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

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

**(Issue #219 – 5 February 2014)**

1. **Actions from *qldwater* member survey**
2. **AWA Ozwater’14 - discounted registration**

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**1.  Actions from *qldwater* member survey**

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A short survey was distributed to all members in 2013 seeking information on a number of topics commonly raised by members and subjects where our technical reference group had identified a need for broader member input.

This eflash item summarises the actions underway and completed to respond to the information provided by members.

1.      Procurement of treatment chemicals

Meetings have been held with Local Buy to investigate the option of establishing a contract/ standing offer arrangement available to members for the purchase of common treatment chemicals.  The survey demonstrated a significant amount of diversity in what is currently used, beyond standard disinfection chemicals.

Many members also seemed reluctant to commit to using such a contract, preferring to keep options open for negotiating individual arrangements or with their neighbouring service providers.

The preferred approach is not yet fully resolved, however Gold Coast Water has agreed to share tender documents it has prepared for a recent invitation process with other members to help in developing similar processes.  When they are available they will be added to our web site.

2.      Availability of specialised contractors

A number of service providers participating in the QWRAP initiative are already sharing information on availability and costs of highly specialised contractors on a regional basis.  We are also slowly building the resources available on the Queensland Water Directory section of our web site.  We had hoped that members would use our forums to share positive experiences but they have not taken off.

The challenge (when people are invariably busy) is to somehow move beyond seeking help when there are no other options and to share positive experiences with contractors when you have them.  ***qldwater*** is very happy to help with this; feel free to contact us at any time.  Alternatively, forum services like [Ask Your Mates](http://www.ipwea.org/communities/communitydetails/?CommunityKey=40161684-473f-4db3-9dbc-ff10c03497e2) managed by the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia are very popular and it is rare to find an issue or need which doesn’t attract some sort of feedback.

3.      Availability of Laboratory services

A number of laboratories able to test samples required for Drinking Water Quality and STP discharges have now provided information for the Queensland Water Directory site. Queensland Health Forensic and Scientific Services, Symbio Alliance and Cairns Regional Council laboratories have been invited to provide information to include in the Queensland Water Directory listing for [laboratory services](http://www.qldwater.com.au/Queensland_Water_Directory_Laboratory_Services) and each are in the process of doing so.  Again, if you have had positive experiences with other providers, we are happy to extend the invitation to others.

4.      Operator exchange/ relief opportunities

Our technical reference group is this week considering a proposal to encourage up to 6 operator exchange opportunities in 2014.  This is not focussed on emergency assistance, rather trying to organise some short term exchanges to give individuals the opportunity to be exposed to different treatment technologies and skill sets when there is not the pressure of a natural disaster underpinning it.  More to come on this.

We have received numerous requests over the last few months seeking assistance with relief operators and have provided some linkages to individuals, companies and members with potential capacity to assist.  This [placeholder page](http://www.qldwater.com.au/Queensland_Water_Directory_Relief_Operator_Services) on the web site will soon host contact details for these types of providers, and we encourage you to forward details of anyone you would like to see included.

5.      Equipment sharing

An [additional page](http://www.qldwater.com.au/Queensland_Water_Directory_Equipment_Sharing) has been added to the Queensland Water Directory which is designed to promote the sharing of equipment between interested parties in the water industry.

In brief, recent tours by technical consultants to a number of ***qldwater*** members identified a need for additional basic monitoring and other equipment in some regional and remote locations (e.g. online and portable turbidity meters).  Other members have identified equipment which is excess to requirements but still functional, resulting from decommissioning plant (e.g. fluoride).  There may also be instances where members are interested in jointly procuring equipment in larger quantities in partnership with other members to achieve economies of scale.  While this is not the main focus of this trial, we are happy to distribute the information and build a new process to manage it if there is interest.

So, for those members who have equipment being disposed of which other members could potentially use for their benefit (or for members who are interested in accessing such equipment):

        The ***qldwater*** member database has had a new category added called “equipment sharing.”  An email will be sent to all who have expressed an interest to be part of this process whenever there is a new post, and future e-flashes will also include a summary notification at the bottom where there has been a new post.

        To be included in the distribution, please respond to this e-flash with “Register for equipment sharing” in the email subject.

        To provide details of available equipment, please email to hgold@qldwater.com.au:

(a)    Description of equipment – make, model, age, condition

(b)    Requirements and costs associated with receiving equipment (e.g. must pay for its disassembly, freight etc, purchase price)

        While all attempts will be made to be equitable, in the event there is strong interest for a particular item, the process will in general operate on a “first come first served” basis.

6.      Potential broader promotion and uptake of the SEQ Design and Construction Code

The [Code](http://www.seqcode.com.au/) was developed by a partnership of distribution/ retail service providers in South East Queensland in response to a legislative requirement.  It was gazetted on 1 July 2013 and provides a consistent source of technical standards for the design and construction of new water and sewerage assets, prevailing over any existing council planning schemes.  It builds on national Codes developed by WSAA and is firmly linked to the Asset Design as Constructed framework managed by IPWEAQ.

There are many obvious benefits to consistency.  We would expect that the State’s 30 Year Water Sector Strategy, hopefully to be released soon will strongly encourage this type of initiative.  A number of Councils outside SEQ are already considering adopting the Code.  Given the diversity of approaches State-wide, our technical group has recommended that ***qldwater*** seeks to raise awareness of the Code with members rather than trying to push for broader uptake at this stage.  WSAA has advised that any future versions of national Codes will be strongly influenced by the SEQ Code, so its longevity seems assured.

7.      Future support for members with planning (with the removal of numerous State mandatory plans)

The technical reference group is currently exploring the development of a voluntary planning guideline/ template for the benefit of members.  ***qldwater*** had long advocated a single, simple mandatory planning document to replace DMPs, OWUCMPs, TMPs, SAMPs and so on. With Legislative changes, soon only Customer Service Standards, Drinking Water Quality Management Plans and the new Key Performance Indicator Framework will remain as mandatory requirements administered by DEWS.  Well developed asset planning is still essential for each water service provider and many members have suggested state-wide template/guidelines taking the best from the previous mandatory plans would be useful to them.

The tentatively titled “Water and Sewerage Plan” and “Operational Plan” guideline will be scoped over the coming weeks with a final decision on its future expected in April.

8.      New technologies identified/ big data

The technical reference group periodically receives presentations on new technologies and two will be reviewed at a meeting later this week.  The group is also considering future approaches to data management while we await the release of the 30 year strategy to refine other priorities.

There are a number of existing groups devoted to evaluating new technologies, from WSAA-led technical panels to a relatively recently established Urban Water Research and Development working group.  We have no desire to, nor can we hope to replicate this work with limited resources, however we are in discussions with all of these groups to work out how best to disseminate useful information to members (particularly around the theme of low cost, fit for purpose technologies).

We anticipate a new “technical product update” section to be included in newsletters in 2014 and may trial some presentations at regional events.

For further information, please contact Dave Cameron (dcameron@qldwater.com.au, 0407 761 991)

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**2.  AWA Ozwater’14 - discounted registration**

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The Australian Water Association are offering local government staff **discounted registration** to Ozwater’14, Australia’s International Water Conference and Exhibition. This year’s event will be held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre from 29 April until 1 May 2014 and will once again be the premier event for water industry stakeholders this year.

Included in the discounted registration is:

* Attendance at conference sessions & trade exhibition (Tues, 29 April – Thurs, 1 May)
* Gala Dinner ticket
* Welcome Networking Evening
* Satchel including Program Book
* Access to full papers (available to download online)
* Morning tea & lunch daily
* Afternoon tea (Tuesday & Wednesday only)
* Happy hour (Tuesday, 29 April)
* Closing drinks (Thursday, 30 April)

To take advantage of your discounted registrations, you must register before **Friday, 21 March 2014.** You will not be eligible to utilise the complimentary registrations and social function tickets after this date. When registering for these two tickets, please visit [**www.ozwater.org/localgov**](http://www.ozwater.org/localgov) **and enter this code in the authorisation code field:** **14NATGOVT003X**

*Please note, you will not be able to register via the regular Ozwater website, as it will require payment of the full conference registration fee.*

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