

Skills

On Farm Series: People & Knowledge | November 2007 | Produced by Cotton Catchment Communities CRC

Cotton and Grains Irrigation Workshop Series: Recognition for your skills

Eight educationally-recognised workshops are available for cotton and grains irrigators and specialists to learn and improve their skills. Based on Vocational qualifications, the workshops are delivered on farm and are practical courses for skills development. Your new skills and qualifications will be mapped to the Cotton BMP Land and Water Module, and can be used directly to provide evidence for BMP certification.



The eight workshops can lead to irrigation performance, BMP certification and formal skills recognition.

THE COTTON AND GRAINS Irrigation Workshop Series consists of 8 workshops which have been developed to give Cotton and Grain Industry personnel the opportunity to learn new skills and techniques. These workshops are:

- Concise and practically focussed
- Delivered on-farm, and related to on-farm issues or research
- Supportive of requirements for planning processes, such as Cotton BMP

- Mapped to nationally recognised competencies

The workshops in the series include:
Benchmarking and Water Budgeting

- water use indices and irrigation system efficiencies
- comparing benchmark figures
- developing a water budget

Scheduling I

- crop water use and Evapotranspiration (ET)

- crop response to water stress
- scheduling tools and soil moisture

Scheduling II

- soil characterisation
- calibration and placement of soil



Cotton Catchment Communities CRC

moisture tools

- fine tuning refill points

Pumps

- pump types
- pump curves
- pump efficiency and operating costs
- Pump selection

Surface Irrigation

Performance Evaluation

- Evaluating surface irrigation performance
- Factors affecting performance
- Analysing performance assessment results
- Implications of management changes

Storage and Distribution Systems

- storage efficiency, evaporation and seepage losses
- evaporation and seepage mitigation strategies
- storage maintenance

Metering

- Meter selection
- Installation
- Maintenance

Irrigation Systems

- Field design and layout
- System selection and economics
- Deep drainage

It is possible to participate in these workshops, and simply come away with new knowledge and skills. However, many people want to be recognised for the skills that they learn so they can demonstrate their knowledge to employers, clients, bank managers, regulators or consumers.

For this reason, the Cotton and Grains Irrigation Workshop Series has been mapped to National training Competencies. If you successfully complete these workshops and demonstrate how you can apply your skills in a real life situation, you may be eligible to obtain the following competencies.

RTE4603A - Implement an irrigation-

Qualifications

A Vocational qualification is a group of relevant competencies. The level of the qualification will determine the number and complexity of competency units required.

Some qualifications that may be of interest include:

- Cert IV in Agriculture (specialising in cotton production)
- Cert IV in Irrigation
- Diploma of Irrigation

The 4 competencies covered by the Irrigation Workshop Series can be used to contribute towards these qualifications as illustrated in the table.

Once you obtain a qualification it is yours for life. Just like a Secondary Certificate or University Degree, a Vocational Qualification is formal nationally recognised and endorsed standard.

Certification

Certification is a voluntary process whereby an individual can demonstrate they meet a certain standard, usually defined by a professional organisation. A widely known example might be a Certified Practising Accountant.

Someone who is certified generally requires:

- Appropriate qualifications
- Appropriate experience
- Ongoing professional development

A number of certification programs relevant to agricultural industries value competency based training. Hence the competencies obtained as part of the Cotton and Grains Irrigation Workshop Series may be used to obtain or maintain certified status in a number of programs.

Irrigation Australia Limited:
 Certified Irrigation Manager
 Certified Irrigation Agronomist
 Cotton Consultants Association:
 Certified Cotton Consultant
 Aust Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology:
 Accredited

related environmental protection program

RTE4609A- Implement , monitor and adjust irrigation schedules

RTE4605A - Schedule irrigations

RTE5604A- Develop an irrigation and drainage management plan

Whilst attendance at the workshops is free, the process involved to obtain the national recognition incurs a cost, as only a Registered Training Organisation is able to award a statement of attainment for a unit of competency. Details regarding these fees can be obtained from the contacts at the end of this document.

What can the competencies be used for?

Understanding what a competency is and how it can be used by you in the future is important. Many organisations and industries are now aligning work activities and operational standards to competencies. Put simply, a

“...Many people want to be recognised for the skills that they learn so they can demonstrate their knowledge to employers, clients, bank managers, regulators or consumers.”

	Units included in Irrigation Workshop Series				Additional Units Required
	RTE4603A	RTE4605A	RTE4609A	RTE5604A	
Cert IV Agriculture (cotton or grain)	Non-listed Elective*	Listed Elective	Non-listed Elective*	Non-listed Elective*	9
Cert IV Irrigation	Compulsory	Compulsory	Compulsory	Non-listed Elective	8
Diploma Irrigation	Non-Listed Elective*	Non-Listed Elective*	Non-Listed Elective*	Listed Elective	9
IAL Certified Irrigation Manager (Cotton)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	RTE4602A
IAL Certified Irrigation Agronomist		Yes	Yes	Yes	Choice of 3 other units
CCA Certified Cotton Consultant	TBC				
IAIST Accredited				Yes	Choice of 7 other units

* - Only 2 non-listed electives can be used to contribute to the qualification.

unit of competency is the vocational training sectors way of defining and assessing an individual's acquired skills sets.

The ways in which the above units of competency could be used are illustrated below.

Information contact for :

Competency Information

Mark Hickman, National Training Co-ordinator, (07) 4688 1206.

Cotton and Grains Irrigation

Workshop series

David Wigginton, Knowledge Broker, (07) 4631 1711

Or your local water team member.

www.cottonandgrains.irrigationfutures.org.au

Cotton BMP

The competencies associated with the Cotton and Grains Irrigation Workshop Series have been “mapped” to the Cotton BMP Land and Water Module. When you attend the workshops, you learn valuable skills that will help you to better understand the requirements of the BMP L&W module.

If you go on to obtain the competencies, you are assisted to provide information on how you have applied what you have learned. Much of this information can be used directly to provide your evidence for BMP. So why not complete BMP and obtain a set of nationally recognised competencies at the same time!

