

DRAFT POLICY – TRAINING AND STANDARDS IN THE WATER INDUSTRY

Policy

Water New Zealand believes that the sustainable management and development of the fresh water environment is underpinned by ongoing co-ordinated training, along with the development and application of high standards based on sound principles and knowledge.

While training in freshwater management is occurring in New Zealand at a technical and professional level, it does not presently sit within any overall strategic framework, because needs assessment is uncoordinated and fragmented. As a result training currently does not equip the industry to best manage and develop one of New Zealand's key strategic resources.

Explanation

The sustainable management and development of New Zealand's abundant freshwater resource is dependent on the acquisition and application of skills acquired through training of practitioners. The skills required to apply knowledge are also constantly changing as science and technology advance.

New Zealand society is predominantly urban based, and as such dependent on reticulated water infrastructure for potable water supply and wastewater removal and treatment. Our economic model is in the main biologically based with agriculture and tourism being the two main drivers.

Both are depend on high standards for water management, which will become increasingly important going forward as the world's freshwater resource comes under increasing pressure.

Land and water management cannot be separated out, since both are connected as part of one holistic system. Activities on land directly affect freshwater, both in urban and rural contexts. These relationships are complex and continually evolving.

There is considerable potential for future development of New Zealand's water resource, which needs to balance off environmental, economic social and cultural interests.

Water New Zealand is committed to ensuring that training is provided to meet the changing skill requirements of water practitioners. This includes:

- skills development, retention and application;
- communication of technological advances;
- working with providers to ensure there is alignment between training availability and needs; and
- the acquisition and retention of data on water practitioners and skill sets.

Facilitation of education of its members is achieved via a number of tools. These include public advocacy for coordination of training, and use of its communications tools on why

skill development and training is important, and what is available. The Association is committed to running a regular programme of training events.

In addition it is committed to the collaborative development, review, updating and dissemination of guidelines, standards, codes and procedures, in association with other industry organisations.