



**Australian Government**  
**Bureau of Meteorology**

## ***Water Regulations 2008*—Policy for updating metadata and contextual information requirements**



## Release history

Date	Version	Status	Owner
March 2016	1.0	Final	Water Accounting and Regulations Section <a href="mailto:regulations@bom.gov.au">regulations@bom.gov.au</a>

### Cover photograph by Alison Pouliot

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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. Along with their data, organisations are also required to give certain metadata listed in the document *Metadata and Contextual Information Requirements*, which is incorporated by reference in the Regulations.

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 represent our values in relation to 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 (incorporated document)
4. maintaining the Metadata and Contextual Information Requirements (incorporated document)
5. maintaining the list of Persons and Classes of Persons (incorporated document)
6. versioning and release of the Water Data Transfer Format.

# Policy for updating metadata and contextual information requirements in the *Water Regulations 2008*

## 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 adding detailed lists of metadata, or extending/revising metadata requirements, will consider the following factors:
  - the impact (including cost) on water information providers
  - the need to service Bureau water information products
  - the Bureau's capacity to ingest and utilise the metadata
  - the Bureau's ability to provide support, including tools, to affected water information providers
3. When adding detailed lists of metadata, or extending/revising metadata requirements, will:
  - consult with relevant parties such as major data providers, subject matter experts and industry
  - ensure that relevant formats prescribed in the [Administrative Instrument](#) can accommodate the required metadata, and that the metadata could be given to the Bureau in those formats (such as the Water Data Transfer Format) where applicable
  - minimise the impost on water information providers by including in the detailed lists only those metadata necessary to understand the related water information
  - ensure metadata requirements are extended only when an overall net benefit can be demonstrated, following consideration of the costs and benefits of the change
4. Will update the *Metadata and contextual information requirements* document no more than once every six months and will allow a six-month period before data providers must comply
5. Will communicate with all affected data provider organisations about the updated requirements at least six months before they take effect
6. Will publish explanatory material at the same time as it publishes an updated *Metadata and contextual information requirements* document
7. Will ensure that its website always shows the version of the *Metadata and contextual information requirements* document that holds the current requirements. As necessary, the Bureau will also publish another version of the document, clearly notifying users that this new version sets out future requirements which are not yet in

# Policy for updating metadata and contextual information requirements in the *Water Regulations 2008*

effect but will be at a date, six months after publication. When the six months have elapsed, this version of the *Metadata and contextual information requirements* document becomes the current version.

Definitions	<p><b>Metadata and contextual information requirements document</b> means the document of that name located on the Bureau's website at: <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/metadata.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/metadata.shtml</a></p> <p>This document is incorporated by reference in the Regulations (Regulation 1.06 refers)</p> <p><b>Regulations</b> means the <i>Water Regulations 2008</i>.</p>
Date of effect	<p>This policy takes effect on 11 March 2016.</p>
Review date	<p>This policy is due for review by March 2018.</p>
Who is affected?	<p>This policy applies to water information providers affected by the Regulations, and those in the Bureau with a water information role.</p>
Rationale	<p>Changing the Regulations requirements can impose costs on named organisations and also uses significant Bureau resources. The Bureau must make judgments and trade-offs between minimising water information provider obligations and maximising the utility of the information given.</p>
Contact	<p>For more information on this policy, contact: <a href="mailto:regulations@bom.gov.au">regulations@bom.gov.au</a></p>
Related documents	<p><a href="#">Bureau of Meteorology principles for developing and maintaining Part 7 of the <i>Water Regulations 2008</i></a></p> <p><a href="#">Bureau of Meteorology Water Data Transfer Versioning Policy</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Australian Government Guide to Regulation</a></p>
Availability	<p>This policy is published on the Bureau's website at: <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/principlesPolicies.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/principlesPolicies.shtml</a></p>