**Queensland Water Skills e-Flash #56**

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

**(Issue #56 –  20 March 2017)**

1. **Industry feedback invited on draft Certification Framework for Operators within Wastewater & Recycled Water Treatment Systems**
2. **Initial scoping of a standardised water industry online induction program**

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The water industry is invited to provide feedback on a draft national *Certification Framework for Operators within Wastewater and Recycled Water Treatment Systems*.

Development of the Framework began late 2016 when the Australian Water Recycling Centre of Excellence engaged ***qldwater*** to coordinate development of a Certification Framework for Recycled Water Operators, including managing industry consultation. Following discussions with national recycled water regulators it was determined that it would be difficult to maintain a separate recycled water framework and the document therefore reflects a combined recycled water and wastewater approach. The resulting draft Framework represents a collaborative effort among ***qldwater,*** the Water Industry Operators Association (George Wall) and David Sheehan (Coliban Water).

The Certification Framework is underpinned by the need to ensure that the environment and public health are protected, and that wastewater and recycled water that is provided to end users is safe and fit for purpose. Certification provides an assurance to regulators, communities and the users of recycled water that Operators are competent to manage wastewater and recycled water quality, as well as being capable of identifying and responding to wastewater and recycled water quality risks and incidents.

A summary of the basic Framework principles is provided below;

* Based on the *Certification Framework for Operators within Drinking Water Systems 2016* and the *Queensland Sewage Treatment Plant Operator Certification Framework* (which will be superseded by the national Framework)*.*
* Operators apply to be formally Certified by a national Certifying Body.
* Includes the following Certified Operator categories;
	+ Certified Wastewater Operator – low complexity
	+ Certified Wastewater Operator – high complexity
	+ Certified Recycled Water Operator
* Operators must;
	+ a) attain the stipulated mandatory and fit for purpose units from the National Water Training package (as relevant to the determined system complexity rating)
	+ b) satisfy the workplace experience requirements; and,
	+ c) be signed-off by their employer in order to be certified (demonstrate capability).
* Certified Operators must participate in ongoing professional development (or undergo a skills audit) in order to be re-certified (after 5 year validation period).

It is the intention that this national Framework will replace the existing Queensland *Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Operator Certification Framework V2* developed through the Queensland Water Skills Partnership and released in 2015. The overarching principles and standard requirements have been aligned in the new Framework to allow for a simple transition in the first instance. Operators that are Certified under the Queensland Framework will automatically be transferred to the national certification program once the final Framework has been approved and a certifying body appointed.

Long term national ownership of the Framework is yet to be determined, however it is the intention that the Water Industry Skills Taskforce (WIST) will take on the role of interim owner as it has done for the *Certification Framework for Operators within Drinking Water Systems*.

The full draft Framework is available on the ***qldwater*** website [**here**](http://www.qldwater.com.au/_literature_226543/Draft_Certification_Framework_for_STP_and_RW_Operators) with a consultation/feedback form available [**here**](http://www.qldwater.com.au/_literature_226544/Draft_Certification_Framework_STP_and_RW_Operator_-_Feedback_Form). Please email any comments or feedback to skills@qldwater.com.au by **14th** **April**.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~**Initial scoping of a standardised water industry online induction program**

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The Water Industry Skills Taskforce seeking interest in the establishment of a standardised national water industry online induction program, targeted at new entrants to the industry, as well as those interested in entering the industry.  There is no funding currently available to do this, and once established it will take some effort to maintain, so a variety of operating models will be investigated.

A Queensland-based program developed and maintained by ***qldwater*** is currently available and options for building on the current model will be investigated. The Queensland water industry induction program can be viewed [**here**](http://www.qldwater.com.au/Skills_Water_Industry_Induction).

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