

Water Compliance Reporting and Planning

2020 - 2021



Ref: DEW-D0014783

Background

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) is responsible for managing South Australia's water resources for the future. This includes monitoring water users who take and use water from prescribed water sources such as a dam, bore, stream, river or creek to ensure they are meeting their legal obligations. In total, there are 14,029 water licences throughout South Australia.

This report includes both 'business as usual' compliance activities and targeted compliance activities undertaken by DEW during the 2020-21 water use year¹ and relates to commitment SA 2.6 in the *Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact*.

Summary

The targeted compliance activities in 2020-21 were to:

- Audit all new meter installations for meter validation certification;
- Audit sites and meter readings within the Mallee Prescribed Wells Area (PWA) Border Designated Area;
- Undertake inspections and take authorised meter reads for reported instances of meters not working correctly within specified zones in the Lower Limestone Coast and Tatiara PWAs;
- Collect annual meter readings, educate licence holders on meter reading obligations, verify meter reading installations and usage adjustments, and note any compliance issues for the Western Mount Lofty Ranges Prescribed Water Resources Area (PWRA); and
- Audit well integrity and water taking infrastructure in the Far North PWA.

The remainder of the compliance activities undertaken across the rest of South Australia primarily involved engaging with water licence holders regarding meeting their metering obligations in accordance with the [South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specifications](#) (revised in June 2019) and the [Landscape](#)

[South Australia \(Water Management\) Regulations 2020](#) (LSA Water Regulations) under the [Landscape South Australia Act 2019](#) (LSA Act).

During 2020-21, 21% of the 14,029 water licences in SA received a site visit associated with a compliance activity, and 93% of those who received a site visit were compliant.

Contents

The business as usual compliance activities and targeted compliance activities that occurred in 2020-21 (1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021) are summarised in table 1 and 2.

[Table 1:](#) Compliance actions pertaining to water take and use.

[Table 2:](#) Compliance actions pertaining to wells and well driller licences.

Please refer to Attachments A and B for further information about the targeted compliance activities:

[Attachment A:](#) Targeted compliance activities undertaken in 2020-21.

[Attachment B:](#) Planned targeted compliance activities for 2021-22.

¹ The 2020-21 water use year compliance reporting is for the period of 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021. Published October 2021.

Table 1. Compliance actions pertaining to water take and use for 2020-21

Table 1 includes compliance actions and site visits undertaken between 1 August 2020 and 31 July 2021, for business as usual and targeted compliance activities, as committed to in 2020-21 (refer Attachment 1). Each compliance action recorded in this table relates to the following sections of the LSA Act or LSA Water 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 water licence with allocation; or by diverting to an illegally constructed dam; or taking water for stock and domestic purposes unless entitled to);
- 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 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, emails, SMS)	Final Notice / Direction Letter Issued	Administrative sanctions or expiations	Compliance breaches reports	Criminal investigation in progress	Proceedings commenced	Finalised - civil enforcement actions	Site Visits ²			
								Number of visits	Number compliant	Number that required compliance action ³	% compliant
River Murray	7712	58	38					182	174	8	95%
Mallee	1502	11	6					126	122	4	97%
Angas Bremer	451	1	2					18	18		100%
Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges	5260	21	21					43	35	8	81%
Marne Saunders	547	1	4					6	5	1	83%
Peake, Roby, Sherlock	21		1								
Clare	925	34	8					99	98	1	99%
Barossa	1548	8	11					65	65		100%
Southern Basins & Musgrave	35							20	20		100%
Lower Limestone Coast	4976	62	12		1			828	817	11	98%
Tatiara	793	9	2					130	127	3	97%
Tintinara Coonapyn	238	1						13	13		100%
Padthaway	274	4									
Morambro Creek											
Northern Adelaide Plains	3477	26	54	3				1095	959	136	87%
McLaren Vale	936		14					38	35	3	92%
Central Adelaide	378		1					1	1		100%
Western Mount Lofty Ranges	4745	9	33	3	1			300	273	27	91%
Baroota	20	2									
Far North	9 ⁴										
Other Statewide	14										
Total	33,861	247	207	6	2			2,964	2,762	202	

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

³ If a site had any compliance issues and required further compliance action, then this is counted as "1" in this column.

⁴ The Department for Environment and Water also undertook two rounds of public consultation.

Table 2. Compliance actions pertaining to wells and well drillers licences in 2020-21

Each of the compliance actions undertaken in this table relate to the following sections of the LSA Act or LSA Water 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 or 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 comm's (e.g. letters, emails, SMS)	Final Notice / Direction Letter Issued	Administrative sanctions or expiations	Compliance breaches reports	Criminal investigation in progress	Proceedings commenced	Finalised - civil enforcement actions	Site Visits ⁵			
							Number of visits	Number compliant	Number that required compliance action ⁶	% compliant
26	16	3	153	0	0	0	55	44	11	80%

⁵ Site visits includes both targeted site visits undertaken as part of activities outlined in Attachment A, and also business as usual or other compliance visits conducted as needed.

⁶ If a site had any compliance issues and required further compliance action, then this is counted as "1" in this column.

ATTACHMENT A: TARGETED COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN 2020-21

DEW has actioned all of the targeted compliance activities outlined in the table below. The site visits undertaken and level of compliance has been reported in Table 1 and 2 of this report.

PRESCRIBED AREA	DELIVERABLE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
All SA prescribed resources	Audit of new meter installations for year 2020-2021 for meter validation certification	Desktop audit of certification for new meter installation validations and follow up compliance investigations and procedures where necessary.
Mallee PWA	Border Designated Area meter reading and site compliance audit	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect current installation of meter to check compliance with the <i>South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specification</i>; Inspect current installation of the meter to check the compliance of the meter installation maintenance with the <i>Landscape SA Act 2019</i> and <i>Landscape SA (Water Management) Regulations 2020</i>; and Take an authorised meter read.
Lower Limestone Coast PWA (Border Designated Area Zones) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donovons Zone 3A Frances Bangham Zone 5A 	Follow up with water licence holders regarding the reporting of meters not working correctly. Meet with water licence holders who have notified DEW of a faulty meter on site.	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inspect current installation of meter to check compliance with the <i>South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specification</i>; Inspect current installation of the meter to check the compliance of the meter installation maintenance with the <i>Landscape SA Act 2019</i> and <i>Landscape SA (Water Management) Regulations 2020</i>; and Take an authorised meter read.
Tatiara PWA (Border Designated Area Zones) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zone 7A Zone 8A Shaugh 	Follow up with water licence holders regarding the reporting of meters not working correctly. Meet with water licence holders who have notified DEW of a faulty meter on site.	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inspect current installation of meter to check compliance with the <i>South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specification</i>; Inspect current installation of the meter to check the compliance of the meter installation maintenance with the <i>Landscape SA Act 2019</i> and <i>Landscape SA (Water Management) Regulations 2020</i>; and Take an authorised meter read.
Western Mount Lofty Ranges PWRA	Follow up with water licence holders regarding the meter reading obligation process	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect annual meter reading, educate licence holder on meter reading obligations Verify meter reading installations and usage adjustments Note any compliance issues
Far North PWA	Far North well integrity and water taking infrastructure audit	Follow up of any issues identified through a well and surface water audit.

ATTACHMENT B: PLANNED TARGETED COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN 2021-22

PRESCRIBED AREA	DELIVERABLE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
Northern Adelaide Plains PWA	Educational compliance program.	Educate water licence holders on their water licensing obligations, the importance of complying, how they can monitor their compliance and the implications of not complying.
Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges PWRA	Field visits to occur for 10% of licensed sites with unmetered sources (i.e. dams) ⁷ .	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect sites to determine that water is not being taken for a licensed purpose; and Where it is found that water is being taken for a licensed purpose, compliance action to be undertaken.
Lower Limestone Coast PWA	Field visits to occur for 10% of metered sites, with a focus on sites identified as having broken meters that have been replaced or on meters greater than 5 years old.	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect current installation and maintenance of meter to check compliance with the <i>South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specification</i>, the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> and <i>Landscape South Australia (Water Management) Regulations 2020</i>; and Take an authorised meter read.
Tatiara PWA	Field visits to occur for 10% of metered sites, with a focus on sites identified as having broken meters that have been replaced or on meters greater than 5 years old.	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect current installation and maintenance of meter to check compliance with the <i>South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specification</i>, the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> and <i>Landscape South Australia (Water Management) Regulations 2020</i>; and Take an authorised meter read.
Tintinara Coonalpyn PWAs	Field visits to occur for 10% of metered sites, with a focus on sites identified as having broken meters that have been replaced or on meters greater than 5 years old.	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect current installation and maintenance of meter to check compliance with the <i>South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specification</i>, the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> and <i>Landscape South Australia (Water Management) Regulations 2020</i>; and Take an authorised meter read.
Padthaway PWA	Field visits to occur for 10% of metered sites, with a focus on sites identified as having broken meters that have been replaced or on meters greater than 5 years old.	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect current installation and maintenance of meter to check compliance with the <i>South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specification</i>, the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> and <i>Landscape South Australia (Water Management) Regulations 2020</i>; and Take an authorised meter read.
Morambo Creek Prescribed Watercourse	Field visits to occur for 10% of metered sites, with a focus on sites identified as having broken meters that have been replaced or on meters greater than 5 years old.	Visit sites to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect current installation and maintenance of meter to check compliance with the <i>South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specification</i>, the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> and <i>Landscape South Australia (Water Management) Regulations 2020</i>; and Take an authorised meter read.
Statewide	Education for well drillers	Upload explanatory video to www.environment.sa.gov.au to assist well drillers to correctly fill out well completion reports and comply with the well drillers licence condition to submit reports within 30 days.

⁷ The focus of this audit will be unmetered sources (i.e. dams) that are licensed and are exempt from metering due to water not currently being taken from the resource for licensed purposes.