



Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology

***Water Regulations 2008*—Policy for issuing and maintaining the Administrative Instrument**



Release history

Date	Version	Status	Owner
February 2014	1.0	Final	Standards and Regulations Section regulations@bom.gov.au
March 2016	1.1	Final. Includes minor revisions	Water Accounting and Regulations Section regulations@bom.gov.au

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Foreword

The Bureau of Meteorology administers Part 7 (Water Information) of the *Water Regulations 2008* (the Regulations). Part 7 sets out details for provision of water information to the Bureau, as required in the *Water Act 2007*. It defines who must give specified water information to the Bureau, and the time and format in which it must be given.

The Regulations individually name over 200 organisations required to give the Bureau specified water information that is in their possession, custody or control. The format of water information is specified in an [Administrative Instrument](#) that is publicly available on the Bureau's website.

The Bureau is conscious that organisations incur costs in order to comply with these requirements. It seeks to minimise the impacts of changes to legislative requirements and foster a cooperative approach with data providers that is transparent and treats data providers equally.

To this end, the Bureau has developed a framework to formalise and communicate a consistent approach to maintaining and developing Part 7 of the Regulations. The framework involves a three tiered architecture consisting of principles, policies and procedures.

- **Principles** are high level, strategic and enduring. They govern the way we manage legislative requirements affecting stakeholder organisations. They frame the strategic development of the underlying policies.
- **Policies** are rules and protocols which are practical in nature and dictate how we will manage particular aspects of the legislative requirements.
- **Procedures** are internal documents that help us implement the published policies. They contain additional detail relevant to Bureau personnel who are responsible for implementing them.

The Bureau has policies and procedures for each of the activities involved in managing the Regulations. These activities include:

1. amending the *Water Regulations 2008*
2. issuing and maintaining the Administrative Instrument
3. maintaining the list of Commercially Sensitive Sites
4. maintaining the Metadata and Contextual Information Requirements
5. maintaining the list of Persons and Classes of Persons
6. versioning and release of the Water Data Transfer Format.

Policy for issuing and maintaining the Administrative Instrument

Policy

The Bureau of Meteorology:

1. Will operate in accordance with each of the overarching principles for developing and maintaining Part 7 of the *Water Regulations 2008*. The principles are published at <http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/principlesPolicies.shtml>
2. Before publishing a new Administrative Instrument, will consider the following factors:
 - the impact (including cost) of mandating a format on water information providers
 - the need to service Bureau water information products
 - the Bureau's capacity to ingest and utilise the data
 - the Bureau's ability to provide support, including tools, to affected water information providers
3. Will ensure new formatting requirements in the Administrative Instrument are added for the Director of Meteorology's approval only when an overall net benefit can be demonstrated, following consideration of the costs and benefits of the change
4. Will consult with water information providers prior to making significant changes to formatting requirements
5. Where possible, will provide a range of format options within the Administrative Instrument, listed in the order of the Bureau's preference
6. Will include Bureau-supported versions of formats such as WDTF in the Administrative Instrument. Once a version is included it will also be included in subsequent Administrative Instruments whilst it remains a supported version
7. Will issue an Administrative Instrument setting out approved forms no more often than six-monthly. Instruments will take effect six months after they are approved by the Director of Meteorology and published on the Bureau's website
8. Will seek to minimise the frequency of changes to format requirements for individual organisations. The Bureau will ensure that individual organisations are not required to comply with new requirements for a given information category more frequently than annually
9. Will provide reasonable opportunity for organisations to be largely compliant before new requirements take effect. The Bureau will provide advice of planned inclusion of new format requirements no less than 12 months before they take effect
10. Will advise affected water information providers when a timeframe for the issuing of new Administrative Instruments is approved. The Bureau will publish the timeline on its website

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11. Will ensure that related material on its website is available and up to date. Specifically, the Bureau will:
- ensure that its website shows at all times the version of the Administrative Instrument that holds the current requirements. As necessary, the Bureau will also publish another version of the instrument, clearly notifying users that this new version sets out future requirements which are not yet in effect but will be at a date, six months after publication. When the six months have elapsed, this version of the Administrative Instrument becomes the current version
 - ensure that further information such as format templates and explanatory material is available on the website and linked from within the Administrative Instrument
 - maintain an area of the website where all versions of the Administrative Instrument are located in an archive/reference area
 - ensure the Regs Online tool shows formatting requirements when they take effect in the Administrative Instrument.

Definitions

Regulations means the *Water Regulations 2008*

WDTF means Water Data Transfer Format.

Date of effect

This policy took effect on 10 February 2014, and was reviewed in March 2016.

Review date

This policy is due for review by March 2018.

Who is affected?

This policy applies to water information providers affected by the Administrative Instrument, and those in the Bureau who have a role in developing and managing the instrument.

Rationale

Water information providers incur costs to meet format requirements for water information. The Bureau must make judgments and trade-offs between minimising data provider obligations and maximising the utility of the information given.

Policy for issuing and maintaining the Administrative Instrument

Contact

For more information on this policy, contact: regulations@bom.gov.au

Related documents

[Bureau of Meteorology Principles for developing and maintaining Part 7 of the *Water Regulations 2008*](#)

[Bureau of Meteorology Water Data Transfer Versioning Policy](#)

[The Australian Government Guide to Regulation](#)

Availability

This policy is published on the Bureau's website at:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/principlesPolicies.shtml>
