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

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

**(Issue #306 –  23 December 2016)**

**1.   Automated metering/ digital utilities workshop – Registrations now open**

**2.   WaSP Wars V2 (2017)**

**3.   SWQ Conference Dalby – Call for Papers**

**4.   New COAG Productivity Reform Agreement**

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**1.   Automated Metering/ Digital Utilities Workshop   - Registrations now open**

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After a very positive response to our request for interest, the Automated metering / Digital Utilities Workshop as discussed in 5 December eFlash  #304  is going ahead on 16 February 2017 (the day prior to the first TRG meeting in 2017).

Registrations are now open, please register now online on our [event website](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/automated-metering-digital-utilities/amworkshop).

Further details of the workshop including the draft agenda can also be found on our [event website](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/automated-metering-digital-utilities/amworkshop). Please contact us if you require any further information.

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**2.   WaSP Wars V2 (2017)**

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WaSP Wars, our card game of tactical skill and cunning is being reimagined for our 2017 events and it’s been a while since we’ve done a silly video.  Check it out [here](https://youtu.be/FI-HD7fh-Y8).

We have started working through 15/16 data for the indicators to be used in the game and will endeavour to source a nice infrastructure photo for each member card.  If you have something in particular you’d like to see included on the card for your organisation, please send a high resolution copy and a description of what it is and where to Desiré Gralton, dgralton@qldwater.com.au.

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**3.   SWQ Conference Dalby 1 March 2017 – Call for Papers**

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The ***qldwater*** South West Queensland Conference will be held in Dalby on Wednesday 1 March 2017.  The full day conference is being run in conjunction with the IPWEAQ SWQ Branch Conference being held on 2 and 3 March.

We are calling for SWQ relevant technical and other presentations to fill 20 minute slots.  ***qldwater*** conferences are an informal opportunity for networking, updates on what’s impacting Queensland’s water and sewerage service providers, and technical presentations.

We are particularly interested to hear about interesting projects and technical presentations from members, or organisations that can co-present relevant case studies with members. We aim to make the process as easy as possible: you only need to provide us with a brief outline now and a PowerPoint on the day if accepted.

If you are interested in presenting at this event, please email Heather Gold at hgold@qldwater.com.au.

We would like to thank our event Principal Sponsor Aqseptence Group Pty Ltd, our event Gold Sponsors Lonza Water Treatment Technologies, Royce Water Technologies and Suez Australia & NZ, Silver and Water Connections Tour sponsors Dial Before You Dig as well as our Taste Test and regional event sponsors Ixom.

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**4.   New COAG Productivity Reform Agreement**

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As many of you will have seen, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) have signed the [Intergovernmental Agreement on Competition and Productivity-Enhancing Reforms](http://waterservicesassociationofaustralia.cmail2.com/t/j-l-urjtjyy-xpttclh-r/) following their meeting earlier in December to support “competition and productivity-enhancing reforms is to improve the well-being of all Australians”. Notably, Queensland is not a signatory to the agreement along with Victoria and South Australia.

The purpose of the agreement is to encourage competition and the sorts of micro-economic reform that have been common in many other jurisdictions often driving reform of water and sewerage services. Among many other issues, the agreement specifically mentions water infrastructure (Section 12c) with agreement to “focus on more efficiently and sustainably securing urban water services” and to examine where “improved governance, better economic regulation and a better understanding of where competition can be deployed” (Appendix C, Sections 7 and 8).

The agreement requires all levels of government to be guided by a standard set of competition principles (Section 9). Of specific relevance to the investigations being undertaken by QWRAP groups are:

“d. The model for government provision or procurement of goods and services should separate the interests of policy (including funding), regulation and service provision and where practical encourage a diversity of providers.”,

“e. Governments should separate remaining public monopolies from competitive service elements, and also separate contestable elements into smaller independent business activities.”, and

“h. Independent authorities should set, administer or oversee prices for natural monopoly infrastructure providers.”

There are provisions for financial incentives to be provided by the Federal Government to States and Territories that implement actions that support the objectives of the agreement (Part 5). The success of such agreement is often determined by the nature and quantity of incentive funding so it will be interesting to see how this one affects the signatories and whether other jurisdictions will be under pressure to become parties to the agreement in the future.

A reminder that our office is closed between Christmas and New Year.

Have a safe break, see you on the other side…

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