

Certification Board Report for Sunday, October 21, 2018

GOVERNANCE & PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION POLICY REVIEW

The initial draft of best practices policies for credentialing programs was created by SeaCrest Company, our contractor. They built upon our current program documentation and included credentialing industry best practices in program governance and operations. The Certification Board, along with past and current Governing Board chairs, shaped the draft to reflect our association. The work product fits into the Section Policy Manual update process. Comments and questions are welcome.

Elevating our program policies will serve the members and industry stakeholders by advancing our credentialing program professionalism. Achieving third party accreditation for the credentialing program represents a milestone of excellence. Earning the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) accreditation for the education program years ago was supported for similar reasons. The State of California Water Resources Control Board may require accreditation for certifying bodies offering Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester programs.

Advanced Water Treatment Operator (AWTO)

The Collaboration Team (composed of staff and volunteers from CA-NV AWWA and California Water Environment Association, CWEA) monitors the progress of the examination development process. An item writing webinar was held on 10/19/18 where subject matter experts were provided guidance and assigned the creation / modification of three or more items for the exams. The item writing workshop was held 10/15-17/18 where the full set of items were reviewed and refined. The next steps will be to assure that all pertinent job analysis components are sufficiently addressed within the item bank and performing the standard setting (determine the passing score for each grade level exam).

Fundraising efforts raised \$160,000. Travel and meeting expenses along with procuring reference materials is estimated at under \$70,000. Marketing and communication expenses to promote the certifications will use additional funds.

Committee officers and members presented our message at multiple conferences. Interest expands outside our region. WateReuse Florida included our program information for their potable reuse commission. Others are watching our progress closely.

In Progress Tasks

- a) Legislative & regulatory treatment of operators in drinking water and wastewater
- b) Refining the list of available materials to support preparations for serving as an AWT Operator and to prepare for the certification examinations; the Water Research Foundation (WRF) will permit the use by our education program of their work product

from project 15-05, which includes seven advanced water treatment unit process and control process modules

- c) Marketing message development and delivery approaches to recruit AWT Operator certification applicants; several abstracts have been submitted by the committee officers for upcoming conferences

The committee will work with the Government Affairs committee to address industry concerns regarding how experience is credited for water / wastewater operators.

Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester & Cross-Connection Control Specialist (BPAT & CCCS)

The CA State Water Board shall adopt standards for backflow protection and cross-connection control. A policy handbook shall be adopted by January 1, 2020, per AB 1671, which is now law.

The Backflow Programs Committee was re-energized to prepare input to the CA State Water Board as they prepare the new policy handbook. Members of the committee and guests represent the following stakeholders with ties to CA-NV AWWA and possess industry expertise.

- ✓ Backflow Programs committee
- ✓ Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester and Cross-Connection Control Program Specialist certification committee
- ✓ Executive Committee
- ✓ Certification Board
- ✓ Utility Cross-Connection Control Program Administrators
- ✓ Commercial entities that provide testing and site survey services
- ✓ Section staff

The most recent version of the BPAT exam will be utilized by the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC). The Memorandum of Understanding with ABC is before the Governing Board for approval.

Updating the job analysis and conducting a new examination development cycle is an appropriate next step for both certifications in 2019. Financial considerations are already reflected in the 2019 budget submission. Exam and renewal fee increases will begin to fund the work ahead.

Preparations to pursue accreditation through the American National Standards Institute / International Organization for Standards / International Electrotechnical Commission (ANSI/ISO/IEC) 17024 Standards are underway.

Water Quality Laboratory Analyst (WQLA)

The California Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) continues to march forward with their incorporation of The NELAC Institute (TNI) Standards for laboratory accreditation. Draft regulations were released and public hearings were conducted. Training sessions on how laboratories may adjust their operations to comply with the new regulations are available.

The impact of these activities will be on the nature and content of our WQLA certification examinations. Updating the job analysis and conducting a new examination development cycle is an appropriate next step for 2020. Exam and renewal fee increases will begin to fund the work ahead.

Water Use Efficiency Practitioner (WUEP)

Changes across the water conservation industry will continue to occur. The committee must be vigilant to maintain the currency of the certification examinations to keep up with these changes.

Our committee members maintain awareness of trends and movements, as well as the nature of job descriptions across our region. Updating the job analysis and conducting a new examination development cycle is an appropriate next step for 2020. Exam and renewal fee increases will begin to fund the work ahead.

The Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE) would like to collaborate on a national rollout of the education and certification process. We are in early stages of discussing the possibilities. Addressing the ramifications of working with the other Sections to assure a suitable arrangement for the marketplace is part of the solution.

Drinking Water Operator (Treatment, Distribution and Associates)

The Water Operator certification committee was suspended in Oct 2017. An annual review will be conducted to determine if any change is appropriate. The Certification Board decided to continue offering the ABC exams for Water Treatment Operator and Water Distribution Operator certifications using the new 2017 version starting in 2019. The 2017 version of the ABC examinations removed regulatory references due to an intent to make the examinations more consistent across the nation. Communications to all stakeholders about the changes will begin in the fourth quarter of 2018.

Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP)

Our proctoring services agreement the NDEP currently calls for receiving the exams ordered from ABC, distributing them to the proctors, receiving the completed exams from the proctors and processing them to ABC. Will Raymond and Gina Enriquez manage communications with

exam candidates & NDEP staff. They oversee proctor assignments, examination delivery to the appropriate sites and results deliver to ABC. Gina informs the applicants of their individual exam results and provides overall levels of mastery to NDEP.

There may be a shift in early 2019 where NDEP may request CA-NV AWWA to place the exam form order on ABC, in addition to our other proctoring duties.

A new Request for Proposal for proctoring services is anticipated considering the current contract ends 6/30/19.