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

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

**(Issue #371– 28 September 2018)**

**1.   KPIs, Drinking Water Quality Management Plans and cybersecurity**

**2.   Mt Isa legal case**

**3.   What’s coming up in October/ November**

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

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**1.   KPIs, Drinking Water Quality Management Plans and cybersecurity**

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As has been broadly discussed for some time, the Queensland Audit Office undertook an audit focussed on cybersecurity for water utilities in 2016-17.  The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) is ultimately required to include mechanisms to support the management of cybersecurity risks into the existing Annual Performance Report (KPI) Framework, and the Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Guideline – now with a tight deadline under scrutiny from a parliamentary committee.

***qldwater*** has attempted to coordinate industry responses to the proposed changes, including conducting a TRG workshop in June (see [Eflash #358](https://www.qldwater.com.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=241807)).  DNRME has undertaken its own research and engaged consultants to assist in developing a response to the requirements.  A few weeks ago, draft KPIs and a draft addendum for the DWQMP guideline were distributed to a range of industry reference groups for feedback, with a deadline of today for responses.

The department will consider responses with a view to finalising the new provisions in October.  Our consolidated feedback has focussed on a few key principles, based on many discussions with members (and the excellent presentations and discussion from the TRG workshop):

* Acknowledgement that cybersecurity is an issue which does not discriminate between services provided by members – SCADA and OT typically facilitate a range of activities including sewerage services, and the Drinking Water regulatory framework is not a “clean” fit.
* Drinking Water quality is the primary focus for that regulation, and cybersecurity risks should not have elevated prominence over Drinking Water.
* It is important to focus on simplicity – considering an approach to improving KPIs over time, as capacity to address the risks matures.

In consultation with our TRG and others, we have proposed a series of simple KPIs to the department.  Various members have advised that this particular space is evolving rapidly with a number of other federal and state initiatives which have the potential to make the chosen regulatory framework redundant quickly.  There have been strong concerns raised about detailed reporting – both regarding the department’s capacity to deal with information presented as well as the possibility of introducing new cybersecurity risks by having detailed information captured.

***qldwater*** will continue to advocate for improvement in the regulatory approach, and we have commenced development of a range of resources designed to help members, including a discussion paper, fact sheet and checklist to assist with evaluating risk.  We understand the department is also planning support tools for service providers, and there are a range of other resources available, including WSAA’s SCADA guideline (a new version has recently been released but was not available through the WSAA bookshop at the time of writing).

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**2.   Mt Isa legal case**

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[Eflash #343](https://www.qldwater.com.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=237989) referred to a decision made by the Supreme Court with the potential to impact the way water rates are levied/ calculated.

<https://www.sclqld.org.au/caselaw/QCA/2018/222> is the transcript of the appeal which ultimately ruled in favour of Mt Isa City Council, awarding costs.  The decision cites several errors in law, and ultimately supported the position that the water charges originally levied by Council complied with the Local Government Regulation.

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**3.   What’s coming up in October/ November**

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While our event program for 2018 has concluded, we remain busy, with a heap of QWRAP and other meetings recently conducted and planned.  A quick and dirty list of upcoming activities that may be of interest:

* The Technical Advisory Committee established to review the Certificate II and III Water Operations qualifications in the National Water Package will hold its first meeting on **4 October**.  Contact csargent@qldwater.com.au for further information.
* Our Water Industry Worker Technical Reference Group meets on **8 October.**
* The [IPWEAQ State Conference](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/ipweaq-annual-conference-gc-2018/annual-conference-2018) at the Gold Coast will be held from **10-12 October.** Keynote speakers include Michael McQueen, Michael Pascoe and Orange Sky Laundry.
* Our Sewerage and Water Environmental Advisory Panel meets on **16 October.**  The group will work with the Department of Environment and Science in particular to progress a range of industry hot topics, including Sewage Pumping Station conditions, the department’s offsets policy, review of Reef point sources and GBR regulations, biosolids and a range of emerging contaminant issues, waste-related ERAs and new recycled water guidelines under development by the Department of Health.  Contact rfearon@qldwater.com.au for further information.
* The [National Water Taste Test](http://wioa.org.au/awards/national-awards/australias-best-tap-water/) will be held in Toowoomba on **17 October.** This is the chance for Toowoomba’s residents to help 2017 Qld winner Livingstone Shire towards a national title, and receive automatic entry into the 2019 international competition in the US.
* The [LGAQ State Conference](http://www.lgaq.asn.au/events-calendar) takes place in Brisbane **29-31 October**.
* AWA’s [QWater Conference](https://www.awa.asn.au/Shared_Content/Events/Event_Display.aspx?EventKey=QLDQWTR18&WebsiteKey=9dc929a7-973a-452a-8ebd-7ac0870e5ba9) runs **1-2 November** at the Gold Coast.
* The ***qldwater*** Strategic Advisory Committee meets on **7 November**.
* Our Water Skills Partnership meets on **8 November**.
* DNRME is planning another Drinking Water Symposium on **13 November** in Brisbane – more details to follow soon.
* Trade Waste interest day hosted by Livingstone Shire Council **16 November** in Yeppoon.  Contact michael.dalton@livingstone.qld.gov.au for more information.
* Final ***qldwater*** TRG meeting for 2018 on **7 December** in Brisbane.

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**4.   QUICK LINKS – ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS ANNOUNCEMENTS
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**1. FNQ Water Interest Day & Trility Charity Barefoot Bowls**

[**Far North Queensland Water Interest Day & "TRILITY" Charity Barefoot Bowls Day**](https://wioa.org.au/nevent/fnq-wid-bowls/) will be held on Friday 12 October in Cairns.  Registrations will close on Wednesday 10 October 2018 so there is still time to register for this event.

**2. WIOA**

The next [**WIOA Talks Webinar - Research, Treatment to Tap**](https://wioa.org.au/nevent/wioatalksresearch/) will be held on Friday 19 October 2018 online from 11:30am-12:30pm AEDT. The webinar is limited to the first 100 members who register.

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