

Metering regulations

NRAR's compliance approach

Fact sheet - updated April 2022 (March 2020)

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) is an independent regulator established under the *NSW Natural Resources Access Regulator Act 2017*.

One of NRAR's regulatory priorities is ensuring compliance with the water metering rules and we do so in accordance with our [regulatory policy](#)¹.

Accurate measurement can provide greater certainty about on-farm water balances, helping to optimise water use and make more informed decisions. Installing accurate meters and telemetry can help to reduce water waste, save money and improve yields.

We will consider each case on its merits but expect all water users to have made a reasonable effort to comply before their deadline.

The metering rules

The metering rules are being rolled out in stages by the NSW Government to better measure water take in NSW, make water use fairer and to build community confidence in water management.

These rules apply to water supply works, such as pumps, that can be measured with an accurate meter and are licensed to take water from rivers and groundwater systems. Visit the [Murray Darling Basin Authority](#)² website to access a list of approved meters.

Do you need to comply?

Use the department's [online metering guidance tool](#)³ to check the rules and find a certified meter installer on the [Irrigation Australia website](#).⁴

Complying with the rules

Under the metering rules, most water works including medium and large-sized pumps and bores, must be fitted with accurate meters that have been independently validated by a certified meter installer (also referred to as a DQP).

These meters must be fitted with an intelligence device and some also require telemetry to enable data about water taken through the work to be shared with a centralised database (often referred to as the DAS).

It is the water user's responsibility to engage a certified meter installer to install and/or validate their metering equipment.

Alternative pathways to compliance

We know that well-intentioned water users may miss their metering deadline due to unforeseen circumstances.

We are a firm but fair regulator and will consider each case on its merit. We recognise a handful of alternative pathways to compliance, including:

- **Inactive works** – water users who no longer use their pumps, but might want to in the future, need to apply to make their pump inactive using the form on the [WaterNSW website](#)⁵.
- **Keeping an existing meter** – a manufacturer certificate (up to 5 years old) is required to keep an existing meter that was installed before 1 April 2019 and isn't on the approved list. Alternatively, a meter installer can field test each meter and verify its accuracy. In both cases, a meter installer is required to validate the installation and fit the meter with an intelligence device and tamper evident seals.

- **Faulty meters** –if a metering equipment doesn't work after it's installed, water users need to report this to WaterNSW using the online S91i form on the [WaterNSW website](#)⁶.
- **Telemetry connectivity issues** –water users can use the department's [telemetry coverage tool](#)⁷ to check their coverage. If a water user is in a blackspot, they are eligible for a temporary exemption from the telemetry requirements⁸. To apply for the exemption, water users can submit the report from the telemetry coverage tool to the department.

We expect all water users to make a reasonable effort to comply by at a minimum having entered into a formal agreement with a meter installer before their deadline.

How we will check your compliance status

NRAR will confirm the compliance status by auditing data sources and visiting properties. We will confirm that the appropriate metering equipment has been installed and validated and if required, that data about water taken through the water work is being transmitted to the DAS.

We will also confirm if action has been taken to commence an alternative pathway to compliance.

Take action to comply with the metering rules before your deadline to avoid fines and interruptions to your water supply.

Compliance checklist

- Do you have an accurate meter?
- Has a DQP validated your meter?
- Does it have intact, tamper-proof seals?
- Is it fitted with an intelligence device?
- If you need to transmit data are you connected?

Our response to breaches of the rules

We approach each case on its merits by considering:

- the seriousness of the non-compliance, based on its actual or potential harm on the community and the environment and public interest
- the offender's attitude toward the offence and willingness to comply
- their cooperation and transparency
- their compliance history

Our responses range from warnings and fines, to interruptions to water supply and in extreme cases, prosecution.

¹ nrar.nsw.gov.au/about-us/who-we-are/our-policies-and-guidelines

² mdba.gov.au/media/mr/accurate-metering-measure-confidence-murray-darling-water-use

³ nswdpie.tfaforms.net/182

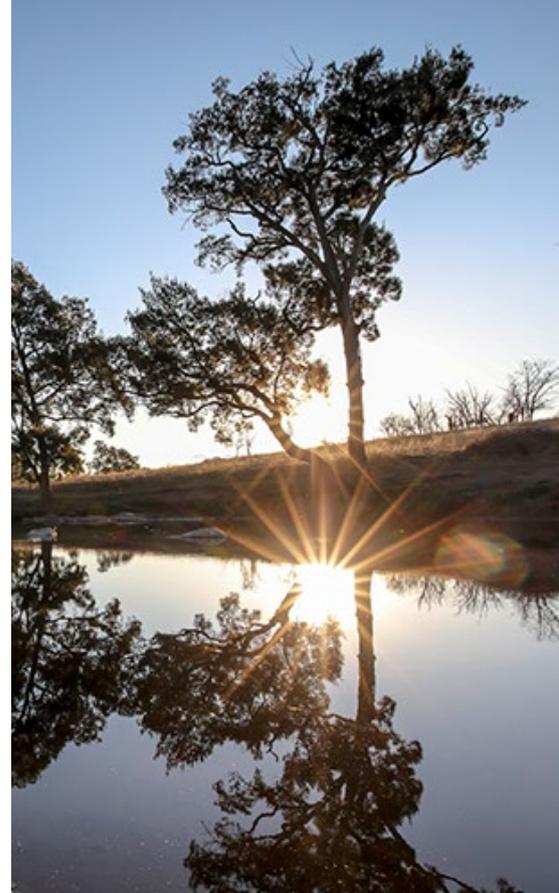
⁴ irrigationaustralia.com.au/

⁵ waternsw.com.au/amendapproval

⁶ waternsw.com.au/s91i

⁷ dpie.nsw.gov.au/water/nsw-non-urban-water-metering/what-water-users-need-to-know/telemetry-coverage-exemption

⁸ Under cl 233 of the Water Management (General) Regulation 2018



More information

Scan the QR code to access useful materials from WaterNSW and the Department of Planning and Environment about the non-urban water metering framework.

For help getting into compliance contact WaterNSW on 1300 662 077 or via email customer.helpdesk@waternsw.com.au

To contact NRAR, you can write to us at nrar.enquiries@nrar.nsw.gov.au

