



## What's in this edition of MAS News

In this edition of MAS News we update you on developments with the ISO 9000 series, proficiency testing, radiation safety and water industry quality assurance standards. We also provide information on the latest developments with quality assurance of Australian laboratories in the water industry.

### Standards Update

#### ISO 9001 and ISO 9004 amendments

A new project has been initiated by ISO to develop amendments to ISO 9001 and ISO 9004. As the standards development process gets underway, organisations should take a keen interest in the proposed amendments and provide comments via their local standards writing body.

#### ISO Guide 43 Parts to be revised

ISO Guides 43 Part 1 and 2 on Proficiency Testing are to be revised. It is expected that the revisions will incorporate the criteria outlined in ILAC Guide 13 as well as further refine the criteria currently described in the ILAC document. ISO Guide 43 - Part 1 is of particular relevance to proficiency testing providers as it outlines the requirements for good practice with respect to these activities. PT providers can provide comment on the draft standards through their standards writing body.

#### ISO 20553 on Radiation protection published

A new International Standard will help protect workers from radiation exposure and contribute to the overall safety of the work environment. ISO 20553:2006, *Radiation protection – Monitoring of workers occupationally exposed to a risk of internal contamination with radioactive material*, is designed to protect workers against risks by monitoring potential intakes and/or quantifying actual intakes and exposures.

The range of industries with workers at risk of occupational exposure to ionizing radiation includes mining and milling, medical institutions, educational and research establishments and nuclear fuel cycle facilities. Monitoring programs for exposure to ionising radiation play a key role in greatly minimising this risk. The new standard offers guidance on deciding whether a monitoring programme is required and how it should be designed, established and maintained.

Its intention is to optimize the efforts of such a monitoring programme, consistent with legal requirements, and with the aim of the overall radiation protection programme, which starts with an assessment to identify work situations where there is a risk of radionuclide intake by workers.

#### Development of ISO/DIS 24510, ISO/DIS 24511 and ISO/DIS 24512

A new suite of standards providing guidelines for the improvement and for the assessment of water services, including drinking and wastewater services, are currently being developed. The implementation of the standards will help water authorities and their operators to achieve a level of quality that best meets the expectations of consumers and the principles of sustainable development. Laboratory testing is an integral aspect of quality assurance of water services.

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### Issue Highlights

- ISO 9000 series revision
- ISO Guide 43 revision
- A new Proficiency Testing strategy for the water industry

## Management Consultancy Services

### A New Water Industry PT Strategy

High quality laboratory analytical information is a fundamental requirement for a water utility. This information serves multiple uses including:

- Provision of operational information to ensure continued high quality service provision;
- Detection and feedback on the resolution of problems identified from utility operations (eg a malfunctioning treatment plant);
- The need for accurate information in the event of a public health incident;
- Fulfilling, regulatory requirements from public health and environmental agencies;
- Validation of the performance of proposed, new or modified plant installed in a utility;

- Assessment of the impacts of actions from a sustainability perspective (eg impacts on a river from a discharge);
- Research needs for the utilities.

Both accreditation and proficiency testing (PT) complement each other in supporting high quality analytical information.

However, for some time, there has been evidence that the current system for ensuring the quality of data in the water industry was under strain, with a number of instances of errors in measurements being made.

To overcome these issues, the water industry, through WSAA, has developed a series of new initiatives. These include the establishment of

industry run proficiency testing programs which offer not only an evaluative aspect, but also include an educational component. The organisation of the proficiency testing programs will be overseen by a management committee and will use accredited PT Providers. WSAA has also initiated a review of contracts with laboratory testing suppliers to strengthen the quality requirements of these services.

Further details on this program can be obtained from WSAA at [www.wsaa.asn.au](http://www.wsaa.asn.au).

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### Improvement suggestions

We are always open to suggestions for discussion topics in MAS News. If you would like a topic to be covered, or have material that you would like included in MAS News, please contact Maree at [maree@masconsult.com.au](mailto:maree@masconsult.com.au).

MAS News is a quarterly newsletter, published by MAS Management Consultancy Services, designed to keep you informed of the latest developments in quality management, business improvement, business planning, project management and metrology in chemistry.

### Contact us

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