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

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

**(Issue #255 - 31 March 2015)**

**1.   Changes to Meter Installation Legislation**

**2.   Twinning Discussion Paper**

**3.   IWC Water Leadership Program**

**4.   QUICK LINKS – ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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**1.   Changes to Meter Installation Legislation**

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From Hansard Friday 27 March:

“I now turn to the amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008. This government made a commitment at the recent election to restore high standards in Queensland’s plumbing industry. The amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 will realise this election commitment by requiring the installation of water meters to be performed by a licensed plumber. The Plumbing and Drainage and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015 also contains a transitional provision that will allow a person who is currently authorised by a water service provider to install a relevant water meter to continue to perform this work for a period of two years. After the transitional period expires, only a licensed plumber will be able to perform this work. This transitional period is important as it will allow the water sector time to adjust to the new legislative arrangements. I commend the bill to the House.”

We understand that the correct reference should be to the Payroll Tax Rebate, Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 which has now been referred to the Finance and Administration Committees to report back to the House by 22 May.  The legislation is on a path to rapid amendment, subject to other whole government issues which have arisen in the last 48 hours.

***qldwater’s*** position paper on the matter of water meter installation, maintenance and replacement (see e-flash #253) states clear opposition to the legislative amendments, which were put forward as a pre-election policy commitment by the ALP.  This paper was presented to DEWS before the legislation was drafted, however the commitment had already been made.

Consultation on the changes was limited to a few select organisations and plumbing unions.  While the changes are unwelcome, it does not represent a complete return to the ambiguity which existing prior to June 2014, in that it clearly only impacts meter installation – meter maintenance and replacement are not licensed plumbing work under the amendments.

The two year transition period (after which time anyone performing meter installations has to be licensed or an enrolled apprentice operating under supervision) has been included to make the transition more manageable for service providers.

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**2.   Twinning Discussion Paper**

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The ***qldwater*** Technical Reference Group is considering whether to trial a formal program to support remote councils in Queensland by helping them engage more with other larger service providers.

Our industry is particularly good at sharing knowledge and skills in times of natural disasters, but past attempts to establish relationships (outside of regional programs like QWRAP) have led to mixed results.

***qldwater*** regularly receives requests for support; typically when faced with an unusual treatment or other technical issue or critical staff shortage.  Our standard response to requests is to ascertain what expertise is needed and then offer contacts for initial advice, other service providers who may assist or consultants/ contractors.  We are slowly building a resource (The Queensland Water Directory) on our web site based on some of these enquiries.

At this stage we are simply seeking to establish whether there is interest from our membership in establishing a trial program among one or more service providers.

For more information, please visit our website

***Objectives***

*What’s in it for the industry broadly*

-        To fill a gap which currently exists in QWRAP planning for example – there are many locations where even a regional collective of councils will struggle to source the necessary capacity to manage issues.

-        To demonstrate leadership, industry coordination and a culture of support for regional Queensland.

-        A more defined network to improve communication of advice, track expertise and issues.

-        “Formalisation” of industry collaboration/support for increased recognition and more transparent cost recovery.

*What’s in it for small providers*

-        Access to cost effective expertise.

-        Potentially increased comfort with “impartial” advice, rather than being reliant on the sometimes confusing diversity of options offered by consultants.

*What’s in it for large providers*

-        A clear profile with the state – and linkages to other programs including QWRAP.

-        Good news stories to promote to owners/ stakeholders and communities.

-        Potential future commercial/ cost sharing opportunities – an opportunity to promote services including co-investment in existing systems.

To complete the expression of interest form, please visit our website <http://www.qldwater.com.au/reports_position_papers>

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**3.   IWC Water Leadership Program**

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The International WaterCentre (IWC) Water Leadership Program helps emerging leaders to develop the abilities they need to exert influence, drive change and advance challenging integrated water management projects — abilities associated with the most effective integrated water management leaders.

Designed for emerging water leaders at the project to middle management level, this program is customised for the water sector through sound research and collaboration with experienced industry practitioners.

The program focuses on helping leaders to build the leadership abilities (e.g. skills, knowledge and networks), to manage complex challenges, as well as collaborate and exert influence across organisational boundaries.

The next round of the Water Leadership Program will start on 1 December 2015. Apply online by 15 November -  <http://www.watercentre.org/education/leadership>.

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**4.  QUICK LINKS – ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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The Counter-Terrorism Strategic Policy Branch of the Queensland Police Service keeps stakeholders informed with regular updates. This information is updated regularly on our website and is provided on a confidential basis for our members only.  Members must log in first to access this information - <http://www.qldwater.com.au/Counter-terrorism>

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