



**Australian Government**

**Bureau of Meteorology**

# Regulatory Statement of Intent

**Issued by the Chief Executive Officer & Director of Meteorology Andrew Johnson FTSE FAICD on 6 March 2025**

This Statement of Intent details the Bureau of Meteorology's (Bureau) actions in response to the expectations outlined in the Ministerial Statement of Expectations of 17 January 2025 regarding regulatory functions administered by the Bureau under the *Water Act 2007 (Cth)* (Water Act).

## Overview

The Bureau is committed to advancing the Australian Government's regulatory reform agenda that aims to boost Australia's productivity and lower the cost of living by ensuring a fit-for-purpose regulatory environment.

We bring together water data collected across Australia in one trusted place in line with our functions under the Water Act to collect, hold, manage, interpret and disseminate Australia's water information.

In carrying out our regulatory functions, the Bureau administers Part 7 of the *Water Regulations 2008* (the Regulations), which requires 241 organisations to provide collected water data to the Bureau. This data provides insight into the past, present, and future conditions of Australia's water resources.

As an independent, authoritative source of information the Bureau uses water data collected from regulated entities to provide understanding on water resource management impacts, support water reform, and increase the transparency of water information. Our national datasets, analyses, and forecasts inform policy, investment, and operational decisions at all levels of Government and water operations.

We ensure that all Australians can access:

- national datasets of streamflow, groundwater, storage levels, design rainfall estimates, and water market activity,
- water resource models, assessments, analyses, maps, accounts, and
- flood and streamflow forecasts.

The Bureau maintains an open and transparent approach to administration of Part 7 of the Regulations. We provide clear regulatory requirements, streamline data provision, emphasising the importance, use, and value generated from collected data.

We closely collaborate with partners and other regulators within a dynamic regulatory environment. Taking a whole-of-system approach across the regulatory lifecycle, we are committed to regulatory stewardship. As a regulator, our focus is to ensure an effective and efficient framework that adapts to changing environments and needs through a risk-based, contemporary, and fit-for-purpose approach in both design and implementation.

**Australia's National Meteorological Service**

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Our staff, as stewards of the Bureau's Water Act and regulatory functions, ensure the long-term interests of the Australian community are met through effective delivery aligned with the Water Act's objectives. We place people at the centre of our regulatory culture to maintain trust in our water functions. All our efforts are underpinned by our people, whose expertise, experience and dedication are fundamental to delivering the high-quality products and services on which Australians depend. To continue to attract and retain the right people, we will ensure the Bureau remains an employer of choice, recognising the needs of each staff member and equipping them with the tools, skills and opportunities to grow and excel.

The Bureau and all our employees, are committed to and abide by the APS Values, including being respectful, non-discriminatory and recognising diversity. The APS Values, APS Employment Principles and APS Code of Conduct are embedded within our organisation through communication with staff, training and induction packages for new employees.

We will continue to build a culture of customer service and collaboration, where we work as one enterprise for the benefit of our nation. We will retain a strong commitment to the respect of First Nations people and Culture, both in the services we deliver and in our operations that span every part of the Australian continent, islands and overseas territories, including Antarctica.

In line with the Ministerial Statement of Expectations, this Statement of Intent covers 3 main areas:

1. Administration of regulatory functions,
2. Whole-of-system regulatory stewardship,
3. Support for regulatory reforms.

## **1. Administration of regulatory functions**

As a statutory agency, the Bureau must act independently and objectively in its legislative powers. Following the Minister's expectations, we will consider the Government's broader policy framework and apply best practice in delivering regulatory functions in line with the three principles outlined in the Australian Government Regulatory Performance Framework (RMG 128) and Statement of Expectations, which are:

- continuous improvement and building trust,
- risk-based and data-driven, and
- collaboration and engagement.

The Bureau is committed to continuously improving performance, capability and culture to support meeting our legislative requirements and to measure our regulatory success. This includes effective planning, monitoring, and reporting to evaluate our progress towards the achievement of our regulatory outcomes. We are dedicated to achieving operational excellence by ensuring our outstanding people are supported by secure, effective and resilient systems, processes and technology.

### **Our continuous improvement and trust building actions**

- Develop and implement a framework for internal regulatory performance measures.



- Regularly review and refine regulatory practices to enhance effectiveness and efficiency, including supporting any statutory reviews under the Water Act.
- Develop and maintain a purpose-driven regulatory section focused on enhancing the integrity and transparency of our regulatory functions and ensuring confidence in our ability to deliver trusted and reliable national water information.
- Adopt a phased approach to transition into a Modern Regulator of water information.

#### **Our risk based and data driven actions**

- Review our compliance posture and mechanisms to ensure that our actions are proportionate to the level of risk, avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach. Our decisions and requirements will be transparent, clearly communicated, and based on potential impacts.
- Embed whole-of-lifecycle product, data, information and technology management across the enterprise and uplift enterprise systems, processes and technologies to enable the delivery of modern, streamlined data and information services that show the importance, use and value generated from data collected.
- Utilise the full weather, water, climate and data capabilities of the Bureau and our partners to ensure our national datasets, analyses and forecasts continue to be fit-for-purpose, trusted and provide the authoritative information needed by customers to inform policy, investment, and operational decisions.

#### **Our collaboration and engagement actions**

- Foster productive engagement with regulated entities, grounded in the highly regarded precedent set through the development and implementation of the water markets data standards, to ensure that water data requirements in the Regulations are fit-for-purpose. We will initiate necessary changes and continuously evaluate the regulatory impacts on data providers.
- Build regulatory maturity and improve connectivity with our policy agency and other like-minded regulators, creating a network of peers to support the Bureau's development and implementation of its vision for water information and standards.

## **2. Whole-of-system regulatory stewardship**

Whole-of-system regulatory stewardship involves integrating comprehensive and coordinated practices throughout the entire regulatory lifecycle, implementing a continuous process that includes design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and refinement. It allows us to strike the right balance between enforcement and support, ensuring that regulations serve the intended purpose and align with our corporate strategy while being mindful of the impact on stakeholders.

We leverage our position as a national, independent organisation to coordinate between and collaborate with relevant jurisdictions, facilitating water sector reform, providing leadership in national water information and climate–water science, and driving national water data standards.

#### **Our continuous improvement and trust building actions**

- Collaborate with Commonwealth, state and territory agencies sharing water information that supports effective decision making to drive productivity, water



security, water quality and environmental sustainability amidst the overlay of highly variable and changing climates and in support of:

- the future National Water Agreement,
- Closing the Gap Priority Reform 4, highlighting the importance that Culture plays in water management and to recognise traditional weather, water and climate knowledge developed and passed down through countless generations of First Nations Peoples,
- Murray–Darling Basin Plan review, and
- National performance reporting of town water supply agencies.

#### **Our risk based and data driven actions**

- Provide opportunities for regulated entities to automate data provision. Where appropriate we share data with other regulators to remove duplicate data transactions and reduce regulatory burden.

#### **Our collaboration and engagement actions**

- Engage with other regulatory bodies, policy agencies, and stakeholders to share information and establish partnerships and networks that enhance best practice regulation.
- Grow the portfolio of national and international partnerships, aligned with the Bureau's strategy and Australia's national water information interests.
- Align and connect the contributions of every staff member to ensure the collective delivery of our Strategy.

### **3. Support for regulatory reforms**

Australia has undergone significant water reforms over the past few decades to address the challenges of water scarcity, growing demand, climate variability and change. Technology has also developed significantly in this period. As expected by the Minister, we will continue to support priority regulatory reforms including reforms to modernise water data collection and accessibility, and we will work with current and future data providers to streamline data provision and ensure low regulatory burden.

#### **Our continuous improvement and trust building actions**

- Deliver on our responsibilities under the Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Act 2023 to strengthen the integrity, transparency and confidence in water markets in the Murray–Darling Basin and provide water market participants and regulators better data and information.
- Identify and establish nationally consistent data sets and water information of high value underpinned by clear nationally committed, consistent data collection, sharing, management and reporting standards.

#### **Our risk based and data driven actions**

- Establish a simplified approach to sharing data and accessible information that fosters collaboration and partnerships and a shared understanding among decision-makers, resource managers and water users.
- Define, establish and secure seamless supply of nationally significant water information of high value that supports the development of state-of-the-art data infrastructure.



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### **Our collaboration and engagement actions**

- Work collaboratively with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, and the Inspector-General of Water Compliance on the Murray–Darling Basin water markets reform and deliver water markets data standards, a water data hub and water markets website.

### **Relationship with Minister**

The Bureau acknowledges its role in supporting the Minister, the government more broadly and the portfolio Department in performing key regulatory functions. We will ensure the Minister is appropriately briefed on key matters around Bureau systems and processes and provide support on significant issues that relate to our role as a regulator and respond with advice and information in a timely and accurate manner. We will seek where appropriate feedback on our performance and ensure responsiveness to feedback in the delivery of our function.

### **Transparency**

The Bureau is accountable to the Australian Government for fulfilling its legislative mandate with the resources invested in it and is ultimately answerable to the Australian community. The Bureau operates within the enhanced Commonwealth performance framework in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and ensures that expenditure is managed efficiently, effectively and economically in accordance with finance law, certified by independent auditors and reported in our annual reports.

The Bureau will also integrate reporting requirements under the PGPA Act including this Statement of Intent and the Statement of Expectations into its performance reporting processes and as part of its Corporate Plan and annual reporting. The Bureau's level of performance or achievement will be measured against the principles of regulator best practice using outcome focussed performance measures and objectives.