

24 May 2024

Ref: OIA-672

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Official Information request regarding Wellington Water's employee qualifications

Thank you for your request of 26 April 2024 asking a series of questions on the qualifications Wellington Water Limited requires of its employees/contractors and subcontractors.

The answers to your questions have been answered in accordance with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and are enclosed following this letter. Where Wellington Water does not hold the information, you have requested this is refused, as allowed by section 17(g) of LGOIMA, *the information is not held by the local authority*.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of the decision to release this information. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that it is our policy to publicly release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly at <https://www.wellingtonwater.co.nz/about-us/official-requests/official-information-act-responses/> with your personal information removed.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to email us at official.information@wellingtonwater.co.nz

Nāku noa, nā

[REDACTED]
Chief Executive
Wellington Water Limited

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Context

Wellington Water currently has over 75 contractors and suppliers who have met the necessary requirements and are approved to work on the region's public drinking water, wastewater and stormwater networks. These cover a range of activities.

Different activities on the network require different skillsets and qualifications. All contractors or sub-contractors that undertake work on our behalf must have the appropriate training, processes, and procedures in place to meet our requirements before they can undertake any work on the public networks.

As the region's water services provider, we have put in place these requirements to protect public health. This is because any work undertaken on the public network (which includes tobies) if not done correctly has the potential to contaminate the drinking water and make thousands of people sick.

Part of these requirements are that anyone working unsupervised and carrying out repairs on the public drinking water network (staff, contractors, sub-contractors) must hold a NZ Certificate in Infrastructure Works (Pipeline Construction and Maintenance) – a Level 3 qualification or higher.

Crews who have people who do not have these qualifications need to be supervised by someone who holds the necessary qualifications while they undertake work on the public network.

1. How many employees/contractors (including subcontractors) of Wellington Water who work on the public water network and hold a current NZ Certificate in Infrastructure Works (Pipeline Construction and Maintenance) Level 3 qualification?

Wellington Water has 37 qualified staff (Level 3+ Infrastructure Works) for water leak repair and network work. Qualified staff are actively overseeing crews/work, completing, or assisting with water leak repair and remedial public network activities across the Wellington region. Please refer to **Table One** for more information.

Contractors must also have qualified staff but Wellington Water does not track their qualifications directly.

2. Including all employees and contractors (including subcontractors), what percentage of employees and contractors hold the NZ Certificate in Infrastructure Works (Pipeline Construction and Maintenance) Level 3 qualification?

41% of all Wellington Water and Fulton Hogan employees responsible for the repair and maintenance of the region's water network hold a Level 3 or higher (Level 4, Pipeline Installation) New Zealand Certificate in Infrastructure Works or prior qualification. This 41% does not include contractors or subcontractors as Wellington Water does not hold this information.

3. How is this information recorded, and how is the information on who holds NZ Certificate in Infrastructure Works (Pipeline Construction and Maintenance) Level 3 qualification maintained to ensure compliance with Wellington Water requirements?

Wellington Water employee certificates, licensing and professional qualifications are stored in our Learning Management System (LMS).

Fulton Hogan employee certificates, licensing and professional qualifications are stored in their own record management system. This information is also tracked by relevant internal stakeholders - Senior Managers, Human Resources and an Operational Training and Development Manager who supports training and qualifications with Industry Training Organisation (ITO) provider Connexis.

4. What other qualifications does Wellington Water accept to be an approved employee or contractor to work on the public water network? Please provide details of these qualifications. What percentage of the total employees and contractors (including subcontractors) hold additional qualifications?

Wellington Water accepts the following qualification:

- National Certificate in Water Reticulation (Planned and Reactive Maintenance Technician – Level 3) with strands in Water and Wastewater or high (Level 4, Pipeline Installation)

Water NZ has a publicly available competency framework for its distribution operators:

- Competency Framework: Water New Zealand (waternz.org.nz) including unit standards for many of the key competencies that would be applicable.
- Prerequisites
- Health and Safety pre-qualification requirements

5. How is the supervision of workers and contractors (including subcontractors) under the NZ Certificate in Infrastructure Works (Pipeline Construction and Maintenance) Level 3 qualification completed? Please provide supervision guidelines.

Within our drinking water crews, we have sufficient level 3 and level 4 qualified staff to ensure that there is a qualified person on each site. The crews' composition attending any particular job is determined by the team leader and is also determined by the type of work required. When the jobs are reported, they are assessed by a qualified person before a crew is assigned to repair the pipe.

6. When was the requirement put in place for all employees and contractors (including subcontractors) of Wellington Water who work on the public water network to hold a current NZ Certificate in Infrastructure Works (Pipeline Construction and Maintenance) Level 3 qualification? How has this been implemented and enforced?

Since 2005, the Water Infrastructure industry has required workers to be level 3 qualified as a minimum qualification to work on public networks. Additionally, Taumata Arowai, the water

regulator, requires all people working on public water networks are to be suitably trained and experienced. Wellington Water's compliance reporting to Taumata Arowai will include the qualifications of workers on the public network.

Wellington Water employees

Wellington Water implements this requirement as part of their recruitment process and ensures that new employees have the required qualification and certificates for their appointed role. We also track any formal training or qualifications employees gain to meet the necessary requirements for their role during their employment with us.

Contractors and subcontractors working on leak repairs and the network

All sub-contractors that work for Wellington Water must go through a prequalification process. Wellington Water then typically enters into a framework agreement with a sub-contractor for a period of two years. Upon completion of this period, the sub-contractors must go back through the prequalification process.

Wellington Water also performs subcontractor audits annually to ensure our prequalification requirements are being met.

In addition to the prequalification process, sub-contractors that work on the drinking water network must also hold the necessary qualifications before they can work on the drinking water network unsupervised.

Contractors working on capital delivery projects

Contractors working on our capital projects must meet the Tōtika Prequalification standard. This standard ensures that our contractors have the base health and safety systems in place to ensure they are appropriately managing their health and safety risks.

The criteria for the Tōtika Standard can be found in **Table Two**. The Tōtika core criteria ST11 specifically address the licenses and qualifications to undertake the job, this includes trade qualifications. The Tōtika standard is a pass/fail system, that is a contractor must meet all of the criteria to meet the standard and be allowed to work for Wellington Water.

Wellington Water does not assess whether not our contractors meet the Tōtika standard, as this is carried out by a number of third-party providers. This ensures the prequalification process is robust and independent. There are currently 51 contractors working on our capital projects that meet the Tōtika standard.

Table one: Staff qualifications as at 23 May 2024

Qualification	Water Network	Drainage Network	Water & Drainage (CCTV, Retic, Water Utility)
<p>Qualified Level 3 Serviceperson An employee who holds a relevant Level Three qualification in: 'NZ Certificate Infrastructure Works – Pipeline Construction and Maintenance' or previous titles</p>	11 Staff at this level	5 Staff at this level	2 Staff at this level
<p>Trade Qualified Level 4 Serviceperson An employee who holds a relevant Level Four qualification in: 'NZ Certificate Infrastructure Works – Pipeline Construction and Maintenance' or previous titles</p>	9 Staff at this level	4 Staff at this level	3 Staff at this level
<p>Unqualified Serviceperson An employee who is gaining experience and working toward a qualification in 'NZ Certificate Infrastructure Works – Pipeline Construction and Maintenance'. Employees are completing internal competency training, tickets and qualifications to support career pathway and water reticulation best practice (service location, W,T,R, STMS, Class2 Licensing, serviceperson competency signoff etc)</p>	25 Staff	17 Staff	11 Staff

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Table two: Tōtika Standard information

# Core Criteria	Criteria	Details	Questionnaire Template Guidance	Minimum Evidence Requirements	Scoring (with suggested anchors)
ST11:	Licences and certification	Trader provides evidence of any licences and/or certifications required for their designated work activity (e.g. Scaffolding COC, Electrical registration, LBP etc.)	Registration information (links to work activity) indicates that you carry out an activity that typically requires a licence or certification. Do you hold a current licence and/or certificate for this type of work? "NA Possible" .	The activities that the Sole Trader undertakes should be reviewed and any licensing and/or certification requirements established. If any are required, the following should be provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a copy of the current licence/certification and expiry date 	0 – no evidence provided 1 – Shows a basic level of technical training for their trade/occupation, but nothing within the last 5 years or licence has expired. 2 – Shows a basic level of technical training for their trade/occupation, but nothing within the last 3 years. 3 – See details and minimum evidence requirements elements. 4 – Provides a comprehensive set of evidence demonstrating currency of professional skills, training, experience, aptitude, and knowledge. Or n/a