

Water compliance news

Good morning

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) was established in April 2018 to bring greater focus on the enforcement of water laws in NSW. Our function is to provide fair, transparent, efficient and accountable water law enforcement.

We release the results of our campaigns to help water users understand what we do and to build public confidence that water is being regulated fairly in NSW.

This year, we have committed to sharing regular updates about our compliance and enforcement actions. Today we are proud to share information about our activities in the first quarter of 2021.

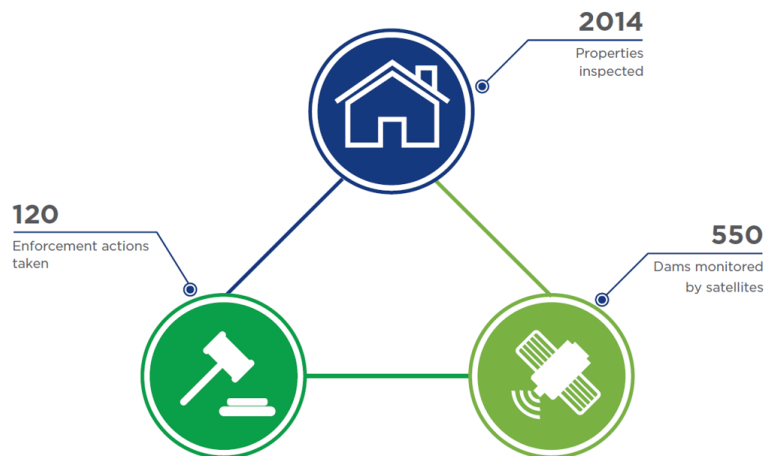
Please don't hesitate to contact our communications team at communications@nrar.nsw.gov.au with any questions or to organise an interview.

Sincerely,



Grant Barnes
Chief Regulatory Officer
Natural Resources Access Regulator

Compliance and enforcement activities Jan-Mar '21



In the first quarter of 2021, we inspected 2,041 properties and 5,051 water supply works, monitored 550 dams by satellites and took 120 enforcement actions, including stop work orders and penalty notices.

To increase transparency about the work we do to enforce the NSW water laws, we have launched an interactive reporting dashboard. Click 'view dashboard' below and select your region or local government area to find out what we have been doing in your area.

For a more detailed look at our program of work, click 'download report' below.

[Download report](#)

[View dashboard](#)



In December 2018, the NSW Government introduced a new non-urban water metering framework to ensure a more simple, robust and fair water management regime across the state.

The new metering regulations require water take to be metered and that meters are accurate, tamper-proof and auditable.

Water users in the northern inland regions are due to be fully compliant with these new regulations by 1 December 2021.

Water users with large pumps needed to comply last year and we are currently inspecting these properties to determine rates of compliance.

Our approach to assessing compliance with the new regulation is simple. Water users must have installed (or taken all reasonable steps to install) a tamper-proof, accurate meter, which has been validated by a certified professional.

If you're not sure when you need to comply with these new regulations you can use the [online metering guidance tool](#) or download an information leaflet by clicking the button below.

[Read more](#)

Water, what are you really taking?



When you take water in NSW without following the rules, it's not just water you're taking. Water brings communities together, keeps industries moving and sustains the environment.

When you take water without following the rules, you're taking something of value away from your neighbours, communities and the environment.

Our new campaign explores the true value of water in a series of videos and encourages water users to do the right thing for their community.

Visit our website to find out more and watch our new videos below.

Industry

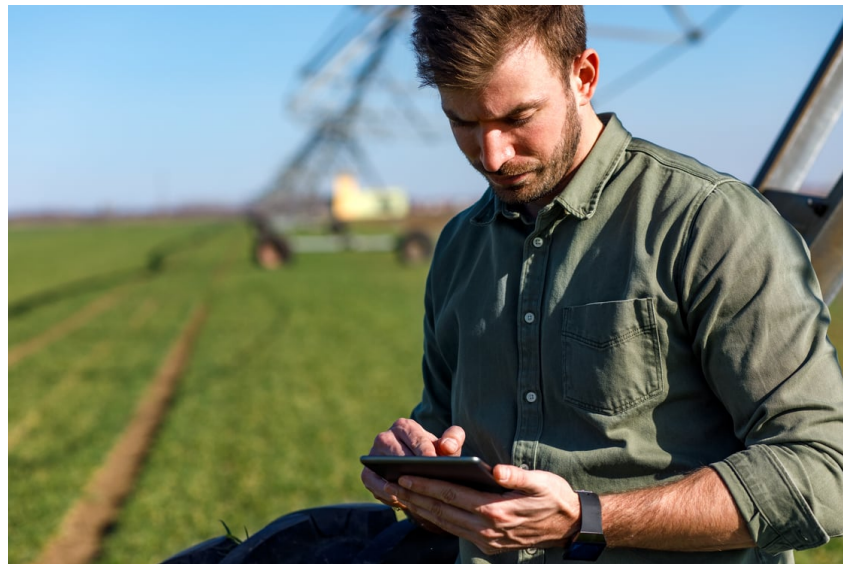


Aboriginal communities



[Find out more](#)

Digital innovation



NRAR launches suite of digital tools

To better assist the regulated community understand their obligations, apply for licences and approvals as well as make enquiries, NRAR is developing a range of self-service web-tools.

The NRAR assist tool, Waterfront land e-tool and Controlled activity exemption e-tool all use simple website interfaces with a range of simple questions that direct users to the information they seek.

NRAR assist is the entry point for all water enquiries and provides pre-lodgement advice; the Waterfront land e-tool enables applicants to determine if they require a Controlled Activity Approval if they are on waterfront land; and the Controlled activity exemption e-tool will help applicants identify whether there is an exemption from the need to obtain a Controlled Activity Approval.

The tools will benefit water users by reducing assessment and enquiry times, reduce application delays and costs, improve application quality and environmental outcomes and increase compliance through reducing barriers to obtaining information.

The Waterfront land e-tool is already available for use and the other web-tools are expected to be available on the NRAR website in August 2021.

[Read more](#)

State-wide compliance rates



Officers from NRAR's [routine monitoring program](#) clocked up enough kilometres (87,000) to travel around the globe twice between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021.

After visiting thousands of properties and water users, we have now launched an interactive dashboard which gives an indication of the rates of compliance and common compliance issues found during the first six months of the program.

“Our experience meeting with water users face to face has confirmed our belief that most water users want to do the right thing. Issues arise when they don't know the rules,” NRAR's Director Water Regulation (East) Greg Abood said.

Regional compliance rates based on the first six months of monitoring:

- Barwon-Darling - 85% compliance
- Gwydir - 79% compliance
- Macquarie - 77% compliance
- Border Rivers - 78% compliance
- Murrumbidgee - 76% compliance
- Namoi - 68% compliance
- Murray - 69% compliance
- Lachlan - 61% compliance

[Read more](#)

Recent prosecutions



To ring in our third year as the NSW water regulator, we commenced two prosecutions in the Land and Environment Court and another in the Tenterfield Local Court.

A Moree irrigation company faces 43 charges for alleged breaches of our water laws. Two Griffith-based water users also face charges for alleged breaches and our third case is against an earthmoving company based in Queensland.

In total, we have commenced 28 prosecutions in our three years of operations and we will continue to hold water users who commit wilful and harmful acts of non-compliance to account.

[Read more](#)

Recent news



NRAR shares position on floodplain harvesting after second disallowance

Water taken in NSW must be done so in accordance with the conditions of an access licence, works/use approval, exemption, or basic landholder right.

We expect water users to understand their obligations and to comply with the law. Any landholder considering floodplain harvesting may wish to seek their own legal advice.

We will continue to investigate alleged breaches of water law as we have always done. On a case-by-case basis in accordance with our regulatory principles, enforcement guidelines, and upon assessment of individual circumstances.

[Read more](#)



NRAR reflects on Reconciliation Week

Our first Indigenous board member Phil Duncan, shared his thoughts on what we can do to create meaningful change during Reconciliation Week and beyond with the Koori Mail.

Phil believes Aboriginal communities have an intrinsic understanding of water management and bring significant value to conversations about water management and regulation.

Read the article which appeared in the Koori Mail on Wednesday 2 June in full on the NRAR website by clicking the button below.

[Read more](#)

If you have a friend or colleague who might enjoy this newsletter, they can [subscribe here](#), simply hit forward.

Keep in touch with us



Email: communications@nrar.nsw.gov.au