



Water Information Bulletins target technical and operational staff in all organisations contributing to Australia's *Improving Water Information Program*.

Bulletins are published as required and previous editions can be viewed at: www.bom.gov.au/water

The purpose of this Bulletin is to provide organisations currently named in the Water Regulations 2008, with an update on the development of Water Data Transfer Format support tools and delivery of water data to the Bureau of Meteorology.

Water Data Transfer Format (WDTF) Tools

Robust and reliable data delivery is essential to the success of the Bureau of Meteorology's new water information mission. Minimising the number of data formats utilised by over 200 data provider organisations named in the Water Regulations 2008 will assist this process.

The Bureau has developed a Water Data Transfer Format (WDTF) file format, which is our preferred mode of data delivery in accordance with the Water Regulations 2008. The WDTF is based on an XML schema developed by the Bureau and CSIRO.

The Bureau has recently investigated development of generic support tools, which many organisations can use to assist them in reformatting their data files into the WDTF format prior to data delivery. This work, and our online survey of data providers, has revealed the wide range of systems and formats used to store data. The proposed support tools require greater flexibility, functionality and usability than expected.

Consequently, the Bureau will be unable to provide these support tools to meet the needs of many organisations due to deliver data in February 2009.

Organisations that have delayed their data delivery in anticipation of receiving the WDTF support tools are advised to carefully read the next section of this bulletin.

The Bureau remains committed to reducing the number of formats used to provide data and will establish WDTF as the standard for data transfer to meet Regulations requirements.

Over the coming months, the Bureau will promote the merits of developing WDTF export capacity to data service providers operating in Australia, via enhancements to their existing data management software or development of stand-alone WDTF support tools.

Compliance with Water Regulations 2008

To avoid breaching the Water Regulations 2008, organisations that have delayed their data delivery in anticipation of receiving generic WDTF support tools from the Bureau should now reassess their internal capacity to implement WDTF in the timeframes available.

The Bureau recognises that organisations may face challenges in meeting the Water Regulations 2008 data delivery schedule.

In these circumstances, we are committed to working closely with organisations to assist them where possible and to ensure they comply with the Regulations.

A Deferment of Data Delivery Plan template is available for organisations requiring deferment of data delivery. The template can be downloaded from our website at: <http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/data-deferment.shtml>

Deferment of Data Delivery Plans should be developed in consultation with the Bureau by:

1. Organisations that had delayed their data delivery in anticipation of receiving the generic WDTF support tools from the Bureau.
2. Organisations that intend to develop and implement their own WDTF within the timeframes available.
3. Organisations that require more time to address any technical issue preventing them from providing their water data within the required timeframes.

If an organisation does not require a Deferment of Data Delivery Plan, it can commence providing historic and ongoing data in their own preferred format.

Data delivery

Information about data delivery and the instructions for data delivery can be found on the Water Regulations Online website at: <http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/regulations.php>.

You can also generate a customised report that lists your organisation's reporting responsibilities under the Water Regulations 2008. When transferring your organisation's data to the Bureau to meet your obligations please:

- develop and use WDTF or Hydstra and TimeStudio export tools if possible (click on the link below for more information on data format)
- follow our file naming conventions, as listed on our website (click on the link below for more information on data file naming)
- use zip files only when delivering data to the Bureau's FTP site
- provide files in consistent formats (for successive data deliveries).

For more information about data format and data file naming click on: <http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/information-delivery.shtml>

Organisations that are unable to deliver data using either the Hydstra or TimeStudio Bureau export tools, or in the preferred WDTF, should provide their data in the format they currently have available. For example:

- If your organisation's water data, as specified in the Water Regulations 2008, is stored in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, you simply provide us the spreadsheet.

- If your organisation's water data, as specified in the Water Regulations 2008, is stored in a commercial data management product or an in-house database management system, the data should be exported to a comma separated values (csv) format for transfer purposes.

Please note: Time series data is not to be provided to the Bureau in PDF, Word document or unstructured text formats.

Historical records provided to the Bureau on DVD or CD are extracted and stored on the Bureau's file management system. Discs should be sent to: [Manager Water Data, Water Data Management Branch, GPO Box 2334, ACT 2601](#) The raw files being delivered to the Bureau's File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site are then catalogued and stored in our file management system.

Please note that the delivery of your data files to the Bureau does not signify the end of your data delivery workflow. In order to extract the data from the files provided to our national hydrologic database, the Bureau will need to interpret and reformat your data. In many cases it will be necessary for us to contact your organisation to develop an understanding of the data you have provided.

Interpretation of these data files is a significant exercise and it may be several months before the Bureau contacts your organisation. In the meantime, if your organisation has any queries regarding data delivery please contact David Nicholls on (02) 6232 3531 or email your enquiry to: waterdata@bom.gov.au

Delivery of Category 8 data (Information about water restrictions)

Category 8 data is information about water restrictions. This information must be provided at the same time your organisation makes any restriction announcement. A copy of the media release, gazette notice or newspaper article relating to the restriction must be emailed to: waterdata@bom.gov.au The preferred format for provision of this information is PDF.

Water Regulations online survey

Our Water Regulations online survey is an important component of the Bureau's Water Regulations compliance strategy and is a critical element in deferment of enforcement action for data supplying organisations. An email reminder will be sent later this month to organisations which have not yet completed the online survey. The email will provide instructions on how to complete survey.

National Performance Reporting and the Water Regulations 2008

Many organisations required to give Category 7 data (information about urban water management) under the Water Regulations 2008, are also already contributing to the National Water Initiative project—the National Performance Report (NPR).

In drafting the Water Regulations 2008, we have endeavoured to make our data requests as similar as possible to those for the NPR. However, there are several differences, particularly in the higher currency and resolution of information required under the Water Regulations 2008. We are working with the National Water Commission and with the Water Services Association of Australia to better align the hydrological reporting requirements. It is our ultimate goal to be the sole conduit for water information reporting to the Australian Government and we are working to that end.

Category A and B persons (lead water agencies and Commonwealth and State agencies respectively) are not

required to give Category 7 data to the Bureau under the Water Regulations 2008.

Where a water utility gives Category 7 information to a water agency in their jurisdiction, the water utility is still required to give this information to the Bureau directly.

An exception occurs when the water agency volunteers to supply this information to the Bureau at the frequency and resolution required by the Bureau, and can demonstrate that no time delay is introduced by being the conduit for the transfer of this data. Please check with the Strategic Water Information Coordinator (SWIC) in your jurisdiction to ascertain whether that case applies to your organisation. SWIC contact details are provided below.

In some cases, urban water utilities may be required to supply other data such as Category 3 data (information on storages) and may already give this information to a state or territory water agency. If this is the case, then you should discuss with your SWIC whether the water agency can give this information to the Bureau, at the currency required, on your behalf.

Strategic Water Information Coordinators (SWICs)

The Bureau of Meteorology funds Strategic Water Information Coordinator positions in each state and territory to support the Bureau's water information role. Please contact your local SWIC for assistance or advice.

State or Territory	SWIC	Email	Phone number
NSW	David Malone	david.malone@dnr.nsw.gov.au	W: 02 9895 6201
Vic	Sabine Schreiber	sabine.schreiber@dse.vic.gov.au	W: 03 9637 8541
Qld	Donna Beattie	donna.beattie@nrw.qld.gov.au	W: 07 3224 7649
SA	John Barrett	barrett.johnw@saugov.sa.gov.au	W: 08 8226 5655
WA	Glen Terlick	glen.terlick@water.wa.gov.au	W: 08 6364 7406
NT	Aidan Smith	aidan.smith@nt.gov.au	W: 08 8999 4522
Tas	David Thorp	david.thorp@dpiw.tas.gov.au	W: 03 6233 9648
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