

Natural Resources Access Regulator

nrar.nsw.gov.au



Regulatory Policy

December 2025



Lake Hume - Photo: Salty Dingo

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across New South Wales and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise the ongoing connection Aboriginal peoples have to Country, and we honour their deep spiritual, cultural, and custodial relationships that continue to this day.

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This document supersedes the 2021 NRAR Regulatory Policy.

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Contents

Introduction	3
The Natural Resources Access Regulator	3
About this Policy	3
Our approach to regulation	4
Our regulatory principles.....	4
Our role in the regulatory lifecycle.....	5
Our compliance activities	6
Our response to non-compliance	9
Our strategic approach	10
Enforcement tools	10
How we determine the appropriate response.....	13
Review and appeal rights.....	15
Public communication	16
Methods of communication.....	16
When NRAR gives public comment.....	16
Public dashboards and reports	17

Introduction

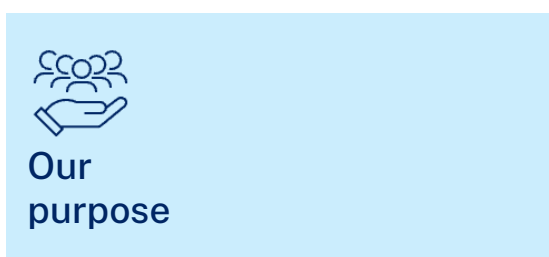
The Natural Resources Access Regulator

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) is an independent regulator established under the *Natural Resources Access Regulator Act 2017* (NRAR Act). We are responsible for ensuring compliance with natural resources management legislation in NSW. This currently includes the *Water Management Act 2000* (WM Act), the *Water Act 1912* and associated regulations.

We aim to ensure the fair and equitable use of our precious water resources and to deliver on the principal objectives of the NRAR Act.



Sustainable and fair water regulation for NSW.



Build public trust and confidence as a regulator by:

- Educating, enabling, and encouraging people to actively comply with natural resources laws.
- Enforcing the law to provide a deterrent, and to ensure fairness for the compliant.
- Championing improvements to the management of natural resources.



- Ensure effective, efficient, transparent and accountable compliance and enforcement measures for the natural resources management legislation.
- Maintain public confidence in the enforcement of the natural resources management legislation.

About this policy

This policy explains:

- how we support compliance and address non-compliance
- the principles and factors that guide our decision-making
- the enforcement options available to us
- how we use communications and public comment.

This policy should be read with the:

- [NRAR Enforceable Undertaking Guidelines](#)
- [NRAR Prosecution Guidelines](#).

Our approach to regulation

NRAR takes a risk-based and outcomes-focused approach to regulation. Being a risk-based regulator means we identify and focus our resources and efforts on the activities or areas that present the highest risk to the environment, other water users and the community.

We recognise that the most effective way to ensure compliance with the NSW water laws is through a combination of approaches. These include education and engagement with the community, using data-driven intelligence to guide compliance activities, investigating alleged breaches and taking enforcement action when appropriate.

To ensure consistency in the way we regulate, we act in line with our regulatory principles, policies and procedures.

Our regulatory principles

Commitment to regulatory best practice

NRAR is committed to building public confidence in our enforcement of the NSW water laws. Our Regulatory Policy supports our core purpose and guides our implementation of a risk-based approach. To implement our regulatory approach effectively, we maintain the necessary skills, processes and equipment. Periodic reviews of our approach, processes and activities help identify improvements and ensure alignment with current regulatory best practice.

We maintain a quality management system under ISO9001:2015. To assess our regulatory maturity, we assess against the Modern Regulator Improvement Tool (MRIT). We grow our capability by participating in networks such as the Australasian Environmental Law Enforcement and Regulators neTwork (AELERT).

Risk-based regulation

To focus our resources where they will have the greatest impact, we use a risk-based and intelligence-led approach. This helps us focus on non-compliance that is most likely to occur and most likely to cause serious harm.

Outcomes-focused regulation

Our regulatory outcomes are clearly defined and reflect our core purpose. These outcomes guide our activities. We invest in staff development to ensure we can apply the appropriate enforcement tools to achieve these outcomes and report on our progress.

Accountability

We are accountable for our compliance and enforcement activities. This means we are answerable for our decisions, including when we do or don't act and the type of action we take. We make evidence-based decisions and keep appropriate records so that decisions can be readily accessed and scrutinised. Our governance framework helps maintain objectivity, independence and integrity. Processes are in place to provide procedural fairness and natural justice.

Transparency

To build awareness of our regulatory work, we publish our policies and priorities. The regulatory process is explained clearly so the community and regulated entities know what to expect. When we detect non-compliance, we are clear about what is needed, when it is required and the potential consequences of continuing non-compliance.

Timeliness

To maximise deterrence and minimise disruption, our activities and enforcement actions are conducted in a timely way. What is considered timely will depend on the complexity of the matter and the proposed enforcement action. This also helps provide certainty to the community and maintain the principle of fairness to those involved.

Balance between consistency and flexibility

Clear policies and procedures promote consistency in our decision-making process. We also consider the specific circumstances of a situation to produce sensible fair results.

Proportionality and discretion

Regulatory action is taken proportionately to the circumstances of the breach. When required, stronger enforcement action is used. Acting in the public interest, we strive to achieve fairness in our regulatory outcomes.

Adherence to the law

All actions taken are within the legal remit of our statutory powers. We do not require the regulated community to observe requirements that are not authorised by law.

Our role in the regulatory lifecycle

NRAR is one of the three major agencies involved in water management in NSW. We are committed to working with WaterNSW and the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (NSW DCCEEW – Water Group), to optimise water management in NSW. Our role is to enforce the rules. The NSW DCCEEW – Water Group makes the rules, which means they determine the policy settings for water management in NSW. WaterNSW implements the rules, which means they administer most water licences and approvals. NSW DCCEEW – Water Group is also responsible for issuing some licences and approvals.

Figure 1. Outline of the key water agencies in NSW

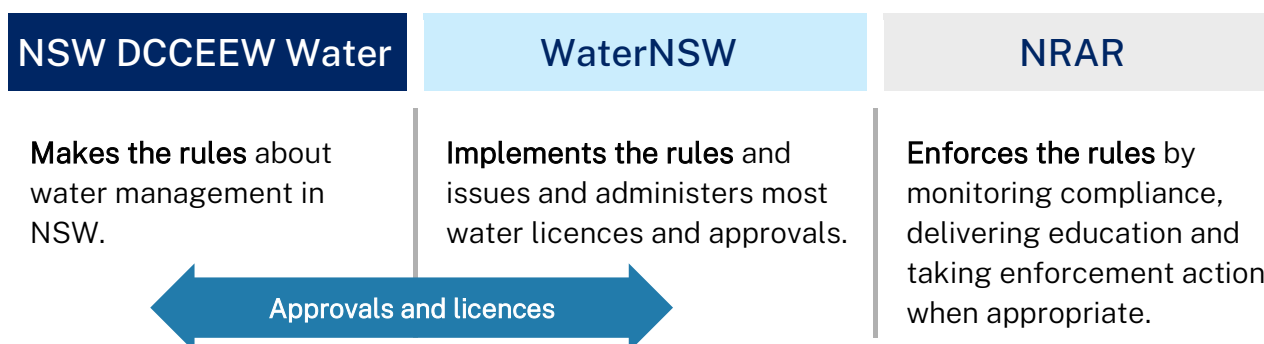
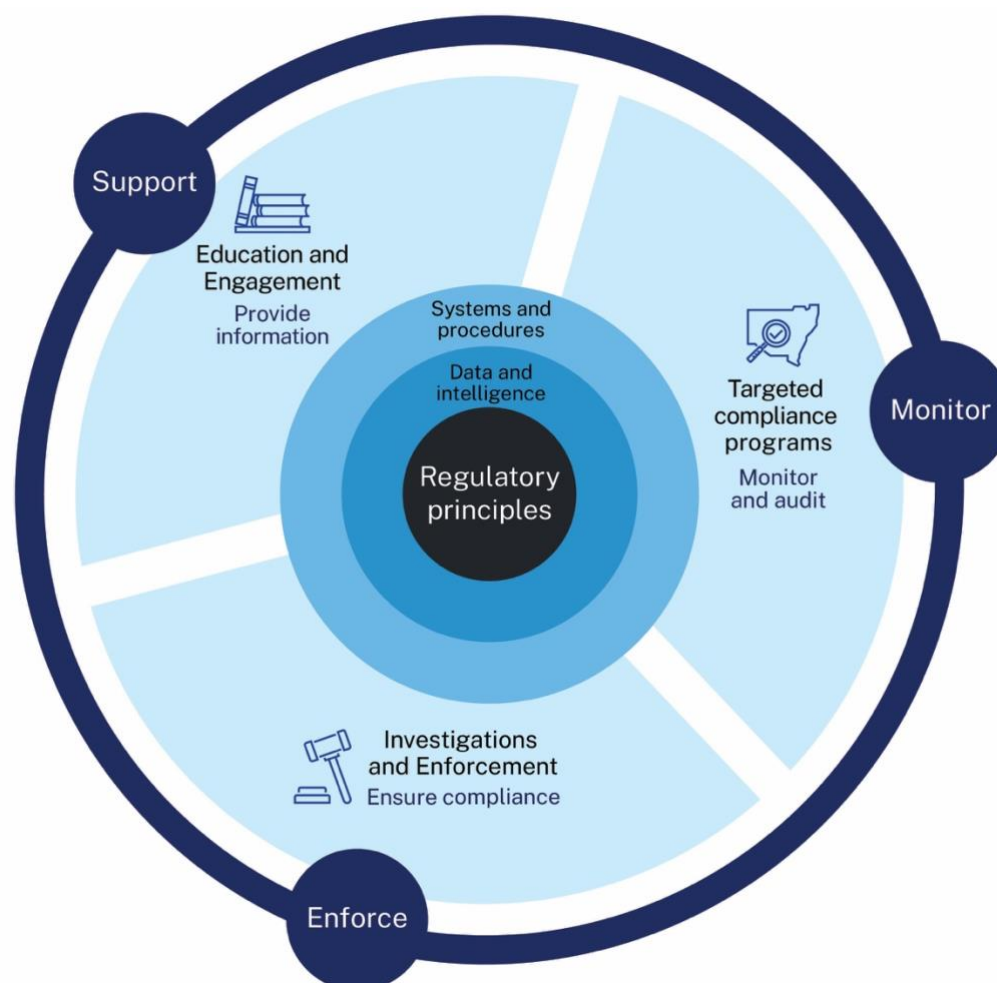


Figure 2. NRAR's core regulatory activities



Our compliance activities

Education and engagement

NRAR seeks to create long-term behaviour change and maximise voluntary compliance through our education and engagement programs.

We are committed to helping water users understand their obligations. Our education activities help water users build the knowledge and skills they need to meet their obligations and avoid unintentionally breaking the rules. Wherever possible, we work in partnership with peak bodies and stakeholder groups to share information about the water laws and progress compliance.

Our education and engagement activities include:

- providing advice at regional field days
- conducting property visits
- attending industry conferences and events
- meeting with stakeholders, including peak bodies and stakeholder groups.

We continue to make it easier for the regulated community to access information. To support our education activities, we seek opportunities to collaborate with others, including relevant state government agencies, local governments, and Aboriginal communities.

Data and intelligence

NRAR uses technology to identify potential unlawful activities, both at an individual property scale and to identify greater patterns of potential non-compliance across large areas. Spatial analysis tools such as satellite imagery and aerial photography are used to monitor changes in water volumes in dams and to detect properties where metered water take volumes seem unusually low relative to the area of irrigated crops being grown.

These tools also help to identify when storage dams have been constructed and when pumps and bores are being used to irrigate crops. This analysis supports both proactive compliance campaigns and investigations and, on a broader scale, informs the development of our regulatory priorities.

Proactive compliance campaigns

In addition to investigating reports from the public about serious alleged breaches, NRAR also conducts proactive compliance campaigns. These campaigns address our regulatory priorities and commonly involve staff from across NRAR working together to address an issue. This may include spatial and database analysts, education and engagement staff, compliance and audit officers, and investigators. These programs are commonly focused on specific industries, issues or areas and may extend over a few years.

Our regulatory priorities target compliance issues that pose the greatest risk to water management in NSW, especially where there's potential to harm the environment, communities, or other water users. To identify and prioritise compliance issues we use a range of sources including stakeholder feedback, project results, and spatial and data analytics. We review these issues every quarter to decide whether they should become a regulatory priority project.

The final selection process is rigorous and considers:

- the degree of economic, environmental and cultural harm
- if weather forecasts could worsen the issue
- emerging patterns in non-urban water use
- seasonal or operational factors that may affect timing.

This approach helps us respond quickly, focus resources where they matter most, and prevent serious harm from non-compliance.

Investigations and enforcement

Assessing reports of non-compliance

NRAR receives suspicious activity reports of potential water law breaches from the public, other government agencies and from our own staff. Reports from the public are essential to our work as they help us understand patterns of non-compliance. Before we respond, we assess the information provided and prioritise our investigations through a triage process. This involves verifying the report and gathering initial data and information.

This includes, but is not limited to, information that indicates:

- the risk to the environment
- the potential impact on other water users
- the alleged volume of water involved
- the scale of the alleged offending
- factors relating to any relevant access licences or approvals.

After this initial assessment, we decide which reports need our immediate attention, rating them based on their urgency and impact. We decide whether there is enough information to determine that a serious breach of water laws is likely to have occurred. We may determine that no law has been broken or find that the reported activity is a low priority.

If a report appears to involve a breach of laws relevant to another regulator, we may refer the matter to them. If we determine that a serious breach of water laws may have occurred, it will be referred to our investigation team.

Even where we do not investigate, we keep the reported information on file. We regularly review this information to identify patterns or trends in behaviour, which we may be able to address in the future.

NRAR's statutory role is to investigate breaches of the water law. Our role does not include acting on behalf of individuals who are in a dispute with other individuals. In these circumstances, individuals in a dispute could consider seeking their own legal advice on the options available to them.

Investigating alleged breaches

Once a matter has been assessed as high priority, our investigators gather further evidence.

Our investigators are authorised officers who have delegated investigation and enforcement powers under the WM Act. Our investigators may visit sites to inspect and collect evidence and interview landholders or other involved persons. They have the power to enter non-residential premises without a search warrant and seize evidence where this is appropriate.

Inspections are usually arranged with landholders in advance, although they may be unannounced. Investigators may use drones and other field technologies such as flow meters and acoustic profiler boats to collect evidence during these inspections.

Investigators can require an individual or company to provide information and records and require answers to questions relating to an investigation. We may engage experts to assist in these investigations.

NRAR may decide to take interim actions such as issuing stop work orders to address ongoing harm or unlawful activities. These interim actions may be taken before an investigation is finalised and are discussed in the next section.

Figure 3. NRAR's investigation process



1 An investigation starts with a suspicious activity report

- External: from the public.
- Internal: from monitoring and auditing.

2 Triage

An initial assessment is made to determine if it is low or high priority.

3a Lower priority matters

Reviewed by our intelligence unit to identify trends in suspicious activities and where to target compliance campaigns. These matters do not progress further.

3b Higher priority matters

Investigation commences with a desktop assessment to establish if there are reasonable grounds to believe breach/breaches have occurred.

4 Detailed investigation

Further information and evidence gathered through site inspections, interviews, data analysis, other regulators.

5 Interim measures

If there is serious ongoing harm, a stop work order or other direction may be issued while the investigation continues.

6 Breach allegation

Where there is evidence of a breach, an appropriate enforcement action is identified based on degree of harm, culpability and the public interest.

7a Resolution: lower tier sanction

Warnings, cautions, penalty notices, and directions are delegated to enforcement managers to apply and resolve.

7b Resolution: top tier sanction

The Enforcement Committee will determine whether to commence legal proceedings (NRAR board must approve), suspend/cancel licence, charge under s60G or s910 or accept enforceable undertakings.

8 Finalise investigation

The informant and other relevant parties are informed of the outcome. The action taken is listed on the public register and may be referenced in media material.

Our response to non-compliance

Our strategic approach

NRAR takes a proportionate approach to responding to non-compliance. This means that we consider the circumstances of each case individually but apply policies and processes to ensure consistency in decision-making.

Compliance means adhering to legal requirements and obligations. It is an ongoing process. This means people and businesses must regularly assess their operations, activities, and water use to ensure they are complying with the rules.

Enforcement means achieving or compelling compliance through the use of influence, authority and statutory powers.

Enforcement tools

We can respond to non-compliance in a range of ways including using enforcement powers under the WM Act:

- **Advisory letter** – a letter that educates someone on how to comply with water laws, relevant to their operations. Advisory letters are used where there is a suspected breach of water laws, or a very minor breach with no harm or impact.
- **Warning letter** – a written warning given when there are reasonable grounds to consider that a person has allegedly committed a specific water law breach of a minor nature.
- **Official caution** – a type of warning letter used instead of a penalty notice when an NRAR authorised officer believes that an official caution may be more appropriate. The decision to use an official caution is informed by the circumstances outlined in the Attorney General's Caution Guidelines under the *Fines Act 1996*.
- **Penalty notice** – a fine issued for penalty notice offences where the breach is not trivial or a minor technical breach, but it is not serious enough to justify more serious enforcement actions such as prosecution or civil penalty proceedings.
- **Charge or debit for water taken unlawfully** – a financial charge imposed on an offender who takes water in contravention of licensing and certain approval requirements. Also referred to as a section 60G or section 91O charge, this is an administrative penalty. At a minimum, this charge is equal to the value of the water taken and may be up to five times higher. In the case of water taken in contravention of licensing requirements, NRAR may decide to debit a person's water licence account. This debit can also be up to 5 times the volume of water taken unlawfully.
- **Licence or approval action** – suspending or cancelling a licence or approval is a major sanction that may be used in serious cases involving significant harm, high culpability or persistent non-compliance.

Voluntary agreements

- **Enforceable undertaking (EU)** – a legally enforceable agreement between NRAR and a legal person. In this agreement, the person agrees to carry out actions that address specific issues related to an alleged breach in accordance with the [NRAR Enforceable Undertaking Guidelines](#). EUs are a type of restorative justice tool, because they must include commitments to repair or address the harm caused to communities and the environment. For example, an EU should propose measures that benefit the local community, improve or restore the local environment, contribute to better water management or address Aboriginal or other cultural impacts. EUs are flexible, timely and less resource-intensive than legal proceedings.
- A person may initiate the EU process themselves or NRAR may invite them to do so in appropriate matters. As an EU is a voluntary agreement, the alleged offender must choose whether to offer an EU and what undertakings are offered. We will accept an EU if it's the best regulatory option. It must also serve the public interest.

Options that may be used as interim measures

Some enforcement tools may be used as interim measures during an investigation before the final enforcement action is decided. In some circumstances, they may also be appropriate to finalise an investigation.

- **Voluntary compliance/corrective action agreement** – an agreement that may be used where the non-compliance is minor and can be remedied quickly. To consider this option the person needs to be cooperative and typically have no history of non-compliance.
- **Statutory directions such as stop work orders and remediation notices** – a formal written instruction used to direct someone to do something or stop doing something. This may include directing someone to stop an unlawful activity or to remove or modify unlawful water management works. It may also involve installing metering equipment or carrying out actions to appropriately manage water resources or restore a degraded watercourse.
- NRAR will also issue a compliance cost notice following a direction, except in extenuating circumstances. A compliance cost notice requires the recipient of a direction to pay NRAR's costs related to the preparation and monitoring of compliance with the direction. For example, NRAR may issue a direction to a landholder to remove an unlawful dam and then send them a notice to recover the costs of preparing and checking compliance with that direction.
- **Mandatory compliance audits** – a direction given to compel someone to audit their water use and other activities under the WM Act to determine their level of compliance. A compliance audit direction may require the person to engage a qualified compliance auditor. For example, these may be directed for large or complex sites where NRAR believes there are extensive and significant breaches.

Court actions

There are a range of applications or actions that NRAR can make in court. The magistrate or judge of that court then becomes the decision-maker.

- **Criminal prosecutions** – NRAR may begin criminal proceedings in the Local Court or the Land and Environment Court (LEC) for serious alleged offences where prosecution is in the public interest. Prosecution may be considered for serious breaches, for example, those involving dishonest, intentional or reckless acts, particularly in circumstances where a criminal conviction is considered appropriate. The court decides whether the alleged offence/s have occurred and, if convicted, what the penalty will be.
- **Monetary benefit orders** – NRAR may apply to the LEC for a monetary benefit order during a criminal prosecution. This can occur if NRAR has evidence that the alleged breach resulted in significant financial gain. If convicted, the Court may order the offender to pay an amount to the NSW Government for the financial benefit obtained through committing the breach.
- **Civil penalty proceedings¹** - NRAR may commence civil penalty proceedings in the LEC for serious alleged breaches. The Court decides whether the alleged breach occurred and, if so, decides on the civil penalty and any other orders. Civil penalty proceedings may be considered as an alternative to criminal prosecution if they better reflect the type and nature of the breach, or if they're likely to have a stronger deterrent effect.
- **Other court orders** – We may seek orders in criminal or civil penalty proceedings to remedy or prevent environmental harm, and to order the payment of investigation, legal and other costs. Additional orders may include requiring a person to publicise the breach and sentence or attend training. We may seek court orders to help achieve restorative justice outcomes. This may include requiring the offender to carry out projects or activities for environmental restoration or enhancement, or for the benefit of the affected community or general public.
- **Civil orders** – NRAR may apply to the LEC for certain civil remedies. These include an injunction to reduce the likelihood or consequences of non-compliance, orders to remedy or restrain a breach, and orders to comply with an EU. NRAR will consider these where other options are not suitable and it is in the public interest to apply for an order.

NRAR cannot begin civil proceedings during or after a criminal prosecution for substantially the same conduct. NRAR will only commence a prosecution after civil penalty proceedings in the unusual circumstances where it is in the public interest to do so. The factors that NRAR uses to decide on which contraventions and respondents to pursue in civil penalty proceedings are the same as those detailed in the [Prosecution Guidelines](#).

In a range of matters, particularly relating to breaches of a corporation, NRAR may initiate proceedings or request orders against a related person. This would be considered where the related person had a degree of responsibility in the breach or the circumstances giving rise to the breach. Related persons include company or body corporate directors, a person who was involved in the management of affairs in the corporation or body corporate, or related entities.

Non-compliance with directions and court orders

If a person does not comply with a direction or court order, we will engage with them to determine if there is a genuine reason such as factors outside their control. If there is a genuine reason, we may extend the completion date for actions in a direction.

Where a person has not complied with a court order, they will need to seek the court's approval to vary the order. This is normally required before the completion date specified in the order. Depending on the circumstances, NRAR may support or oppose this application.

If a person does not implement the specified measures in a direction within the set timeframe and there is no reasonable justification for the delay, NRAR may take enforcement action.

¹ Civil penalty proceedings commence on 1 January 2026.

NRAR may also decide to exercise the Minister's powers to carry out the specified measures. In this situation, we will appoint a contractor as an authorised person to carry out the work. NRAR will recover the contractor's costs from the person who received the direction. Before appointing a contractor, we will write to the person to advise them of our intention and provide an estimate of the costs. We will consider any response received from the person before making a final decision.

In rare cases, the contractor may need to cross another landholder's property. For example, the only way to reach a site from a public road might be by using an access easement over a neighbour's property. In this case, we will provide reasonable notice to the neighbouring landholder that an authorised person intends to access the work site through their property. We will consider any feedback received from the landholder before making a final decision. If any damage is caused to the neighbouring property, it will be rectified by the authorised person.

Alternatively, NRAR may seek a court order requiring the person who received the direction to carry out the specified works.

How we determine the appropriate response

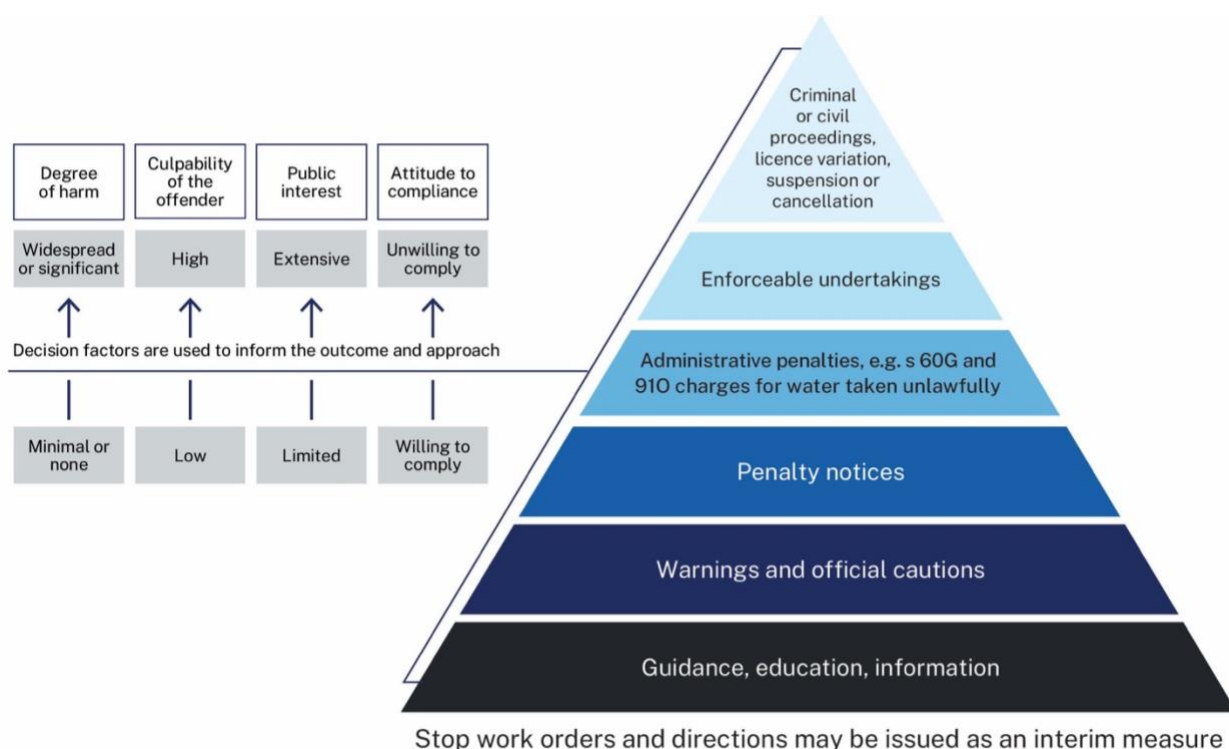
The enforcement options we decide to use depend on the circumstances of each matter. A mix of regulatory responses allows for a balanced approach to non-compliance to stop improper conduct and promote behaviour change.

There are a range of factors related to the non-compliance and the offender that influence our decisions. These include the degree of harm, the culpability of the offender, their attitude to compliance and the public interest:

Degree of harm	• The seriousness of the non-compliance, based on its actual or potential impacts on other water users, the community, the environment and Aboriginal cultural values.
Culpability of the offender	• Evidence of motivation for the non-compliance, including undertaking unlawful activity for financial gain. • Whether the behaviour is deliberate, reckless or involving consistent carelessness. • Whether the person has made false or misleading statements about the non-compliance. • Any mitigating or aggravating circumstances.
Public interest	• Timeframe over which the breach was committed. • Public interest and community expectation about the action taken. • Whether a decision not to act would undermine public confidence. • Whether action is necessary to provide specific or general deterrence. • Whether action is necessary to clarify a grey area in the law.
Attitude to compliance	• Voluntary remedial action taken to address the non-compliance, mitigate the harm and any mechanisms put in place to prevent a recurrence. • Cooperation demonstrated by the person involved. • Whether the breach was self-reported. • The person's willingness to comply with requirements. • Compliance history of the person. • The person's ability to comply with requirements.

The factors that guide our decision-making are considered in combination to identify what action we will take. The greater the impact on any or all factors, the more significant the response and enforcement action will be. Our approach is depicted below, with the increasing impact of the non-compliance resulting in more severe responses moving up the enforcement pyramid.

Figure 4. How we respond to non-compliance



Inappropriate considerations

A decision on enforcement action, including whether to take action, will not be influenced by any inappropriate considerations, such as:

- any elements of discrimination against the person, such as the race, religion, sex, national origin or political associations, activities or beliefs of the alleged offender or any other person involved
- personal empathy or antipathy towards the alleged offender or victim
- the political or other affiliations of those responsible for the enforcement action decision
- possible political advantage or disadvantage to the government or any political party, group or individual.

Regulatory discretion

We use regulatory discretion when making decisions about what action to take. For example, we can decide whether to commence an investigation and the appropriate enforcement action to take if we consider that a person has breached water laws. When regulatory discretion is applied, the decision-maker must consider all available information, act in good faith, and for a proper purpose under the legislation. We are accountable for our decisions, and we must record them and be able to justify them.

A combination of the WM Act, the NRAR Act and instruments of delegation give NRAR enforcement action decision making powers. In most circumstances these powers are held by the NRAR Board, through delegation from the Minister. The NRAR Board's instrument of delegation allows a director or manager to exercise these powers.

Policies and processes, including this Policy, guide our staff in the appropriate use of discretion in decision-making.

Governance arrangements

NRAR has governance and approval arrangements in place to ensure appropriate oversight of decisions on enforcement actions. This ensures consistency and appropriate oversight of the more serious sanctions recommended by investigators.

Oversight of investigation decisions

At the end of an investigation, an investigator recommends an appropriate enforcement action. The investigator may also recommend interim actions during the investigation.

The process used to consider and approve an investigator's recommended actions is based on the seriousness of the recommended enforcement action and the level of delegation.

- Managers or team leaders make decisions on advisory letters and warning letters.
- Managers make decisions on penalty notices, official cautions and directions.
- The NRAR Enforcement Committee, which includes NRAR executives, makes a recommendation on whether a charge for water taken unlawfully, or the cancellation or suspension of a licence or approval is appropriate. Then, the relevant director is the delegate responsible for issuing the enforcement action.
- The Chief Regulatory Officer (CRO) and directors decide on whether NRAR should accept an EU, based on the recommendations of the Enforcement Committee.
- The NRAR Board makes decisions on whether to commence legal proceedings (including prosecutions and civil penalty proceedings), based on legal advice and the recommendations of the Enforcement Committee.

The responsible director or the CRO may decide to seek the advice of the NRAR Board before exercising their delegated authority to take enforcement action.

Review and appeal rights

When NRAR takes enforcement action against a person using a power in the WM Act, they have the right to appeal against our decision. In most cases, this is an appeal to the LEC, although penalty notices can be disputed in the Local Court. Appeals to the LEC must be made in accordance with the court's rules and be lodged within 28 days of the enforcement action. If a person wants to dispute their penalty notice in the Local Court, they need to apply online to Revenue NSW.

A person can also request an internal review of NRAR's decision to issue a penalty notice through Revenue NSW. These reviews are undertaken by suitably senior staff who were not involved in the original decision. Internal reviews are carried out following the Attorney General's Internal Review Guidelines under the *Fines Act 1996*. The outcome of a review could be that the reviewer confirms the validity of the penalty notice or that they recommend the penalty notice be withdrawn.

If a person is not satisfied with NRAR's decisions, including a decision not to commence an investigation of an alleged breach of water laws, they may seek further support by contacting the NSW Ombudsman.

Public communication

To deliver on our mandate to maintain public confidence in the enforcement of water laws, we publish information about our regulatory efforts and the outcomes of our work.

We do this to uphold transparency, educate water users, encourage voluntary compliance and deter non-compliance.

Methods of communication

Information about our work is communicated in a variety of ways including:

- in the media
- on [social media](#)
- in our quarterly newsletter [Water Compliance News](#)
- on the [NRAR website](#)
- in person at events such as field days or conferences.

We issue media releases about our work and its results. All [media releases](#) are stored on the NRAR website for two years.

Educational materials are published on our website including a series of [fact sheets](#). Field staff hand these out in person at events or during property visits.

NRAR's social media channels provide up-to-date information about our activities and educational information on how to comply with the water rules.

Our quarterly newsletter, Water Compliance News, includes relevant compliance information or NRAR updates. It is distributed to a list of subscribers who have opted to receive this communication.

When NRAR gives public comment

NRAR issues public statements where appropriate to do so.

Some examples of topics we may issue a media release or public statement about are:

- The commencement of a prosecution and the outcome when it is finalised.
- Enforcement outcomes and case studies.
- Compliance campaigns and upcoming fieldwork.
- Educational campaigns and information about how to follow the rules.
- The results of our compliance activity reporting and key trends.
- Survey results or expert reports on water management issues.
- Water law changes or compliance deadlines.

Before issuing a media release or providing public comment, we consider the potential public benefits. These include providing transparency about water regulation, promoting confidence in the enforcement of NSW water laws, and deterring future non-compliance.

When it comes to enforcement, we assert our right to publish information about our actions and regulatory outcomes. However, we may withhold publication if there are legal limitations, such as during an active investigation.

Informing the regulated community about the potential implications of breaching the law is an important method of deterrence. It also provides transparency about what we are doing as the independent regulator to enforce the water laws.

Public dashboards and reports

We maintain three key dashboards on the NRAR website: the [compliance activity dashboard](#), the [metering compliance dashboard](#) and the [public register](#).

Our compliance dashboard is updated monthly. It details the investigations undertaken in each water sharing plan region, and the enforcement actions we've taken including penalty notices, directions, EUs and legal proceedings.

Our metering compliance dashboard is updated annually. It shows compliance rates for high-volume water users that need to comply with the non-urban metering rules.

Our public register is updated as new enforcement actions are finalised. NRAR has a legislative obligation to publish a register of the enforcement actions taken by or on behalf of the regulator under the WM Act. Offenders may be named on the public register in relation to an EU, after a criminal conviction or after the appeal period ends for an administrative penalty, except where NRAR approves a privacy request.

Our two key reports are our annual Progress Report and campaign reports.

The annual [Progress Report](#) is published and distributed around October and details the activities and achievements of the previous financial year.

[Campaign reports](#) are published on our website at the end of proactive compliance campaigns. These reports include the results of NRAR's work and the actions taken.

We also commission and publish other reports by experts on key issues affecting the NSW water sector, such as the [value of water report](#). We use these reports to plan activities and share them publicly to offer water users insight into why we prioritise certain activities.