

WORK PROGRAM TO IMPROVE THE TRANSPARENCY OF INFORMATION ABOUT WATER TAKE UNDER ENTITLEMENTS

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN COMPLIANCE COMPACT COMMITMENT 1.2B

Commitment 1.2b of the Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact states:

Each Basin State will publish a work program to improve the transparency of information about water take under entitlements, to be implemented no later than 2025, that addresses:

- i. Real-time information on flows, extractions and related rules in unregulated river systems.*
- ii. Location of take (e.g. pumps, bores or meters) and levels of take in all surface and groundwater systems.*
- iii. Changes to water registers to ensure that information about water entitlements and trades can be easily accessed by the public.*

The work program should be rolled out progressively, with a priority on high risk areas, it should respect relevant privacy laws, and include any exemptions made by the state should be supported by justification published on the website of the relevant state agency.

Each requirement outlined in 1.2b above is addressed in the table below.

Commitment no	Commitment	How is commitment achieved or planned to be achieved (or if will not be achieved, justification for exemption)?	Implementation timeframe
1.2b (i)	Publish real-time information on flows, extractions and related rules in unregulated ¹ river systems.	The objective of this commitment is to 'improve the transparency of information about water take under entitlements', and is accordingly focussed on prescribed water resources areas where water entitlements exist. Of South Australia's prescribed areas, the only regulated river system is the South Australian River Murray. Rivers within the remaining prescribed surface water areas are unregulated.	

¹ 'A river system where no major dams or weir structures have been built to regulate the supply, or extraction, of water for consumptive use'

		<p><u>Real-time information on flows:</u> Flow rates for the prescribed unregulated rivers of the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin are monitored using telemetry and water licence holders can access real-time information on flows on DEW's Water Connect website.</p>	Complete
		<p><u>Publish 'related rules' regarding take from unregulated river systems:</u> All take in the unregulated rivers in the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin is governed by conditions on water licenses which require that no more than the annual allocation endorsed on the water licence can be taken (through a meter). There are no other 'take' rules that apply that require publishing.</p> <p>The only exception to this - where extraction rules relating to flow rate exist in an unregulated river - are the Angas and Bremer Rivers in the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges (EMLR) Prescribed Water Resources Area. These flows are small in comparison to other parts of the Basin. These rivers are ephemeral and certain types of water allocations in the lower catchment may only be taken during a 'flow event' (i.e. when the flow rate is above a certain value) as shown from certain stream gauging stations on each river respectively. These 'take' rules are outlined in principles on page 153 of the Water Allocation Plan for the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges and are also outlined as a condition of relevant water licences. The applicable real time flow rates are available on the Water Connect website which is updated hourly. In addition, to improve the transparency and understanding of these water take rules, a Fact sheet explaining the take rules is planned to be published on a public facing website in late 2020 and distributed to affected water users.</p>	End of 2020
		<p><u>Real time information on extraction:</u> It is not currently mandatory to have telemetered meters installed on licensed extractions in South Australia. While it has been a requirement in the South Australian Licensed Water Use Meter Specifications that all meters have the capability of being retro-fitted with telemetry, telemetry has not yet been mandated, nor is it mandated under the Australian Standard for Meters for Non-Urban Water Supply (AS4747). SA is currently seeking funding prior to introducing telemetry requirements for customers. Given telemetry is not currently installed and is subject to funding,</p>	Exempt

		real-time extraction information from unregulated rivers is unable to be displayed or a date committed to in future. This statement justifies why South Australia is 'exempt' from the specific requirement to publish real-time information on extractions from unregulated rivers.	
1.2b (ii)	Publish location of take (e.g. pumps, bores or meters) information	<p>The precise location where an individual or company takes water (under a water licence) is classified as sensitive information in accordance with the South Australian Information Classification System and the Information Privacy Principles.</p> <p>Therefore, the Department cannot publish data about associated water sources, meter allocation or levels and land parcels, which could directly or indirectly identify an individual licence holder. This protects the licence holder's confidentiality rights and prevents the publication of any information which may be commercially sensitive or commercially/competitively advantageous.</p> <p>On occasion this type of data may be released to members of the public who are undertaking work on behalf of the agency or a licensee, however this is at the discretion of the relevant Information Authority within the Department and the data consumer must adhere to a restricted information licence and the South Australian Protective Security Framework for Information Security. This includes conditions such as only permitting the data to be used for a specific and agreed upon purpose, no further distribution of the data, storage and use on a secure system and the requirement that the information be treated as private and confidential.</p>	Exempt
1.2b (ii)	Publish levels of take in all surface water and groundwater systems	South Australia plans to publicly publish the levels of take for all prescribed water resources areas (aggregated to resource scale). It is considered that the earliest feasible time that this information could be published on an annual basis is when the new water licensing system – called the 'Water Management Solutions' – is brought into operation. This is because the new system marks a change in technology, will provide for enhanced functionality including streamlined data delivery timeframes and will allow for potentially automated and improved annual reporting across prescribed areas. Hence, the data will be published once the new system has been operationalised,	2023

		tested and the appropriate reporting functionality is in place. This is expected to be no later than 2023.	
1.2b (iii)	Changes to water registers to ensure that information about water entitlements and trades can be easily accessed by the public.	<p>DEW publicly reports Water Trading in South Australia, through its WaterConnect website. This website includes information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water allocation trading history (volumes and prices), • Water entitlement trading history (volumes and prices), and • Processing time for water trades (against trade service standards). <p>Through the development of the new water register (the Water Management Solution program) and the complementary Enhanced Water Register project, South Australia is considering what information should be captured/accessed by the water register, how information is reported and the accessibility of data.</p> <p>It is noted that any person can submit a request to DEW for data from the State water register. In response, DEW will provide data with consideration of the end purpose of the data, the South Australian Information Classification System and the Information Privacy Principles, as outlined in 1.2b(ii) above.</p>	Complete