

Enforcement of approval conditions requiring metering equipment that complies with Australian Standard AS 4747

Approval notification update

In December 2017, the NSW Government released the Water Reform Action Plan, a program to introduce best-practice water management across the state. Core to this plan is improving the transparency in how we share, allocate, account for and manage water in NSW.

As part of this approach, we recognise that water licence holders and work approval holders need to understand their rights and obligations when accessing and using water under their licences.

To this end, holders of water supply work approvals and water licences across NSW recently received notification from the NSW Department of Industry—Lands & Water (the department) about the conditions that apply under current water-sharing plans.

Water supply work approval conditions

For all water licence and approval holders who take water from the Hunter, Lachlan, Murrumbidgee, Murray and Lower Darling regulated rivers, a mandatory approval condition specifies that water can only be taken through metering equipment that complies with the Australian Standard AS4747: 'Meters for non-urban supply'.

This condition has also been applied to approximately 35 water supply work approvals in unregulated water sources.

The department estimates that approximately 4,400 water supply work approvals out of about 119,000 approvals across NSW have been notified of this condition for the first time.

Interim compliance policy

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) recognises it may not be practical for all licence and approval holders to become immediately compliant with this condition given the need to source, install, and calibrate a compliant meter.

Therefore, the NRAR will take a case-by-case approach when exercising its discretion on compliance with Condition B (see below).

In exercising its discretion, the NRAR will have as one of its prime considerations the government's consultation launched by the Minister today and will adopt a risk-based approach to achieving compliance.

NRAR believes that while compliance with AS4747 will be a minimum requirement, the final policy may include additional standards. If a water licence or water approval holder needs to upgrade or replace their current meter, it is expected that any replacement meter would be AS4747 compliant.

Metering conditions set out in recent notification from the department that apply under current water sharing plans.

As stated in MW2452-00001:

Water must be taken through metering equipment that meets the following requirements:

- A. the metering equipment must accurately measure and record the flow of all water taken through the water supply work authorised by this approval
- B. the metering equipment must comply with the Australian Standard AS 4747: 'Meters for non-urban supply', as may be updated from time to time
- C. the metering equipment must be sited and installed at a place in the pipe, channel or conduit between the water source and the first discharge outlet. There must be no flow of water into or out of the pipe, channel or conduit between the water source and the metering equipment, and
- D. the metering equipment must be operated and maintained in a proper and efficient manner at all times.

Affected approval holders will shortly receive written notification of this approach

NRAR regulatory policy and prosecution guidelines are available on the website

<https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/natural-resources-access-regulator>

WaterNSW remains the regulator for water take compliance until transitional arrangements are finalised and will be applying the above guidance provided by NRAR until the impending transfer of compliance functions to NRAR occurs.

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