



Government of South Australia

Department for Environment  
and Water

# 2024-2025 Water Compliance Report and Plan

Water Licensing Branch | Water and River Murray Division  
Department for Environment and Water

# Background

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) is responsible for supporting the sustainable management of South Australia's water resources. This includes administering water licences in prescribed water resource areas, accounting for water usage, monitoring compliance, and undertaking education and enforcement activities where appropriate.

South Australia currently manages over 13,800 water licences across 26 prescribed water areas, of which approximately 12,400 water licences are subject to water take or metering compliance requirements.

Twenty-three prescribed areas are managed through a Water Allocation Plan (WAP)(refer map page. 10). Water licence holders have a legal obligation to comply with the conditions of their water licence or approval and the requirements of the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* (LSA Act) and associated regulations. The obligations include metering their water use and ensuring that water take does not exceed the licensed water allocation. To monitor compliance, DEW:

- Meters 94% of licensed water use.
- Requires meter reads quarterly for 26% of users in high-risk water resources (e.g. the River Murray and other high demand areas) and annually for the remaining 74% of users.
- Conducts desktop and site assessments to verify that usage is within licensed allocations.
- Undertakes targeted compliance activities, visiting at least 10% of licensed sites to check meter installations and water use compliance.

DEW undertakes compliance action where water users are found to be in breach of their licence conditions or legislated requirements.

DEW licenses well drillers and monitors the drilling, maintenance and decommissioning of bores to ensure that bores meet legislated standards, helping protect South Australia's valuable groundwater resources.

This report fulfils the activity reflected in the Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact (SA 2.6); detailing

compliance activities undertaken during the 2024-25 water use year in relation to water use and well drillers activity. It also reports on compliance rates, where available. It does not include compliance actions for water affecting activity permits.

## Summary

Compliance activities undertaken across prescribed resources in South Australia in 2024-25 are outlined in Attachment A.

During 2024-25:

- DEW field officers visited 1,831 (15.6%) of nearly 12,000 licensed metered sites.
- Of these, 44 (2.4%) were assessed as non-compliant with requirements.

### Data limitations for 2024-25

Some compliance and performance data (administrative penalties and expiations) for the 2024-25 reporting period is incomplete or delayed due to the transition to *mywater*. It is important to note that monitoring activities have continued uninterrupted, and all potential breaches remain under investigation.

Missing data will be incorporated into future reports as compliance investigations are finalised.

## Contents

Tables 1 & 2. Compliance actions relating to water take and use for 2024-25 .....	4 - 5
Table 3. Compliance actions relating to wells and well drillers licences in 2024-25 .....	6
Attachment A: Targeted Compliance Activities undertaken during 2024-25 .....	8
Attachment B: Targeted Compliance Activities proposed for 2025-26 .....	9
Map of prescribed areas .....	10

# At a glance



**26**

prescribed areas



**13,800**

Licences \*



**94%**

of take compliance monitored via meters



**12,738**

education and other advisory communications sent



**11,790**

licensed water meters



Not available

compliance with water allocations (2023-2024)



**1,831**

site visits



**97.6 %**

of sites visited compliant



**108**

compliance actions \*\*



Government of South Australia

Department for Environment and Water

\* Approximately 12,400 water licences are subject to water take and metering compliance

\*\* Compliance actions include penalties, expiations, warnings and final notices issued throughout 2024-2025 irrespective of the date offences occurred.

## Tables 1 & 2: Compliance actions relating to water take and use for 2024-2025

Table 1 and Table 2 include compliance actions and site visits undertaken between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, for business as usual and targeted compliance activities (refer Attachment A). Each compliance action recorded in this table relates to the following sections of the LSA Act or LSA Water Management Regulations:

- **Section 104(1):** Unauthorised taking of water from a prescribed surface water area, watercourse, lake or well (taking water without a section 105 authorisation or a water licence with allocation; or by diverting to an illegally constructed dam; or unauthorised taking of water for stock and domestic purposes);
- **Section 104(7):** Contravening a condition of a water management authorisation or permit (conditions on water licences, section 105 authorisations and well permits);
- **Section 88(1):** Penalty for taking water in excess of licence allocation;
- **Regulation 12:** Failure to comply with 'Part 5: Meters' (Failure to comply with a direction to install a meter etc.); and
- **Section 230:** Interfering with a meter.

Prescribed Area	Education, advisory comms (e.g. letters, email, SMS)	Final notice/direction letter/warnings issued	Administrative penalty issued (2023-24) non-compliance water allocations)	Expiations (late submission of meter reads)	Criminal investigations in progress	Proceeding commenced	Finalised civil enforcement actions
Angas Bremer	223						
Baroota	0						
Barossa	652	2					
Central Adelaide	1	1					
Clare	459	5					
Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges	1,101	9					
Far North	0	0					
Lower Limestone Coast	3,138	10					
Mallee	238	3					
Marne Saunders	221	1					
McLaren Vale	793	1					
Morambro Creek	4	0					
Northern Adelaide Plains	866	20					
Other Statewide	0	0					
Padthaway	258	3					
Peake, Roby, Sherlock	6	0					
River Murray	1,535	41	11				
Southern Basins & Musgrave	0	0					
Tatiara	622	0					
Tintinara Coonalpyn	515	1					
Western Mount Lofty Ranges	2,106	0					
<b>State totals</b>	<b>12,738</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>11<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Nil<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>

<sup>1</sup> Missing data as actions delayed due to transition to mywater – as these actions are finalised, missing data will be reflected in future reports

Table 2

Prescribed Area	% compliant with water allocations 2023-2024 <sup>1</sup>	Site visits <sup>2</sup>			
		Number of site visits	Number compliant	Number requiring compliance action <sup>3</sup>	% visits compliant
Angas Bremer	N/A	0	-	-	-
Baroota	N/A	45	45	0	100%
Barossa	N/A	13	13	-	100%
Central Adelaide	N/A	37	37	0	100%
Clare	N/A	21	21	0	100%
Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges	N/A	70	69	1	98.6%
Far North	N/A	0	-	-	-
Lower Limestone Coast	N/A	35	35	0	100%
Mallee	N/A	9	9	0	100%
Marne Saunders	N/A	14	14	0	100%
McLaren Vale	N/A	25	25	0	100%
Morambro Creek	N/A	7	7	0	100%
Northern Adelaide Plains	N/A	1,049	1,011	38	96.4%
Other Statewide	N/A	0	-	-	-
Padthaway	N/A	3	3	0	100%
Peake, Roby, Sherlock	N/A	0	-	-	-
River Murray	N/A	219	218	1	99.5%
Southern Basins & Musgrave	N/A	0	0	0	-
Tatiara	N/A	200	198	2	-
Tintinara Coonalpyn	N/A	0	-	-	-
Western Mount Lofty Ranges	N/A	84	82	2	97.6%
<b>State totals</b>		<b>1,831</b>	<b>1,787</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>97.6%</b>

1 Data unavailable at time of publishing.

2 Site visits includes both targeted site visits undertaken as part of activities outlined in Attachment A, and business as usual or other compliance visits conducted as needed.

3 The number of sites that had compliance issues and required further compliance action.

## Table 3. Compliance actions relating to wells and well drillers licences in 2024-25

Each of the compliance actions undertaken in this table relates to the following sections of the LSA Act or LSA Water Management Regulations:

- **Section 115(4) and Regulation 25:** If the holder of a well driller’s licence contravenes or fails to comply with a condition of the licence
- **Section 104(3)(a):** Drilling, plugging, backfilling or sealing a well;
- **Section 104(3)(b):** Repairing, replacing of altering the casing, lining or screen of a well;
- **Section 119(1):** Obligation to maintain a well; and **Section 120 (1), (2) and (3):** Requirement for remedial or other works.

Education /Advisory comms e.g. letters, emails, SMS	1	
Final Notice / Direction Letter Issued	0	
Administrative sanctions or expiations	0	
Compliance breaches reports	0	
Criminal investigation in progress	0	
Proceedings commenced	0	
Finalised - civil enforcement actions	0	
Site visits <sup>4</sup>	Number of visits	26
	Number compliant	20
	Number that required compliance <sup>5</sup>	6
	% visits compliant	76.9%

4 Site visits include both targeted site visits undertaken as part of activities outlined in Attachment A, and business as usual or other compliance visits conducted as needed.

5 A site that had compliance issues and required further compliance action is counted as “1” in this column.



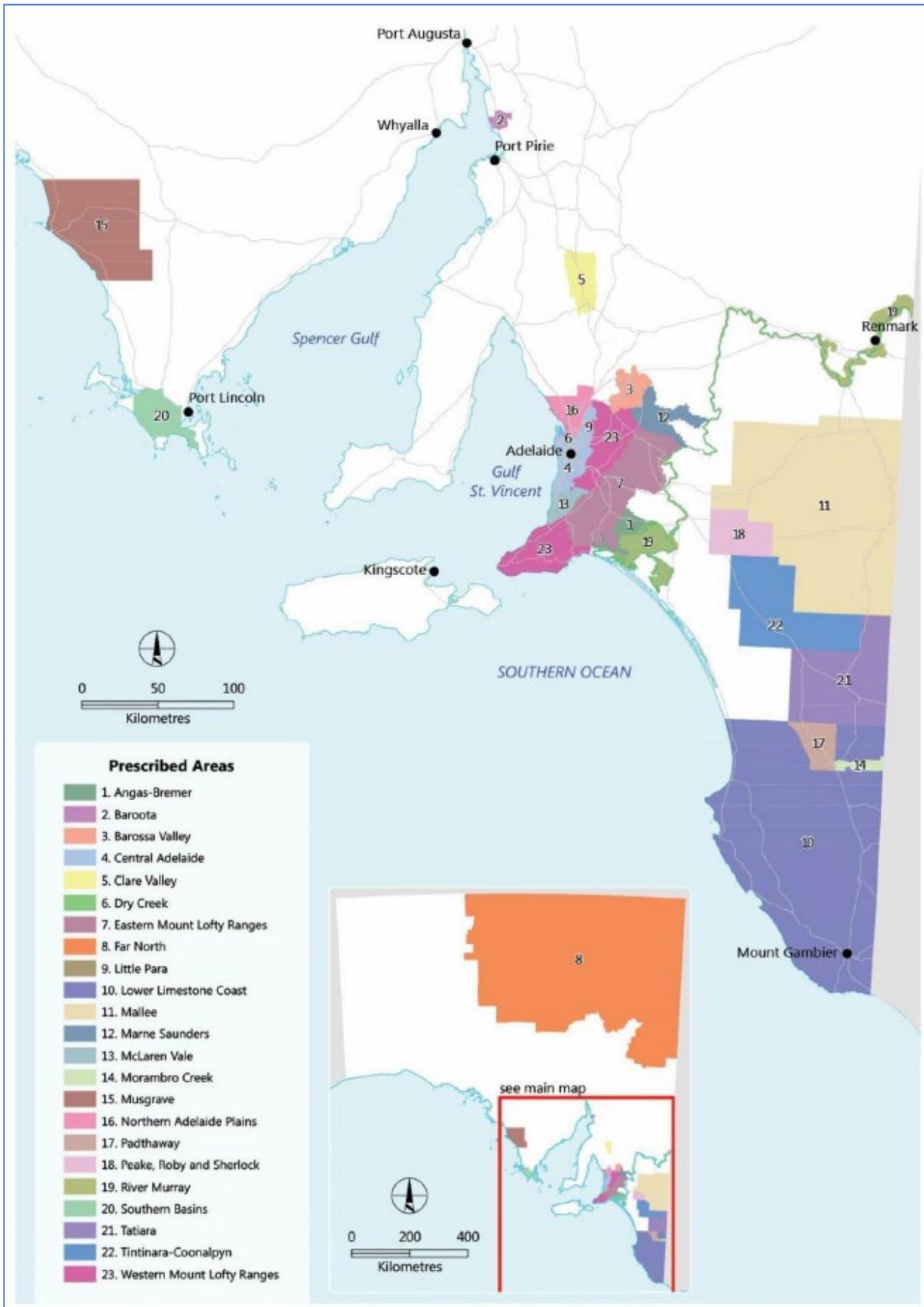
## Attachment A: Targeted Compliance Activities undertaken for 2024-25

Prescribed Resource	Compliance Activity
Central Adelaide Prescribed Well Area	DEW collected two thirds of the meter records needed from sources required to report water take.
Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area	Transitioning of all licence holders to self-meter reads on track for 2025-26 end of year reporting. 1049 visits detected 38 faulty meters requiring replacement.
River Murray PWC	DEW desktop and field assessments confirmed that 95% of Lower Murray swamps (ELMA) post-flood meter reinstallations are complete.
Tatiara PWA	Compliance officers conducted field activities to assess over 200 meters against State compliance requirements in the Tatiara Prescribed Well Area.
Statewide	DEW reviewed all meter readings submitted for the 2024-25 water year to identify accounts needing adjustment and identify missing and unusual readings that require follow-up.
Statewide	DEW registered over 4000 users on the <i>mywater</i> online portal through onboarding efforts throughout 2024-25.
Statewide	DEW refined and published the online meter notification form and validation certificate.

## Attachment B: Targeted Compliance Activities for 2025-26

Prescribed Resource	Compliance Activity
<b>Barossa Valley</b>	Identify and assess ageing meters for compliance against the South Australian Metering Specification
<b>Central Adelaide Prescribed Well Area</b>	The CAPWA meter identification and installation program will continue through the 2025-26 water year.
<b>Clare Valley</b>	Identify and assess ageing meters for compliance against the South Australian Metering Specification.
<b>Lower Limestone Coast PWA</b>	Desktop review of special meter conditions in high-risk areas.
<b>McClare Vale</b>	Identify and assess ageing meters for compliance against the South Australian Metering Specification
<b>Northern Adelaide Plains Prescribed Wells Area</b>	Complete transition of all licence holders to self-meter reads. Identify and assess ageing meters for compliance against the South Australian Metering Specification
<b>Southern Basins</b>	Identify and assess ageing meters for compliance against the South Australian Metering Specification
<b>Statewide</b>	Develop policy and procedure for escalation decisions for repeat or significant offenders
<b>Statewide</b>	Required annual BAU checks for alleged overuse, adjustments, non-submitted reads and anomalous reads.
<b>Statewide</b>	DEW onboarding licensees and validators to mywater online portal.

# Map of prescribed areas referred to in report





With the exception of the Piping Shrike emblem, other material or devices protected by Aboriginal rights or a trademark, and subject to review by the Government of South Australia at all times, the content of this document is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Licence. All other rights are reserved.

Disclaimer: DEW and its employees do not warrant or make any representation regarding the use, or results of the use, of the information contained herein as regards to its correctness, accuracy, reliability and currency or otherwise. DEW and its employees expressly disclaim all liability or responsibility to any person using the information or advice.