Capacity Building & Institutional Strengthening in the Water and Waste Sectors

Presented by
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Introduction

- The Caribbean Basin Water Management Programme Inc (CBWMP) is:
  - an organization of thirteen water and sewerage utilities set up to promote the efficient management of its members operations.
  - membership comprises, Anguilla, Antigua, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Monsterrat, Nevis, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Turks and Caicos Islands
Introduction (con’t)

- CBWMP identified the need for the establishment of a programme to provide certification of operators of its water and wastewater services.

- Certification of operators in the water and wastewater sector in the Caribbean has been in discussion since 1991.

- Water and Sewerage organizations Bahamas and Trinidad and Tobago had been strong advocates for the setting up of a Caribbean operator certification programme.
Early Actions

- CWWA took the initiative to invite priced proposals from a number of accreditation bodies to provide services for the development and implementation of a so-called 'Caribbean Certification Programme'.

- Recommendations were made for the selection of The Certification & Assessment Board for the Water Industry (CABWI) to provide the certification services.

- The start-up cost for the programme was estimated at US$275,500.
Early Actions

While the proposed CABWI programme was comprehensive in scope, CBWMP assessed it to be prohibitive if self financing was to be pursued.
ABC Certification

In its review of other certifying bodies CBWMP recognised the advantages of the certification programme administered by the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) of the USA. These advantages included:
ABC Certification

- (a) Certification of its members by a universally accredited certifying body;
- (b) Use of ABC’s standardized examinations (to be replaced by CBWMP’s own prescriptive exams at a later stage); and
- (c) Cheaper transaction costs compared to the other certifying bodies.

A major disadvantage of the ABC approach is the fact that the certificates are only awarded on the basis of a written examination.
ABC Certification Classes

- ABC certifies operators in four classes:
- Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, and Class 4 with Class 1 being the lowest category and Class 4 the highest.
- An operator must be awarded a Class 1 certificate before she/he could attempt the examinations for Class 2, and similarly for Classes 3 and 4.
- Examinations are held in the country of the examinee.
- However, all examination papers are graded by ABC.
CBWMP - ABC
CERTIFICATION

- **In January 2002, CBWMP's application for membership was accepted by the Board of Directors of ABC.**

- On the advice of CBWMP's legal counsel:
  
an interim certification Board was setup comprising members of the Executive Committee of CBWMP with the CBWMP Director for the Cayman Islands as its chairperson.

- The Certification Board was formally established via a resolution of the CBWMP’s Board of Directors at its 7th Annual General Meeting;
CBWM Certification Policy

ABC’s Model Act and Regulation has been redrafted and renamed CBWM’s Certification Policy Document.

Most member Utilities have adopted the Policy Document via a resolution of the Board of Directors for those Utilities that are Statutory Authorities or Limited Liability Companies or by the authority of the Companies or by the authority of the responsible Government Minister for those that are Government Departments.
CBWMP Certification Board

Members of the Interim Certification Board have met in on-line discussion sessions and have adopted the following resolutions:

(a) The first certification categories comprise:
   (i) Water Distribution Operators;
   (ii) Wastewater Collection Operators;
   (iii) Water Treatment Operators;
   (iv) Wastewater Treatment Operators; and
   (v) Very small Water System Operators.
(b) The minimum qualifications and experience for candidates wishing to sit the certification Class 1 examinations be:

- Qualifications

- Evidence of having completed five years as a student at a secondary school recognised by the Ministry with responsibility for Education in the particular country or territory; and

- Two years of operational experience (as defined below) as a substitute for each year of secondary schooling
CBWMP Certification Board Cont’d

Experience

- Operational experience in an Environmental Control Utility (ECU) classified as Class 1 or higher in accordance with ABC’s ECU Points Rating System contained as an Appendix to ABC’s Operator Certification Program Standards (April 1999).
EXAM PREPARATION

On the issue of preparing candidates for the certification examinations, CBWMP has supplied each of its member utilities with ABC recommended study material published by the California State University, the Water Environment Federation, and the American Water Works Association. In addition, CBWMP on-line training facility currently contains relevant courses on:

- (a) Basic Hydraulics;
- (b) Water Quality Management; and
- (c) Pipe Installation together with a module on on-site safety.
EXAM RESULTS

- In January 2003, thirty-nine (39) operators from five CBWMP Member Utilities took the first Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) certification examinations Class 1 administered by CBWMP.
- The examinees achieved a 46% pass rate.
- In July 8, 2003, CBWMP entered sixteen (16) candidates for the Class 11 examinations and thirty-six (36) candidates for Class 1.
- There was a 69% pass rate for the Class 11 examinations and a 56% pass rate for Class 1.
THE FUTURE

- CBWMP proposes to address the certification of its 'grand-father' operators by developing a special certificate for these persons. This certificate will be based on Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition principles with recognition being achieved through practical and verbal testing. These certificates will be CBWMP certificates and they will not be recognised by ABC.
THE FUTURE Cont’d

ABC's examination procedures allow for CBWMP to set its own examination questions after consultation with ABC. This process would allow the setting of examinations that would be more relevant to working conditions in the Caribbean environment.

In response to demands from utility staff, CBWMP proposes to introduce the certification categories of 'Very Small Water System Operators' and 'Operator/Laboratory Analyst' at its next diet of examinations.