Update:

Queensland Turtle Conservation Program (QTCP)

Citizen Scientist Authorisations

The Threatened Species Operations (TSO) is reviewing the QTCP Citizen Scientist authorisation framework and documentation to implement a standardised processes for Citizen Scientists wanting to contribute to QTCP research and monitoring activities at marine turtle nesting beaches.

As part of this program, authorised individual citizen scientists are required to demonstrate continued competency under the department's relevant ethics permits for authorised activities. Training and assessment of competency in authorised activities occur through a formal training process conducted by a registered QTCP trainer. To support this, TSO are re-evaluating our training and competency assessment material to ensure citizen scientists contributing to the QTCP are assessed against consistent standards and have access to current methodologies and up-to-date information relevant to authorised activities.

To facilitate the competency assessment process, authorised citizen scientist approaching expiration that wish to continue contributing to the QTCP program should advise the department within the 6-month period prior to their authorisation expiration of this intent to have their authorisation 'held in renewal'. This renewal period will permit continued operation under the terms of their authorisation for a period of 12 months, within which citizen scientists must demonstrate continued competency in their authorised activities to an approved QTCP trainer.

QTCP Citizen Scientist training and competency assessments may be undertaken at Mon Repos under the direction of TSO staff trainers, or locally under a QTCP approved citizen scientist trainer.

Access to training will be made available through a network of approved trainers, intended to improve access to training and competency assessments for individuals/groups unable to attend training at Mon Repos. This list of approved trainers is still to be finalised and will be communicated in a later update.

We will be in contact with approved trainers regarding the new competency assessment process prior to the season.

TSO values the continued contribution and dedication to turtle research and monitoring activities by the members of the QMTN Network and appreciates your patience while we finalise this review of the QTCP Citizen Scientist framework.

If you have any queries or concerns with respect to authorisations or this review process, please direct these to turtle.volunteers@detsi.qld.gov.au.