job roles).

-              Suggesting incentives for employers to help encourage other trainees to be retained once their traineeships are complete.

Members are also encouraged to make submissions. Submissions can be made via the Jobs Queensland website at [www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au](http://www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/)

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