

Routine monitoring

Fact sheet

September 2020 Natural Resources Access Regulator



The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) is an independent regulator established under the NSW *Natural Resources Access Regulator Act 2017*. The current regulatory focus of NRAR is water regulation, a key part of which is to prevent, detect and stop unlawful water activities.

In a move to increase our capacity to promote compliance and to engage with the water community, NRAR has put more boots on the ground to expand our presence in regional NSW.

Our routine monitoring officers will meet water users on their properties to gather data to assess their levels of compliance and better understand reasons for noncompliance.

About the routine monitoring program

NRAR has established additional teams in Dubbo, Tamworth and Deniliquin as part of its new routine monitoring program. These teams will routinely visit properties across regional NSW from October 2020 to September 2021.

This program complements NRAR's existing monitoring and audit campaigns and will allow us to better understand water compliance behaviour across NSW.

Understanding water compliance behaviour

Over the past two and a half years, NRAR has used many methods, including property inspections and new technologies (such as satellite imagery, drones and sonar depth gauges), to enforce NSW water laws. We will now expand our physical presence in regional NSW to better understand water compliance.

Information we gather during these property inspections will help NRAR:

- understand why and how regional water users comply with water laws
- identify when, and if, education campaigns are necessary to help the community understand their obligations
- assess the effectiveness of our existing operations, education and information programs about water law compliance
- identify where action may be necessary to avoid or mitigate harm to our water resources and the community.

Engaging water users

NRAR's routine monitoring program will create opportunities to meet the water community face to face.

Authorised officers from NRAR will visit properties, help the community understand their obligations and inspect water-related activities to ensure compliance with legal requirements.





During these inspections, our officers will:

- confirm landholders have a valid licence or approval
- check that landholders are taking water in accordance with local and individual restrictions
- confirm that all works, pumps and bores are being used in line with their approved purpose at the time of inspection
- ensure that water take is being appropriately monitored with metering equipment or a logbook in line with their licence and/or work approval conditions or the requirements laid out in the NSW non-urban water metering framework.

Outcomes for landholders

If our officers uncover noncompliance during a property inspection, we will follow up our investigation process to determine the most appropriate course of action to address the activity.

NRAR employs a graduated and proportionate approach to any breaches of water laws. This is based on the severity of the breach and the landholder's culpability, cooperation and approach to the breach.

More information about NRAR's compliance approach is available in our *Responding to alleged breaches* fact sheet, which is available on the NRAR website at www.industry.nsw.gov.au/nrar

Health and safety

NRAR is taking additional precautions to protect the health of its staff and the community as we continue to work through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our procedures require NRAR officers to do the following on a site inspection:

- avoid exposure to people at risk of the COVID-19 virus
- maintain social distancing
- practise COVID-19 hygiene guidelines, including frequent handwashing
- introduce themselves to the landholder, where

possible, and discuss what activities they will be conducting to identify any known hazards. They will ask landholders to help them identify potential hazards

- conduct an appropriate risk assessment according to NRAR's work health and safety policies and procedures if no landholder is present and proceed only if it is safe to do so.

Reporting a suspected breach of water laws

To make a confidential report of a suspected breach of water laws:

- use NRAR's online reporting form at www.industry.nsw.gov.au/natural-resources-access-regulator/report-suspicious-water-activities
- phone 1800 633 362.

More information

This fact sheet is one in a series explaining water management, compliance and associated issues. You can find this series and more information about licensing, approvals and compliance on the NRAR website at

www.industry.nsw.gov.au/nrar

Copies of the Acts and associated Regulations are available on the NSW Government legislation site at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au

For enquiries, call NRAR on 1800 633 362 or email nrar.enquiries@nrar.nsw.gov.au.



For more information on the Natural Resources Access Regulator, visit industry.nsw.gov.au/nrar

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