

THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR NON-URBAN WATER METERING

About the National Framework

The National Framework for Non Urban Water Metering (National Framework) sets out the foundations for water metering on a nationally consistent basis. It aims to deliver the primary objective agreed by state, territory and Commonwealth governments to provide an acceptable level of confidence that measurement performance in the field is within maximum permissible limits of error of ± 5 per cent.

Specifically, the National Framework outlines:

- the implementation of the national standards for meter construction, installation and maintenance;
- the use of certified installers, maintainers and validators; and
- compliance, auditing and reporting requirements.

The National Framework also specifies:

- that all non-urban meters shall comply with the national metering standards by 1 July 2020, unless otherwise exempted by the relevant jurisdictional government department or agency

- any meter installed after 30 June 2010 must comply with the national metering standards
- any meter installed prior to 1 July 2010 shall be replaced with a compliant meter by 1 July 2020. Replacement shall be undertaken at the earliest opportunity, such as when major maintenance is required on the non-compliant meter

The Metering Expert Group, comprising representatives from industry, state, territory and the Commonwealth governments developed the National Framework. The National Framework will apply to meters (including measuring systems, devices and their component parts) owned by entitlement holders, water service providers and jurisdictional governments and used for trade and/or related resource management activities in a non-urban setting.

The introduction of nationally consistent non-urban water meter standards will enable water used in river and groundwater systems around Australia to be measured more accurately. More accurate measurement will assist water managers and users identify areas where efficiency can be improved, and minimise water lost through delivery systems.

The National Framework came into effect on 1 July 2010.

Implementing Non-urban Water Metering

As a requirement of the National Framework for Non-urban Water Metering, State and Territory (jurisdictional) governments agreed to create implementation plans for non-urban metering, prepared by the relevant jurisdictional departments or agencies.

Respective state implementation plans will document priorities and targets for non-urban water metering. Jurisdictions are required to identify objectives in relation to areas such as meter deeming, upgrading meters and installations, certified workforce, implementation of national standards for non-urban meters and the Metrological Assurance Framework as well as review jurisdictional legislation to ensure compliance.

In consultation with state and territory governments/jurisdictions, this Department is preparing a National Implementation Plan for Non-urban Water Metering.

Reporting on Non-urban Water Metering

The National Water Initiative (NWI) Agreement provides a strategy for improving water resource management across Australia. Paragraph 89 specifies open reporting requirements relating to metered water use and associated compliance and enforcement actions.

As Council of Australian Governments (COAG) signatories, state and territory governments are committed to achieving these objectives. Jurisdictional Governments Audit Reports and water service provider meter statements will be made publicly accessible.

State and territory governments

The objectives of reporting on Non Urban Water Metering through to 2020 (and beyond) are as follows:

- Ensuring metering activities achieve the objectives of the NWI relating to paragraphs 87, 88 and 89 (i) regarding consistent metering, national meter specifications and open reporting on metered use and related compliance activities respectively;
- Ensuring there is an acceptable level of confidence in meter performance and similar outcomes within all jurisdictions;
- Providing benchmarks for, and monitoring the progress of introducing the national standards – including installing new pattern approved, laboratory verified meters and the upgrade / replacement of non-compliant meters and installations;
- Providing the opportunity to judge the effectiveness of certification schemes;

- Identifying areas of improvement required through analysing information about installation, maintenance, validation and (where applicable) verification and certification activities.

A template for State/Territory Audit Report is available in attachment 4 Audit Report Template of the National Framework.

Source: <https://www.environment.gov.au/water/rural-water/srwui/non-urban-water-metering/national-framework>