

WATER TRAINING PACKAGE, HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008 - 2009



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*3rd Annual WIOA NSW Water Industry Engineers & Operators
Conference*

Tamworth Regional Entertainment & Conference Centre

31 March to 2 April, 2009

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Since the endorsement of the latest Water Training Package in 2007, GSA has focused on responding to industry and training providers' feedback and suggestions for improvements to the Training Package, as well as supporting the implementation of the national qualifications through traineeships and learning and assessment resources.

1.0 HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008

1.1 Review of competency standards

Technical advisory groups have been established and have met throughout the year to work on areas of the competencies which need further development. These include:

- ***Dam Safety*** – has split one generic unit of competency into three units in the Certificate III which will form skill sets for embankment and concrete dam monitoring.
- ***Hydrography*** – has developed a complete specialist set of units of competency for the Certificate IV and a skill set for entry level Hydrographers and is investigating certification. This work is assisted by a project grant from the Bureau of Meteorology, and support from the Australian Hydrographers' Association.
- ***Water Quality*** – has developed a suite of specialist competencies for Certificate IV.
- ***Trade Waste*** – has agreed on the selection of electives for this specialisation. This work is undertaken by the WSAA Trade Waste Training Network.
- ***Essential Services Operators*** – have agreed on the selection of electives and have formed an assessment network for moderation and resource sharing. This work has been supported by Reframing the Future.

Minor changes have been made including:

- The inclusion of NWP219A Work safely in confined spaces in the Certificate IV.
- Replacing LGACOM405B OHS unit in the core of Cert IV with BSBOHS303B.
- Correcting unit codes in the trade waste units in the Diploma
- Adjusting the level of responsibility in NWP276A Monitor, operate and report fluoridation systems, replacing systems with processes.
- The development of NWP302A Install meters for non-potable, non-urban water supplies for use in certification by Irrigation Australia.
- The inclusion of four units of competency for planning and designing water distribution and waste water collection systems in the Diploma.
- Imported units have been updated to current versions.

The Case for Endorsement is completing the quality assurance processes before submission to NQC for endorsement and implementation in 2009.

The Technical Advisory Groups have undertaken to continue working on their specialisations in 2009 through on-going networks and through liaison with RTOs, industry and allied projects.

1.2 National Learning Resources

Resources for the Certificate II in Water Operations are in draft form and available on the GSA website for operators who have registered to provide feedback. The project is still keen to have more registrations of interest for the feedback panels. The Cert II resources are expected to be available in early 2009. Development work has also begun on the Cert IV Hydrography learning resources, and will soon begin on the Trade Waste resources. The Technical Advisory Groups will act as advisors to these projects. The development of resources for Certificate III in Water Operations will begin in early 2009.

1.3 Promotion of Traineeships

Government is committed to increasing access to national qualifications through traineeships. GSA's role is to promote a planned approach to developing industry skills through structured training contracts and to encourage employers to invest in future skills through training for recruits and for current employees. This promotional work will continue over 2009-2010.

1.4 Mutual Recognition of Qualification With New Zealand

GSA has begun negotiations with New Zealand on an agreement to have cross Tasman recognition of national qualifications. This objective is supported by the Australian Water Industry Operators Association and the Water Industry Operators Group in New Zealand. GSA plans to have a proposal developed for discussion and endorsement at the WIOA and WIOG conferences in the first half of 2009.

1.5 Review of Industry Advisory Arrangements

The Board of GSA has created a working party to examine and evaluate current advisory arrangement and develop guidelines and protocols for the roles and responsibilities of industry representatives in the GSA decision making forums. Currently, the Water Industry Advisory Committee has nomination from all states and territories, from peak bodies and from trade unions. The committee meets three times a year and is essential in providing advice to GSA on industry interests and training needs, and in promoting the work of GSA with industry constituents.

1.6 Feedback Register

As well as advice from the Water Industry Advisory Committee, and from Technical Advisory Groups, the GSA website allows individuals to communicate any issues with the Training Package or with GSA projects through the feedback register. GSA is required to maintain a record of all feedback and to provide evidence of responses to the feedback. It is always interesting and valuable to hear the issues you have with training and with the quality and relevance of information in the Training Package. There are many sharp-eyed operators and trainers in the industry who report inconsistencies or make suggestions to improve resources and we encourage this to continue.

1.7 Environmental Scan – Skills Needs of the Water Industry

With the current government and media focus on skills needs and shortages, GSA has been gathering information from industry and from reports on the skills needs of the water industry.

During 2008, GSA was represented on the steering committees of the WSAA, and AWA/ICEWaRM skills research projects, and is also represented on the National Water Commission's Skills Forum.

GSA has an important role in pulling together all the existing research data and compiling a report to the Australian Government on training priorities. This advice will guide governments and training providers in the allocation of resources for specific areas of training to address skills needs and shortages. The GSA Workforce Planning Program will have responsibility for liaising between industry and government on where to direct resources to take account of regional needs, specialist skills, cost effective delivery to small demand areas, emerging skills and a new focus on career development of the current workforce through investment in upskilling within organisations.

2.0 CONCLUSION

For more detailed information about any of the GSA projects and activities, we invite you to register on the GSA website. This will give you access to a range of information and will put you on the mailing list for newsletters and project updates.

www.governmentskills.com.au