



Queensland
Water Regional
Alliance Program

Annual Report 2024-25



Queensland
Government



Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program

The Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program (QWRAP) is a Queensland Government funded program delivered collaboratively with LGAQ and Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*) to support local government in the sustainable delivery of essential water and sewerage services in regional Queensland.

57 Councils participating through 9 regional collaborations

QWRAP Regions

- Central Queensland Water and Sewerage Technical Group (CQWSTG)
- Downs Urban Water Technical Group (DUWTG)
- Far North Queensland Water Alliance (FNQWA)
- North Queensland QWRAP (NQ QWRAP)
- North West Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance (NWQWSA)
- Remote Area Planning and Development Water & Sewerage Alliance (RAPADWSA)
- South West Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance (SWQWSA)
- Wide Bay Burnett Urban Water Alliance (WBBUWA)
- Whitsunday, Isaac & Mackay Water Alliance (WIMWA)



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\$1,817,000

Invested in QWRAP by
Department of Local Government,
Water & Volunteers



\$1,648,350

Council cash and in-kind
contributions



Estimate of money
saved through joint
procurement

\$1.5M

9

QWRAP regions work
together to identify and
initiate projects to overcome
or address service challenges

Technical Meetings
and Workshops

61

22

 Strategic Meetings
across the regions

57

QWRAP councils provide



safe drinking water to

1,388,712

Queenslanders



\$136K

Invested in the
Water Industry Worker
Program through QWRAP

19

Projects received bidpool funding

\$910K

Bidpool funding committed



118

Employees enrolled in training
NWP Training and Micro-Credentials

Introduction



The Queensland Water Regional Alliances Program (QWRAP) continues to be a cornerstone initiative in strengthening the delivery of drinking water and sewerage services across regional and remote Queensland.

As a collaborative partnership between the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers (DLGWV), the Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*), the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), and participating local councils, QWRAP is designed to foster innovation, efficiency, and resilience in water service provision.

Queensland's vast geography and decentralised population present unique challenges for drinking water and sewerage services. With over 370 public water supplies—many of which are small and isolated—ensuring safe, secure, and sustainable services requires tailored regional collaboration. Outside of South East Queensland, 66 local governments are responsible for delivering these essential services. Through QWRAP, many of these councils have come together to share expertise, align standards, and jointly tackle infrastructure, workforce, and governance challenges.

In 2024–25, QWRAP supported 57 Councils in regional Queensland, across nine alliances, each working to address local priorities while contributing to broader state-wide outcomes.

These regions include:

- Central Queensland Water and Sewerage Technical Group (CQWSTG)
- Downs Urban Water Technical Group (DUWTG)
- Far North Queensland Water Alliance (FNQWA)
- North Queensland QWRAP (NQ QWRAP)
- North West Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance (NWQWSA)
- Remote Area Planning and Development Board Water and Sewerage Alliance
- South West Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance (SWQWSA)
- Whitsunday Isaac Mackay Water Alliance (WIMWA)
- Wide Bay Burnett Urban Water Alliance (WBBUWA)

Each alliance has made significant strides in regional planning, joint procurement, workforce development, and infrastructure resilience. The following pages provide a snapshot of achievements, challenges, and strategic priorities for each region, highlighting the collective impact of QWRAP across Queensland.



QWRAP Projects Approved in FY 24-25

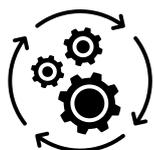
During the FY 24-25 period, 19 new projects were initiated, with \$910,701 committed in bid pool funding. These projects reflect a strong focus on regional collaboration, operational improvement, and strategic planning.

QWRAP-Funded Projects supports a diverse range of initiatives aimed at strengthening regional collaboration, improving service delivery, and building operational capability across Queensland councils including:



Operator Development

Training forums, exchanges, and manuals to build workforce capability.



Strategic Planning

Workshops and frameworks to align regional goals and improve service delivery.



Customer Service

Development of standardised charters for consistent service expectations.



Asset Assessment

Condition assessments of key infrastructure (e.g. lagoons, AC mains, pump stations)



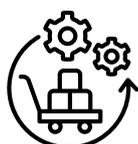
Water Security & Drought Resilience

Projects addressing source water integrity, planning, and loss management



Technology & Innovation

Smart meters, AI monitoring, and digital tools to enhance operations



Joint Procurement

Coordinated purchasing for services like bore inspections, sewer relining, and Drinking Water Quality Management Plan (DWQMP) audits



Sustainability & Collaboration

Regional initiatives focused on long-term skills, asset, and financial sustainability.

Table 1 provides an overview of the projects completed and/or commenced during this FY.

Table 1: Projects completed and/or in progress during the 24-25FY

Alliance	Project Details	Program Funding (ex GST)
NQ-QWRAP	Operator Training Forum (COMPLETED) Bringing together operators from across the region to travel to Townsville for a day of training, networking, and tours.	\$7,640.00
	Strategic Pathway (COMPLETED) A workshop facilitator engaged to support the technical committee in planning 2025, including strategical alignment with NQROC.	\$5,500.00
	Operator Exchanges 2024-2025 (IN PROGRESS) Operators travel to visit neighbouring councils. A technical forum will be used to capture best practices and improvements, which can then be brought back and implemented at home operations.	\$12,395.00
NWQWSA	Customer Service Standards Charter (COMPLETED) A customer service standards charter will be created that individual councils can customise for their own use.	\$10,800.00
	Lagoon Desludging Pre-assessment (IN PROGRESS) The region has identified a common challenge with sludge lagoons operating at full capacity. This project provides project management to coordinate baseline lagoon assessments, including sludge characteristics and volume. The reports generated will guide the next steps for renewing these assets.	\$27,038.00
	AC Mains Condition Assessment (IN PROGRESS) A study of asbestos cement drinking water mains. This will include the identification of risks, with recommendations for priority maintenance or replacement.	\$27,037.50
	Sewer Pump Station Condition Assessment (IN PROGRESS) In- field assessment of sewer assets including a final report to identify risks, with recommendations for priority maintenance or replacement activities.	\$41,175.00
	Drought Resiliency (IN PROGRESS) Improve urban water security, drought resilience, and asset management by addressing source water infrastructure integrity, drought planning, water loss management, and asset conditions.	\$120,000.00
WIMWA	BNR Training (COMPLETED) Operators will travel to attend industry-leading training in biological nutrient removal to be better equipped to produce high-quality effluent at wastewater treatment facilities.	\$29,232.00

Alliance	Project Details	Program Funding (ex GST)
WIMWA (Continued)	Smart Meter Playbook (IN PROGRESS) A service provider will be engaged to develop a smart meter playbook, providing guidance for smart meter deployment.	\$33,300.00
	WIW Guidelines Manual (IN PROGRESS) A water industry worker training manual will be produced, detailing how training is aggregated across the region with streamlined collaboration with RTOs. The work will also assess current practices for continuous improvement opportunities and implementation, enabling statewide use.	\$42,000.00
	Sewer Monitoring Artificial Intelligence Tool (IN PROGRESS) Smart Sensor installation and AI to improve wet weather overflow management, reduce inflow and infiltration, and optimise capital infrastructure upgrades.	\$74,500.00
RAPADWSA	Bore Inspection (IN PROGRESS) A regional joint procurement project which will enable participating councils to inspect source water bore heads using CCTV camera inspection. This work includes the includes project management and reporting elements.	\$26,302.50
	DWQMP Audits and Review (IN PROGRESS) Joint procurement of external audits for Drinking Water Quality Management Plans (DWQMPs). By aligning schedules and pooling resources, the project reduces costs, strengthens regional collaboration, and improves access to specialised expertise.	\$41,175.00
SWQWSA	Sewer Relining (IN PROGRESS) A regional procurement project providing a pathway that targets quality service providers and leverages economies of scale, which has been shown to save money on the cost of relining projects.	\$27,652.50
	DWQMP Audits and Review (IN PROGRESS) Joint procurement of external audits for Drinking Water Quality Management Plans (DWQMPs). By aligning schedules and pooling resources, the project reduces costs, strengthens regional collaboration, and improves access to specialised expertise.	\$48,568.50
	Lagoon de-sludging pre-assessment The NWQWSA lagoon de-sludging project aims to coordinate baseline lagoon assessments, including sludge characteristics and volume. The reports generated will guide the next steps for renewing these assets.	\$6,615.00
CQWSTG	Asset Maintenance Collaborative Initiative (IN PROGRESS) Standardisation of job specifications and maintenance practices for key water and sewer assets operated by councils.	\$59,770.00
	Combined Project - Financial Sustainability (IN PROGRESS) Comprehensive strategic assessment of the region's water and waste-water services in the areas of skills, assets and financial sustainability.	\$270,000.00
Sub-Total		\$910,701.00

Other QWRAP Projects Completed in FY 24-25

Several QWRAP projects funded in previous financial years reached completion during FY24-25, demonstrating continued progress in workforce development, strategic planning, and service improvement.

Completed projects include:

Region	Title	Committed
FNQWA	FNQ Regional Water Capability Plan The FNQ Capability Plan is a staged initiative to address key challenges in water and wastewater services by identifying capability gaps, developing targeted solutions, and implementing prioritised actions to improve regional performance and sustainability.	\$200,000.00
NWQWSA, RAPADWSA, SWQWSA	Western Queensland Alliances Travel Expenditure Due to the vast size and remoteness of Outback Queensland, travel costs for regional coordination are significantly higher. The NW-QWRAP, RAPADWSA, and SWQWSA alliances jointly submitted a bid for additional travel funding.	\$53,215.20
NWQWSA	Harmonisation of Processes Project aimed to strengthen water management services by improving efficiency, consistency, and service quality across councils, while also supporting better governance, regulatory compliance, and service delivery.	\$36,000.00
WBBUWA	Water Industry Skills Enhancement Project Project mapping training needs across regional treatment plants in WBBUWA councils, identifying skill gaps to inform a potential statewide training needs analysis.	\$35,032.23
WBBUWA	Design and Construct Code Update Major update to WBBUWA Design and Construction Codes, delivering a collaboratively developed standard that improves consistency, asset quality, and efficiency across councils, developers, and suppliers.	\$27,740.00
TOTAL		\$351,987.43

Regional Coordinators

An annual funding pool of up to \$315,000 (excluding GST) is available to support QWRAP Regional Coordinators, with a maximum of \$35,000 (excluding GST) allocated per alliance.

This funding is intended to subsidise costs associated with regional coordination, including:

- Administrative and project management
- Strategic leadership, including policy development and funding identification

The Regional Coordinator facilitates collaboration across member councils by managing QWRAP activities, providing strategic advice, convening alliance meetings, supporting regional project delivery, and promoting shared initiatives such as joint procurement and resource sharing.

Regional Coordinator Role

- Organise and report on QWRAP meetings
- Support project development and reporting
- Promote regional collaboration
- Ensure clear advice to councils & stakeholders on QWRAP matters

In the FY24–25, \$315,000 was allocated to support QWRAP alliance regional coordinators. All nine QWRAP alliances submitted payment claims, fully utilising the available budget. Notably, FNQWA and DUWTG submitted claims for regional coordinator funding for the first time during this financial year, marking a significant step in their regional coordination efforts.



QWRAP Chairs and Coordinators along with program managers from DLGWV, the LGAQ and *qldwater* came together for the 2025 Chairs & Coordinators Forum in August 2025.

Coordinator Spotlight: Pippa Sullivan

When Pippa Sullivan stepped into the role of Regional Coordinator for the Downs Urban Water Technical Group (DUWTG), she brought with her a fresh perspective, a can-do attitude, and a genuine passion for collaboration. A professional engineer with GenEng Solutions, Pippa's background in agricultural engineering and planning is now expanding into the operational side of water management—thanks to her involvement in QWRAP.

“I've never done operational water, but the whole point of being an engineer is you always get to do new things. So, when someone says, ‘Hey, do you want to do this?’ I generally say, ‘Yes!’”

Pippa took the reins at a pivotal time for DUWTG, as the group emerged from a period of inactivity. Her enthusiasm has helped reinvigorate the region, fostering renewed collaboration and momentum—even in the absence of formally funded projects.

One standout example of this collaboration came when Southern Downs Regional Council faced an urgent issue at their activated sludge wastewater treatment plant. Toowoomba Regional Council stepped in, providing sludge from the Wetalla digester within 24 hours to re-seed the system.



This spirit of cooperation is driving DUWTG's priorities, including joint procurement, emergency response planning, and knowledge sharing. A multi-year sewer relining contract is high on the agenda, along with a practical initiative to catalogue mobile plant and equipment for emergency use.

With Pippa at the helm, DUWTG is poised for a new chapter of collaboration, innovation, and shared success.

[Read more.](#)

Coordinator Spotlight: Janice Wilson

Janice Wilson's journey to becoming the Coordinator of the Whitsunday Isaac Mackay Water Alliance (WIMWA) is as dynamic and inspiring as the ambitious projects she now leads. With a background rooted in engineering and a passion for community-focused water management, Janice has become a pivotal figure in one of Queensland's most progressive regional water alliances.

Raised on a dairy farm in Québec with a commercial maple syrup operation, Janice's early exposure to reverse osmosis systems sparked a curiosity that eventually led her into engineering, despite an initial detour into sports medicine. Her career path has been shaped by global experiences, from wastewater system design in Asia to water management roles in mining across the Pacific. But it was a milestone opportunity with Mackay Regional Council that truly aligned her professional values with community impact, setting the stage for her current leadership role.

Since stepping into the QWRAP Coordinator position over a year ago, Janice has streamlined processes and set the WIMWA on a clear path to success. Working closely with Chair Michael Gallagher, Janice has helped shape the strategic vision: “Think globally, act regionally, deliver locally.” Together, they focus on building collective capabilities, demonstrating



leadership, and developing unified positions on shared challenges.

As one of the first QWRAP regions, the WIMWA boasts a bold and diverse portfolio of initiatives, securing bidpool funding to tackle skills and training through the expansion of the Water Industry Worker program, technology focused sewer data monitoring, network and treatment monitoring programs, including SCADA systems integration and developing a Smart Water Meter Playbook to help guide other water service providers and QWRAP regions through the process of a smart meter rollout.

These efforts reflect the Alliance's commitment to innovation, collaboration, and regional resilience.

[Read more.](#)



QWRAP
Regional Updates

Remote Area Planning & Development Board Water and Sewer Alliance (RAPADWSA)



Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program



Coordinator:

Matt Brennan



Chair:

André Pretorius



- 7 councils
- 19 communities
- 0.19% of Queensland's population
- 22.94% of Queensland's landmass
- \$67,477 QWRAP funding committed
- 2 New Projects FY 24/25

In 2024–25, RAPADWSA continued to lead regional collaboration in Central Western Queensland, delivering strategic infrastructure projects, advancing governance, and building operational capacity across its seven member councils. As the first QWRAP alliance to form, RAPADWSA operates at a high level of collaboration maturity with a strong track record in joint procurement and shared service delivery.

Key achievements this year included:

- **Reservoir Cleaning Project:** Inspection and cleaning of 35 reservoirs across multiple councils, improving water quality and identifying safety risks such as radiofrequency radiation exposure. This led to the development of a new safety training program.
- **Water Mains Air Scouring Project:** Delivered in five stages, this initiative enhanced drinking water quality and demonstrated successful cross-alliance collaboration with NWQWRAP, SWQWSA, and WBBUWA.
- **Certificate III in Water Industry Operations:** Nine council staff completed nationally accredited training, strengthening local workforce capability and succession planning.

Strategic initiatives progressed include:

- **Asset Data Collection Project:** Completed mapping of ageing infrastructure to inform future planning and investment.

- **Infrastructure Cliff Project:** Developed a risk-based framework to identify and prioritise critical assets nearing end-of-life.
- **Bore and Borehead Inspection Program:** Initiated condition assessments of century-old groundwater assets.
- **DWQMP Audit Coordination:** Began aligning audit timelines across councils to streamline regulatory compliance.
- **Strategic Plan and Governance:** Finalised the alliance's Memorandum of Understanding and Constitution and developed a draft Strategic Plan to guide future collaboration and investment.

RAPADWSA's projects delivered tangible benefits including improved water quality, operational efficiency, and cost savings through joint procurement. Intangible benefits included enhanced regional self-sufficiency, stronger governance, and increased workforce resilience.

With a clear strategic direction, robust governance, and a commitment to collaborative service delivery, RAPADWSA remains a model for regional water management under the QWRAP framework.



Coordinator:
Janice Wilson
Elected July 2024



Chair:
Kylie Rogers
Elected November 2025



Banker:
GWCoM



The Whitsunday Isaac Mackay Water Alliance (WIMWA) continued to demonstrate high levels of collaboration and strategic leadership throughout 2024–25. Despite challenges including staff turnover and resource constraints, the Alliance delivered key projects, strengthened governance, and expanded regional capacity.

Key achievements this year included:

- Smart Water Meter Playbook and Water Industry Worker (WIW) Procedures Manual projects, advancing regional standardisation and workforce development.
- Continued success of the WIW Training Framework, hosted by Mackay Regional Council, now supporting multiple QWRAP regions and recognised as a model for cross-regional collaboration.
- Establishment of sub-working groups focused on Smart Sewer, Assets, and Third Party Network Monitoring, enhancing technical cooperation and shared problem-solving.
- Formalisation of succession planning through the creation of a Chair Elect role, ensuring leadership continuity.

Governance and coordination were strengthened through:

- Active engagement with the Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors (GWCoM).

- Quarterly meetings and an annual forum, supported by over 1,200 in-kind labour hours from council and partner staff.
- Reappointment of Regional Coordinator Janice Wilson, who received high performance ratings across all KPIs.

Strategic planning progressed with updates to the Alliance’s Terms of Reference and continued alignment with QWRAP priorities. The Alliance also contributed to broader sector development through participation in QWRAP Chairs and Coordinators forums and shared learnings with other regions.

Material benefits included cost savings through joint procurement, improved water quality, and enhanced operational efficiency. Intangible benefits such as strengthened professional relationships, shared expertise, and regional self-sufficiency were also evident.

WIMWA remains a leader in regional water collaboration, with a strong foundation for continued innovation, strategic alignment, and service improvement across the Greater Whitsunday Region.

Wide Bay Burnett Urban Water Alliance (WBBUWA)



Queensland
Water Regional
Alliance Program

Coordinator:

Colin Hester



Chair:

Steve Carroll



- 6 councils
- 39 communities
- 5.44% of Queensland's population
- 2.81% of Queensland's landmass
- 2 completed projects
- No new projects this FY
- \$0 this FY

The Wide Bay Burnett Urban Water Alliance (WBBUWA) continued to demonstrate strong regional collaboration and technical leadership throughout 2024–25, delivering impactful projects and advancing strategic initiatives across its member councils. With full participation from all councils, WBBUWA maintained a high level of engagement, contributing to improved service delivery, workforce capability, and infrastructure planning.

Key achievements included:

- **Water Industry Skills Enhancement Project:** Delivered micro-credentials training in Drinking Water Quality Management Plans and Water Data, supporting workforce development and operational excellence.
- **Design and Construction Code Update:** Finalised revisions to the former WBBRoC Code, now the WBBUWA Code, improving consistency, asset longevity, and procurement efficiency across the region.
- **Sewer Relining and Manhole Maintenance Program:** Continued under a long-standing Memorandum of Understanding, streamlining procurement and ensuring high-quality asset rehabilitation.
- **DWQMP Audits:** Coordinated collective procurement and scheduling of audits, reducing costs and easing regulatory burden.

- **Training Needs Analysis:** Mapped competencies against treatment assets to identify skill gaps, informing future training programs and supporting statewide rollout.
- **Trade Waste Uplift Project:** Initiated a regional interest group and drafted a model Trade Waste Management Plan and Loading Report, with broad support across Queensland.

Governance and engagement were maintained through quarterly meetings, chaired by Steve Carroll (South Burnett RC) and coordinated by Colin Hester. Formal agendas, minutes, and communications ensured transparency and alignment with council leadership.

Strategic maturity was reflected in WBBUWA's proactive approach to regional planning, standardisation, and workforce development. The alliance's collaborative efforts continue to deliver tangible benefits in cost savings, service quality, and regulatory compliance, while fostering a resilient and skilled regional water workforce.

WBBUWA remains a model for voluntary collaboration under QWRAP, demonstrating the value of shared expertise, coordinated action, and regional leadership in water and sewerage service delivery.

Downs Urban Water Technical Group (DUWTG)



Queensland
Water Regional
Alliance Program

Coordinator:

Pippa Sullivan



Chair:

Graham Sweetlove



- 4 councils
- 33 communities
- 4.55% of Queensland's population
- 4.48% of Queensland's landmass

The 2024–25 financial year marked a significant milestone for the Downs Urban Water Technical Group (DUTWG) with the successful re-establishment of the group and the appointment of a new Regional Coordinator, Pippa Sullivan, in September 2024. This revitalisation has laid the groundwork for renewed collaboration and strategic planning among member councils.

Over the reporting period, DUTWG convened four meetings—three online and one in-person—demonstrating a strong commitment to regional engagement despite challenges such as the postponement of the March meeting due to Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. The group's first in-person meeting in December 2024 was a key moment, setting the tone for future collaboration.

A major focus of the year was reviewing historical projects and lessons learned to inform the group's strategic direction. This reflective approach enabled DUTWG to identify priority areas and develop a list of potential projects for future implementation. While no QWRAP bid pool applications were submitted this year, the groundwork has been laid for future project delivery.

Key collaborative achievements included:

- Resource sharing across councils, such as the transfer of activated sludge to support wastewater treatment operations.
- Joint procurement for the auditing of Drinking Water Quality Management Plans, enhancing efficiency and consistency.
- Mutual support through letters of endorsement for external funding applications.

The group's governance remains strong, with active participation from Southern Downs, Goondiwindi, Western Downs, Toowoomba, and Maranoa Regional Councils. The Regional Coordinator successfully met administrative and support KPIs, including meeting coordination, stakeholder engagement, and communication with regulatory bodies.

While DUTWG's regional maturity is still developing, the foundations laid this year signal promising growth ahead. With a clear strategic direction and renewed momentum, DUTWG is well-positioned to deliver impactful regional water and sewerage initiatives in the coming year.

South West Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance (SWQWSA)



Queensland
Water Regional
Alliance Program

Coordinator:

Matt Brennan



Chair:

Jacob Barton



- 6 councils
- 26 communities
- 0.44% of Queensland's population
- 18.46% of Queensland's landmass
- 3 New Projects
- \$82,836 QWRAP Funding



In 2024–25, SWQWSA continued to strengthen its regional collaboration and technical capacity, delivering key infrastructure projects, advancing workforce development, and enhancing cross-alliance partnerships. The alliance remains a leader in coordinated drinking water and sewerage service delivery across South West Queensland.

Key achievements included:

- Completion of the SWQWSA Infrastructure Strategy, a region-wide assessment of asset condition and risk, culminating in a 10-year capital investment plan to guide future funding and renewal priorities. QWRAP funding support for a Project Manager to prepare a Building Our Regions (BoR) submission.
- Launch of the SWQWSA Sewer Relining Project, targeting critical sewer infrastructure across Balonne and Murweh Shires, with delivery underway through a joint procurement model.
- Delivery of the Water Operators Forum (Feb 2025) in Charleville, fostering peer learning and standard operating procedure development.
- Certificate III in Water Industry Operations training completed by 19 staff across six councils, enhancing operational capability and workforce retention.

Ongoing initiatives:

- DWQMP Audit and Review Program, streamlining regulatory compliance through coordinated audits and plan updates.

- GIS Options Analysis, exploring a unified digital platform to support regional asset management and planning.
- Collaborative Enhancement Initiative, including a graduate engineer program and a technical exchange with the Downs Urban Water Technical Group.
- Participation in cross-alliance projects, such as the RAPADWSA-led Reservoir Cleaning and Water Mains Air Scouring, and the NWQWRAP Lagoon Desludging Pre-Assessment.

Governance and engagement remained strong, with regular Technical and Strategic Group meetings and over 1,200 hours of in-kind contributions from member councils. The Regional Coordinator achieved top ratings across all KPIs, supporting project delivery, reporting, and strategic facilitation.

SWQWSA's achievements this year reflect a deepening of regional self-sufficiency, improved infrastructure planning, and a commitment to collaborative service delivery. The alliance is well-positioned to continue driving innovation, resilience, and efficiency in water and sewerage management across the region.

Far North Queensland Water Alliance (FNQWA)



Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program

Coordinator:

Amanda Hancock



Chair:

Darlene Irvine



- 11 councils
- 43 communities
- 4.83% of Queensland's population
- 14.36% of Queensland's landmass
- 1 Project
- \$200K QWRAP Funding

The Far North Queensland Water Alliance (FNQWA) continues to demonstrate strong regional collaboration and strategic leadership in water and sewerage service delivery across twelve member councils. In 2024–25, the Alliance formalised its coordination arrangements with the appointment of Amanda Hancock as Regional Coordinator, reinforcing its commitment to long-term planning and operational excellence.

A major achievement this year was the completion and endorsement of the Regional Water Capability Plan; a comprehensive strategy developed with support from expert consultants and Jobs Queensland. Endorsed by the FNQROC Board in December 2024, the plan outlines strategic priorities and initiatives to uplift water business capability across the region over the next decade.

Key projects and activities aligned with the Capability Plan include:

- **Regional Leak Detection Arrangement:** Joint procurement to improve demand management, excluding Cairns and Yarrabah due to existing arrangements.
- **Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Audits:** Coordinated audits to optimise costs and ensure compliance.
- **Regional Sewer Relining:** Continued joint procurement efforts, now expanded to include manhole rehabilitation.

- **Biosolids Dewatering Options Analysis:** A regional study to identify sustainable and cost-effective biosolids management solutions.
- **Trade Waste Environmental Management Plan:** Development of a regional plan under the Trade Waste Uplift Project (Trade Waste Interest Group).

The FNQWA operates under a robust governance structure, with active participation from technical leaders, CEOs, and mayors across member councils. The group has matured significantly since its inception in 2011 and maintains a strong presence in QWRAP, having successfully delivered multiple bid pool projects.

Coordinator KPIs for administration, support, project delivery, reporting, and strategic facilitation have been clearly defined and are actively pursued.

The Alliance's proactive approach to regional procurement, regulatory engagement, and capability building positions it as a model for collaborative water service delivery in Queensland.

North Queensland QWRAP (NQ QWRAP)



Queensland
Water Regional
Alliance Program

Coordinator:
Jeff Ballard



Chair:
Julian Tickle



- 5 councils
- 13 communities
- 4.33% of Queensland's population
- 4.63% of Queensland's landmass
- 3 New Projects
- \$25,535 QWRAP Funding

The North Queensland QWRAP (NQ QWRAP) alliance continued to strengthen regional collaboration and technical capacity across its five member councils—Townsville, Burdekin, Charters Towers, Hinchinbrook, and Palm Island—despite significant weather disruptions in early 2025. The group held five meetings throughout the year, with one cancelled due to flooding, and maintained strong engagement through rotating host councils and active participation from key stakeholders.

Key achievements in 2024–25 included the successful delivery of the Operators Forum and Site Visit and the completion of the Strategic Pathways Project, both of which advanced regional skills development and strategic planning. The Regional Standards Project also progressed significantly, offering a potential model for broader adoption of enhanced SEQ codes.

The alliance initiated several new projects, including:

- An Operator Training Forum, bringing together operators from across the region in Townsville for a day of training, networking and a site tour
- A workshop to support the technical committee in developing a strategic pathway aligned with NQROC.

The group also developed a forward-looking Major Projects Plan (2025–2028), identifying future priorities such as sewer relining, asbestos pipeline management, and regional asset data standardisation.

Governance remained strong, with leadership transitioning smoothly between councils. Jeff Ballard continued as Regional Coordinator, meeting all administrative and reporting KPIs, and facilitating three successful bid pool applications. The group also contributed an estimated 684 hours of in-kind support across meetings, project participation, and leadership roles.

Two projects were completed, and several others are in development or planning stages.

With a growing portfolio of collaborative initiatives and a clear strategic direction, NQ QWRAP is well-positioned to deliver impactful outcomes in water and sewerage service delivery across North Queensland.

North West Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance (NWQWSA)



Queensland
Water Regional
Alliance Program

Coordinator:

Matt Brennan



Chair:

Michael Wanrooy



- 8 councils
- 16 communities
- 0.53% of Queensland's population
- 17.71% of Queensland's landmass
- 5 Active Projects
- \$226,050 QWRAP Funding

In 2024–25, NWQWSA demonstrated significant progress in regional collaboration, strategic planning, and infrastructure resilience across North West Queensland. Comprising nine local councils, the alliance delivered a suite of impactful initiatives aimed at improving water and sewerage services in remote communities.

Key achievements included:

- Completion of the Skills Gap and Training Needs Assessment in partnership with TRILITY, supporting workforce development and succession planning.
- Launch of the Lagoon Desludging Pre-Assessment Project, involving eight NWQWSA councils and Quilpie Shire Council from SWQWSA, showcasing cross-alliance collaboration.
- Delivery of the Customer Service Standards Charter, providing a regional template to enhance service consistency and regulatory alignment.
- Progress under the Harmonisation of Processes program, including DWQMP audit alignment, supplier list reviews, and public notice standardisation.
- Initiation of asset resilience projects, including AC Mains and Sewer Pump Station Condition Assessments, now in scoping and tender preparation phases.

- Commencement of the North West Drought Management and Water Security Initiative, a multi-stream program addressing climate resilience, water loss reduction, and infrastructure planning.

NWQWSA also contributed to broader regional efforts through participation in RAPADWSA-led Reservoir Cleaning and Water Mains Air Scouring projects, improving water quality and operational performance.

Governance was strengthened through the formation of a Strategic Group and the development of a draft Strategic Plan, aligning alliance activities with long-term regional goals. The alliance logged over 220 hours of strategic and technical input from member councils, reflecting deep engagement and commitment under the leadership of past Chair Stephen Jewell, who retired this year.

Coordinator KPIs were met or exceeded across administration, support, project delivery, reporting, and strategic facilitation. Financially, NWQWSA managed multiple bid pool-funded projects, with material and intangible benefits including cost savings, improved service delivery, and enhanced regional self-sufficiency.

NWQWSA's achievements in 2024–25 position it as a leader in collaborative water management, with a clear trajectory toward higher maturity and sustained regional impact.

Central Queensland Water and Sewerage Technical Group (CQWSTG)



Queensland
Water Regional
Alliance Program



Coordinator:

Scott Mason



Chair:

Mark Francis



- 6 councils
- 31 communities
- 4.13% of Queensland's population
- 6.8% of Queensland's landmass
- 2 Projects
- \$329,770 QWRAP Funding

The Central Queensland Water and Sewerage Technical Group (CQW&STG) navigated a challenging yet transformative year in 2024–25, marked by renewed strategic clarity and strengthened governance. While meeting frequency and project delivery were occasionally impacted, the group emerged with a clearer focus and stronger collaboration in managing regional water and sewerage services.

CQW&STG held four meetings during the year, fostering dialogue among its six member councils: Gladstone Regional Council, Livingstone Shire Council, Rockhampton Regional Council, Woorabinda Aboriginal Shire Council, Banana Shire Council, and Central Highlands Regional Council. The group is chaired by Mark Francis (Gladstone RC), with Scott Mason serving as Regional Coordinator.

Early enthusiasm led to the development of an ambitious work plan, which included projects across asset management, workforce planning, biosolids management, and regional service models. Although implementation was paused, the group used this time to reassess priorities and build consensus, laying the groundwork for future success.

Key achievements and developments include:

- Regional collaboration continues to strengthen, with two joint projects advancing efforts to improve water and sewerage service delivery across participating councils including an Asset Maintenance Collaborative Initiative to standardise job specification and maintenance practices, and a combined sustainability project relating to skills, assets and financial sustainability.

- Strategic project planning, with a comprehensive list of proposed initiatives including water security, SCADA upgrades, sewer relining, reservoir refurbishment, and coordinated Drinking Water Quality Management Plan (DWQMP) reviews.
- Governance improvements, with consistent communication between the Regional Coordinator and CQROC leadership, and fulfillment of all Coordinator KPIs.
- Project planning. Two strategic planning projects—Asset Maintenance Collaborative Initiative, and the Combined Sustainability Project—have been approved and are progressing well to support improved regional coordination and long-term service planning.

QWRAP Stories



CQWSTG Champions Regional Collaboration in Asset Maintenance

In a significant step toward strengthening water infrastructure resilience, the Central Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance has spearheaded the formation of a Regional Maintenance Planning Networking Group.

This initiative, launched in 2024, brings together key asset managers from Central Highlands, Livingstone, and Banana Shire Councils, with strong collaboration from Mackay and Isaac Regional Councils.

Good asset maintenance strategies will extend asset life. The implementation of proactive maintenance strategies will ensure that pressures on Councils capital budgets and the State's grant programs are minimised.

The maintenance planning group was established with a clear mission: to foster knowledge sharing, develop unified strategies for asset longevity, and enhance maintenance practices across the region. By pooling expertise and resources, the councils aim to deliver more efficient and effective asset management outcomes for their communities.

In May 2025, the group's efforts were bolstered by the approval of a QWRAP Bid Pool Application, unlocking funding for three cornerstone projects:

- 1. Best-in-Class Training in Asset Management and Maintenance**
Secure an asset management expert to deliver a tailored two-day course designed specifically for the Queensland water sector .
- 2. Quarterly Regional Maintenance Planning Group Meetings**
These sessions will serve as a platform for continuous knowledge exchange, enabling councils to stay aligned on best practices and emerging trends in asset maintenance.
- 3. Development of a QWRAP Asset Maintenance Guide**
This guide will establish a shared standard for asset maintenance across the region, promoting consistency, efficiency, and industry leadership.



SWQWSA Aligns DWQMP Audits for Regional Efficiency and Compliance

In a landmark achievement for regional collaboration, the South West Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance (SWQWSA) successfully delivered a coordinated Drinking Water Quality Management Plan (DWQMP) Audit project across six member councils: Balonne, Bulloo, Maranoa, Murweh, Paroo, and Quilpie. This initiative exemplifies the power of strategic alignment and joint procurement in driving efficiency and regulatory compliance.

The DWQMP Audit project was initiated in response to a recommendation from the Department of Local Government, Water & Volunteers in late 2023. SWQWSA aimed to:

- Align DWQMP audit timelines across councils
- Ensure compliance with the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*
- Standardise audit methodology and reporting
- Build internal capability and strengthen regional collaboration

From 2021 to 2025, SWQWSA worked diligently to align audit due dates, overcoming challenges such as differing council cycles, CEO approvals, and flooding delays. The Water Supply Regulation (the Regulator) approved a unified audit deadline of 1 July 2025, streamlining scheduling and enabling joint procurement.

Viridis Consultants Pty Ltd was awarded the contract through a competitive tender process. The joint procurement model delivered cost savings of 17–21% compared to individual audits, thanks to shared

mobilisation and reduced duplication.

Site visits were conducted between April and May 2025, with final reports submitted by July. The audits assessed:

- Accuracy of monitoring and performance data
- Compliance with DWQMP conditions
- Relevance of the DWQMP

Findings showed strong compliance in risk management and incident response, but highlighted areas for improvement in operational monitoring, documentation, and record keeping.

The project reinforced SWQWSA's commitment to regional cooperation and continuous improvement. Key recommendations include:

- Implementing a shared document management system
- Formalising regional training programs
- Exploring joint procurement for technical services and equipment

This success story demonstrates how regional alliances like SWQWSA can lead the way in delivering smarter, more resilient water management solutions for Queensland communities.



FNQWA Learns From Douglas Shire Council's Disaster Recovery



In December 2023, TC Jasper brought catastrophic rainfall and landslides to the Douglas Shire Council (DSC) region, recording 3.2 metres of rain in a single week.

The disaster caused major disruptions to water supply systems, with landslides severely impacting raw water intakes and turbidity levels overwhelming existing treatment plant capacities. Pipe breaks, valve and network failures, flooding, and infrastructure damage led to extensive service interruptions.

DSC's proactive and comprehensive response, led by Manager Water and Wastewater Ben Baillie, has resulted in a series of recovery and resilience-building actions, including:

- Interconnector pipelines to improve network redundancy and service continuity.
- Plant upgrades and membrane replacements to enhance treatment capacity.
- Leak detection surveys identifying over 1 Megalitre per day of water loss in Council infrastructure.
- Network asset maintenance activities including improved valve operation and control.
- Installation of emergency reserve tanks and mobile potable water tanks to improve emergency water access.
- Community-wide education programs promoting water conservation and reduced consumption (with a recorded 12% demand reduction in key service areas).

These recovery efforts are not only rebuilding physical infrastructure but are also strengthening long-term planning and operational resilience - critical attributes for effective asset management and the delivery of essential services to the community.

DSC's experience underscores the interconnectedness of disaster preparedness, operational resilience, and strategic asset management and highlights the critical importance of funding to undertake a condition assessment program that will provide essential intelligence for renewal investment planning.

By using available asset management information, and tools developed by the industry (like the *qldwater* asset criticality tool) Council is prioritising asset investment to those assets which represent the most critical risk to service.

Through the FNQ QWRAP group, these lessons will be built into the regional efforts to lift maturity in asset management as part of the delivery of the regional Capability Plan.

The detailed asset data, funding approach, and resilience strategies offer a replicable model for other Councils facing similar challenges across FNQ, especially those grappling with increasingly frequent extreme weather events.

Furthermore, Douglas's experience highlights the need to reform how water and wastewater infrastructure is funded, particularly in disaster-prone areas.

The FNQ Water Alliance Technical Committee continues to play a pivotal role in facilitating strategic planning, aligning Council efforts, and promoting regional solutions. As part of this collective, Douglas Shire's contributions offer not just a recovery story, but a blueprint for capability growth—helping shift FNQ from reactive disaster recovery to proactive, data-informed infrastructure planning and service resilience.

Watch Out for Electromagnetic Energy Risks on Elevated Reservoirs

A recent QWRAP initiative has uncovered a critical safety issue for water operators working on elevated reservoirs: electromagnetic energy (EME) exposure from telecommunications equipment. What began as a reservoir cleaning and condition assessment project under the RAPAD alliance quickly expanded to include North West and South West QWRAP regions, ultimately involving the inspection and cleaning of 35 reservoirs.

The project delivered significant benefits:

- Joint procurement across three alliances reduced duplication and delivered substantial cost savings.
- All ground-level reservoirs (GLRs) were successfully inspected and cleaned, improving water quality and asset reliability.
- Remote-operated vehicles (ROVs) and drones enabled safe inspection of high-risk sites, showcasing the value of shared access to specialised technology.
- Cross-alliance delivery strengthened regional consistency in asset management practices.

However, the project also revealed a hidden danger: seven elevated reservoirs had dangerously high RF radiation levels, in some cases exceeding 200% of the safe threshold. Telecoms equipment on these reservoirs was often unlabelled or had outdated contact information, preventing deactivation and forcing teams to rely on external inspections to ensure safety.

This discovery prompted immediate action:

- Technical specifications for future QWRAP projects now require contractors to assess and mitigate EME risks.
- **qldwater** initiated a detailed analysis of the issue, with a postgraduate intern from James Cook University reviewing condition reports and preparing two key documents, one focused on the inaccessible reservoirs and another addressing broader EME concerns.
- These reports will be shared with QWRAP regions and **qldwater** members statewide to raise awareness and improve safety protocols.

Key lessons learned:

- High RF levels on elevated reservoirs represent a previously underestimated risk.
- Councils recognised the importance of early coordination with telecom providers.
- The project led to the development of a statewide telco infrastructure agreement, supporting safer future projects.
- Cross-alliance collaboration fostered shared learning, trust and operational confidence, especially valuable for smaller or remote councils.

This success story highlights how QWRAP continues to protect public health, improve infrastructure, and safeguard the workforce through proactive, collaborative regional initiatives.



WIMWA Leads the Way with Smart Sewer and AI Innovation



The Whitsunday Isaac Mackay Water Alliance (WIMWA) is preparing to launch a groundbreaking three-year project that could redefine how regional councils manage sewer networks.

With funding secured through the Queensland Water Regional Alliances Program (QWRAP), WIMWA will trial a cutting-edge Smart Sewer and Artificial Intelligence (AI) initiative.

This collaborative project will combine real-time data collection with advanced AI analytics to improve sewer network performance and reduce environmental and public health risks. The initiative includes:

Deployment of Smart Sewer Sensors

Continuous level sensors will be installed in key sewer manholes across the three council areas. These sensors will provide real-time data on sewer levels, enabling early detection of inflow and infiltration issues, particularly during wet weather events.

AI and Machine Learning via Stormharvester

The project will leverage Stormharvester's AI platform, which integrates data from sewer sensors, network monitoring systems, and external sources such as hyperlocal rainfall and groundwater levels. This powerful tool will:

- Establish baseline sewer network performance
- Detect anomalies and predict potential overflows
- Inform operational planning and guide future capital investment

The primary goals of the project are to:

- Proactively manage environmental and public health risks associated with sewer overflows during wet weather events
- Optimise capital investment in wastewater infrastructure by using predictive insights to guide decision-making and direct active programs which manage inflow and infiltration in sewers.

Participating Councils are facing large capital upgrades for trunk infrastructure and treatment plants and it is expected that the information from this trial will help optimise capital investment and contribute to keeping downward pressure on customer costs.

By working together, with the support of QWRAP Partners, the WIM Councils can share the innovation risk and reduce costs. The regional scale of the project also enhances the effectiveness of the AI analytics, allowing the Stormharvester tool to be developed and refined using a broader dataset.

Running over three years, the project will allow for comprehensive evaluation of the AI system's performance across varying weather conditions. This extended timeframe is essential to fully understand the benefits and limitations of the technology.

Importantly, WIMWA is committed to sharing the outcomes and learnings from this project with other QWRAP regions. The insights gained could pave the way for broader adoption of smart sewer and AI technologies across Queensland, helping more councils to improve service delivery, reduce risks, and make smarter infrastructure investments.

Cross-Regional Collaboration

Water Industry Worker Program: Building Skills, Strengthening Communities

As the Water Industry Worker (WIW) Program prepares for its next round of funding, we celebrate one of Queensland’s most impactful regional training initiatives. Over the past five years, nearly 220 Water Industry Workers and Treatment Operators from 18 regional councils have successfully completed their Certificate II or III in Water Industry Operations—a testament to the power of collaboration and commitment to workforce development.

Originally launched as a pilot in South East Queensland in 2009, the WIW Program has evolved into a scalable model tailored to the needs of regional and remote communities. In 2019, the Whitsunday Isaac Mackay Water Alliance (WIMWA) secured bidpool funding to establish a Learning and Development Project Coordinator (LDPC) role, hosted by Mackay Regional Council. This role has been pivotal in coordinating training needs analysis, scheduling, procurement, and performance reporting.

Training delivery has been led by Simmonds & Bristow (S&B), a specialist Registered Training Organisation with deep experience in clustered training for remote areas. The first regional rollout brought together five councils—Mackay, Townsville, Whitsunday, Burdekin, and Cairns—using regional hubs to minimise travel and maximise local relevance.

Since then, the program has expanded, with additional RTOs such as TRILITY and Envirocheck joining the effort, currently hosting 7 and 24 trainees respectively. The clustered delivery model continues to foster strong local networks and reduce barriers to participation.

Recent analysis has revealed compelling evidence of the program’s long-term impact. A two-year post-training survey of 120 operators showed significant improvements in retention and promotion rates. Table 2 shows the estimated retention cost benefits based on financial modelling using benchmarks from the Australian Institute of Human Resources and the LGAQ.

These figures highlight the WIW Program’s value not only in building skills but also in retaining talent and reducing workforce turnover costs.

As we look ahead, the WIW Program remains a cornerstone of regional workforce development—empowering operators, strengthening communities, and ensuring the sustainability of Queensland’s water sector.

Table 2: Financial modelling of estimated retention cost benefits based on benchmarks from the Australian Institute of Human Resources and LGAQ.

Cohort	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Research Cohort (120 Operators)	\$1.39 million	\$1.84 million
All WIW Graduates	\$1.63 million	\$2.15 million
All Operators in QLD Sector	\$5.44 million	\$7.18 million

Cross-Regional Collaboration Delivers Cleaner Water to 22 Towns

The RAPADWSA Water Main Air Scouring Project stands as a powerful example of what can be achieved through cross-regional collaboration. Delivered across 22 towns and involving four QWRAP alliances—RAPADWSA, NWQRWA, SWQWSA, and WBBUWA—this ambitious project tackled the challenge of improving water quality and network performance in some of Queensland’s most remote communities.

The project was delivered in five coordinated phases, encompassing pre-scouring inspections, biofilm and sediment removal, and environmentally responsible waste disposal. All works were conducted in alignment with drinking water quality and environmental standards, ensuring safe outcomes for communities and ecosystems alike.

Tangible Outcomes

- Joint procurement reduced duplication and delivered significant cost savings across participating councils.
- 22 towns serviced across four QWRAP regions, demonstrating the power of regional collaboration.
- Biofilm and sediment removed from potable and raw water mains, improving network hygiene.
- Improved water quality, flow, and pressure, enhancing service delivery to residents.
- Standardised sediment reporting using a 0–5 scale, enabling better benchmarking and future planning.

- Reduced pipe blockages and enhanced operational performance.
- Safer drinking water for thousands of Queenslanders.

Lessons Learned

The project also provided valuable insights for future initiatives:

- Seasonal risks such as heat and flooding impacted scheduling. Future programs should avoid peak summer and include weather contingencies.
- Incomplete GIS and asset data delayed works, highlighting the need for up-to-date network mapping.
- Digital reporting systems are essential for real-time tracking and transparency.
- Reservoir cleaning should precede air scouring to prevent downstream recontamination.
- Flexible scheduling models allowed teams to adapt to access and supply challenges.

This project not only delivered immediate improvements in water quality but also laid the groundwork for more efficient, collaborative, and data-driven water management across Queensland. It’s a shining example of how QWRAP alliances can work together to deliver real, measurable benefits to regional communities.



QWRAP Strategic Projects

In 2024, *qldwater* received \$217,842.00 (excluding GST) from unspent QWRAP bid pool funds to deliver four State-wide projects supporting all QWRAP regions. These projects address sector-wide challenges and build long-term capability across Queensland's regional water alliances

1. Telecommunications Advocacy and Legal Support - \$10K

Responding to widespread concerns from QWRAP regions, *qldwater* led a targeted advocacy campaign addressing the risks posed by telecommunications infrastructure on critical water assets. These risks include asset damage, drinking water contamination, and staff safety hazards due to electromagnetic exposure. *qldwater* engaged with State and Federal regulators to highlight contradictions between the *Telecommunication Act* and the *Security of Critical Infrastructure Act*, and to push for legislative reform—particularly the right of refusal for water service providers. A Telco Land Access Agreement template was developed with expert legal input to support QWRAP regions in negotiations with licensed carriers. This work has laid the foundation for stronger protections and clearer legal pathways for water utilities.

2. HR/IR Toolkit for Operator Recruitment and Retention - \$20K

To address ongoing workforce challenges, a comprehensive HR/IR Toolkit was developed that focused on recruiting and retaining Water/Wastewater Operators. The toolkit offers practical strategies based on contemporary HR practices and member contributions. It is designed to be adaptable across councils with varying resources and will be reviewed every three years. With input from LGAQ, the toolkit includes recruitment tips, generic positions descriptions aligned with Queensland Local Government Industry award structures, structuring job ads, where to advertise and where to find potential applicants.

3. TRILITY Online Training Courses (\$60K)

In partnership with TRILITY, a Registered Training Organisation, *qldwater* launched a suite of introductory online training modules on the Water Training website. Topics include Chemistry, Calculations, Fluid Flow, Isolation, and Monitoring. These free courses are accessible to all QWRAP regions and Water Service Providers across the state and were reviewed by industry experts to ensure practical relevance. The initiative supports foundational learning and professional development for operators across Queensland. These training programs are particularly helpful to small regional and remote water service providers who find it difficult to release staff to attend training due to securing back fill support.

4. Training Needs Analysis (\$127,842)

Following the Queensland Audit Office's recommendation to assess skills gaps, *qldwater* piloted a Training Needs Analysis project in the WBBUWA and NWQWSA regions. The project mapped plant processes to National Water Package units of competency, identified operator competencies, and conducted gap analyses. Key outcomes include improved understanding of training needs, safety risks, and workforce planning. Recommendations include developing a Regional Training Framework, enhancing record-keeping, prioritising safety training, recognising prior learning, and fostering collaborative training initiatives.

The 2024 completed Balmoral Queensland Water Skills Survey shed light on water industry workforce dynamics, emphasising skills, training needs, and challenges in attraction and retention. These are crucial matters for the delivery of safe drinking water, maintenance of water infrastructure, and effective environmental risk management across Queensland communities.

Key findings highlight a significant mismatch between the current skills supply and the evolving demands of the water industry, exacerbated by rapid technological advancements, legislative changes, and an aging workforce.

Despite the critical roles skilled operators and engineers play, the absence of mandatory training requirements, lack of comprehensive skills gaps analysis and difficulties in accessing subsidised training have led to gaps in training delivery and workforce development. In addition, managing the qualification needs of operators may be difficult due to the lack of a central record for their skills and training.

Read more about the initial findings on page 31.

Building a Skilled Water Workforce Across Queensland: Regional Training Needs Analysis

The first two in a series of Training Needs Analysis (TNA) projects across QWRAP regional alliances are laying the foundation for a statewide, data-driven approach to workforce development, ensuring Queensland's water sector is equipped to meet future challenges.

The Wide Bay Burnett Urban Water Alliance (WBBUWA) was the first to complete a comprehensive TNA, assessing operator competencies across six councils. The project mapped treatment plant processes to the National Water Package (NWP), identified critical gaps in safety and process training, and recommended council-specific training frameworks. Key findings included:

- Low completion rates for process-related competencies (3–36%)
- Incomplete or unavailable training records
- Strong support for collaborative training and the Water Industry Worker (WIW) Program
- A clear need for centralised tracking via SWIMskills, a statewide training record system under development

Building on this success, the North West Queensland Water and Sewerage Alliance (NWQWSA) undertook its own TNA, covering nine councils and over 40 treatment facilities. Delivered by TRILITY, the project assessed 47 Certificate III units and 15 WHS compliance units. Despite data collection challenges, the analysis revealed:

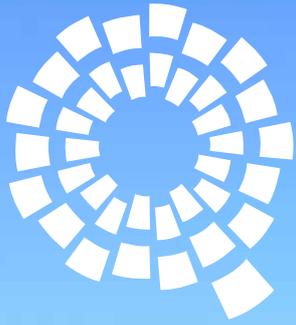
- Significant gaps in both safety and process training
- Inconsistent record-keeping and reliance on operators to access USI transcripts
- Common training needs across councils, enabling joint procurement and shared delivery models
- Strong compliance in basic safety training, but critical gaps in Low Voltage Rescue and Gas Test Atmospheres

The NWQWSA report also reinforced the importance of qualified operators for safe drinking water delivery, regulatory compliance, and asset longevity. It recommended expanding training pathways, recognising prior learning, and prioritising high-risk safety training.

Together, these projects demonstrate QWRAP's commitment to regional collaboration, workforce capability, and operational excellence. By rolling out TNAs across alliances and integrating findings into the SWIMskills platform, QWRAP is creating a scalable, statewide framework for water industry training—ensuring every Queensland community benefits from safe, reliable, and professionally managed water services.

Image below: WBBUWA Micro-Credential training





Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program

