



Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology

Regulator Performance Framework self-assessment report, 2017–18

PART 7 OF THE *WATER REGULATIONS 2008*
(WATER INFORMATION)



Cover image: The Williams River near Dungog, New South Wales, 30 December 2010. © Commonwealth of Australia, credit: David Perry, Bureau of Meteorology

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Overview

Water Regulations 2008, Part 7—water information

The Bureau of Meteorology (the Bureau) administers Part 7 of the [Water Regulations 2008](#).¹ The regulations support our functions under the [Water Act 2007](#).² They define who must give water information to the Bureau and the time and format it must be given.

Around 200 organisations give water information to the Bureau – less than 80 are businesses or not-for-profit entities. The Water Act only requires these named organisations to give data they already have in their possession, custody or control.

We are conscious of the costs the regulations impose on organisations. Each organisation differs in size, complexity and the data they hold. Our approach is to work with providers to support data delivery, and to limit the impact on their business.

Benefits of improved water information

Data collected under the regulations allow for insight into the current and future state of water resources in Australia. You can find many of the products and services we create from these data at <http://www.bom.gov.au/water>.

From one site, Australians can access:

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

Our national datasets, analyses, and forecasts inform policy, investment, and operational decisions. They also support water reform and help to generate public trust in resource management.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2008L02170>

**WE COLLECT
WATER
INFORMATION
FROM 200
ORGANISATIONS
ACROSS AUSTRALIA**



TO DELIVER MORE THAN

20 PRODUCTS & SERVICES

INCLUDING DATA, MAPS, MODELS,
REPORTS, AND STREAM FORECASTS

OUR PRODUCTS

INFORM WATER POLICY
AND MANAGEMENT

² <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2007A00137>

Our Regulator Performance Framework

Under the Government's [Regulator Performance Framework](#),³ the Bureau must assess its performance against six key indicators. To do this, we use agreed metrics published on our [website](#).⁴

Our approach to self-assessment

To report on our performance, we use the colour-coded assessment scale shown on the right. We evaluate the evidence against government and stakeholder expectations, and in the context of our regulatory size and impact.

Evidence collection

We record evidence of activities in enterprise software and an internal register. Activities include stakeholder consultations, ministerial correspondence, newsletters, website changes, meetings, data sharing, and industry events.

Quotes within this report are from several sources including emails and other correspondence.

External validation and certification

We sought external validation of this report from organisations that give water information to the Bureau.

The CEO and Director of Meteorology certified the report and provided it to the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources.

Assessment key:	
Good practice	Systems and practice meet expectations
Well placed	Targeted improvement possible
Need improvement	Need for considerable change
Poor or limited capability	Does not meet expectations

³ <http://www.cuttingredtape.gov.au/resources/rpf>

⁴ <http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/performanceFramework.shtml>

Self-assessment for 2017-18

Summary

The Bureau continues to follow good practice for three of the six indicators (KPI 3, 4 and 5). We are well placed against the rest (KPI 1, 2, and 6). Pages 7 to 9 show the metrics and supporting evidence for our assessment.

Assessment	Comment
KPI 1 Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities	
Well placed	To ensure that we do not unnecessarily impede regulated entities we actively review data requirements, engage with industry (KPI 1.1) and consult directly with data providers (KPI 1.2). We are also responsive to queries and requests for support. We publish policies that guide how we administer changes to requirements.
KPI 2 Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective	
Well placed	Our online advice is personalised, up-to-date and well-used by regulated entities (KPI 2.1), while staff are available and responsive with direct advice (KPI 2.2).
KPI 3 Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed	
Good practice	Our risk management and compliance policies and procedures are documented and accessible (KPI 3.1; 3.2). The compliance strategy is risk based and sets out clear and proportionate actions in response to non-compliance. Data providers have not raised concerns about the Bureau's compliance framework or actions undertaken.
KPI 4 Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated	
Good practice	Following internal policies and using customer relations software helps us to manage and streamline compliance interactions with data providers. We are working to further automate data provision and monitor compliance. We also actively share data with other regulators.
KPI 5 Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities	
Good practice	We consult with data providers before making changes that will affect their data delivery. We also send regular e-newsletters to data providers about our activities and any reviews that are under way.
KPI 6 Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks	
Well placed	To improve the regulatory framework, we meet often with key data providers through formal advisory groups and meetings. We also work with the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and other Commonwealth agencies involved in national water reform.

During 2016-17 we amended the regulations to reduce the reporting burden on the regulated community. In 2017-18 we allowed these changes to settle in and did not further modify requirements. Consequently, there were fewer requests for advice from data providers than in previous years. Our systems also recorded fewer compliance interactions.

Below, we outline some of the ways in which we work to perform our regulatory functions with the minimum impact necessary to achieve regulatory objectives.

Our knowledge of and engagement with industry

We regularly consult and work closely with organisations and water associations to understand the industry (metrics 1.1, 5.2 and 6.1; Box 1). We look for ways to refine requirements and reduce data delivery costs for data providers. For example, we develop tools and guidelines to automate data transfer. We also encourage data provision via larger third parties, such as State agencies, which have mature data management systems and procedures in place.

Regulated entities can find us at key water industry events and conferences. They can contact the Bureau directly through email addresses on our website (metric 1.1). We use enterprise software to manage and record such interactions. This helps staff to co-ordinate their dealings with data providers.

Principles and policies

We publish [principles and policies](http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/principlesPolicies.shtml)⁵ that govern how we administer the regulations. The policies guide how we work with data providers to refine requirements. This includes changes to water data formats and to documents incorporated in the regulations. Before making changes, we consult with those affected (metrics 1.2 and 5.2). We ensure that changes are transparent, well communicated, and have clear benefits to Australia that outweigh

⁵ <http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/principlesPolicies.shtml>

Box 1: National Industry Guidelines for hydrometric monitoring



Through the Water Monitoring Standardisation Technical Committee (WaMSTeC) we work with water organisations to describe industry recommended practice for water monitoring across Australia.

The Committee is leading a periodic review of the National Industry Guidelines for hydrometric monitoring. This review ensures the guidelines are up-to-date with technology and practice. It will also expand guidance for groundwater monitoring.

Standardised practices for hydrometric monitoring across Australia have significant benefits. They lead to efficient integration and use of data from diverse sources; and improved assessment, interpretation, and understanding of water information.

Collaboration between agencies is vital to achieve nationally consistent water data and reap the benefits that consistency brings.

You can find the guidelines at <http://www.bom.gov.au/water/standards/niGuidelinesHyd.shtml>

costs to affected organisations. We also work to minimise the impact of changes on regulated entities.

I knew BoM would be all over it, what perfect timing. Well done team - as always you continue to deliver such an excellent service.

Regular review of requirements

In accordance with our principles and policies we regularly review requirements (metric 1.2). For transparency, we publish a register of changes made to the lists of organisations named in the regulations and of commercially sensitive sites.

The Bureau regularly meets with data providers to discuss how to refine requirements. These include advisory groups, facilitated meetings, and targeted workshops (metric 6.1). We also seek feedback through channels described in KPIs 1, 2 and 5.

Clear communication and advice

Clear communication is important to maintain the Water Regulations and to achieve compliance. The Bureau uses e-newsletters, emails, letters, phone calls, meetings, and workshops to keep data providers informed and to seek feedback.

From our website, organisations can access the regulations and guidance on how to comply (metric 2.1) which also includes information on our compliance framework (see KPI 3), and how to deliver data. We review the web pages and make sure they are up to date.

We include email addresses on our website for people to seek direct help from Bureau staff and provide feedback to us (metrics 2.2 and 5.1). Organisations can also find a tailored list of regulations requirements using our Regulations Online tool. This gives organisation-specific detail on what data they must deliver, when and how.

Proportionate risk-based compliance

The Bureau has a risk-based and proportionate approach to non-compliance. Our website contains a summary of the principles behind our compliance and enforcement strategy (metric 3.2).

We prefer to work with data providers to encourage compliance. Our enforcement efforts focus on high impact water information. We have a documented series of steps for returning organisations to compliance. Our aim is to restore data supply without resorting to enforcement actions.

So far, the Bureau has not used the enforcement powers available under the Water Act. Nor have data providers raised concerns about the Bureau's compliance framework or actions.

Sharing data and information to maximise the value of the regulations

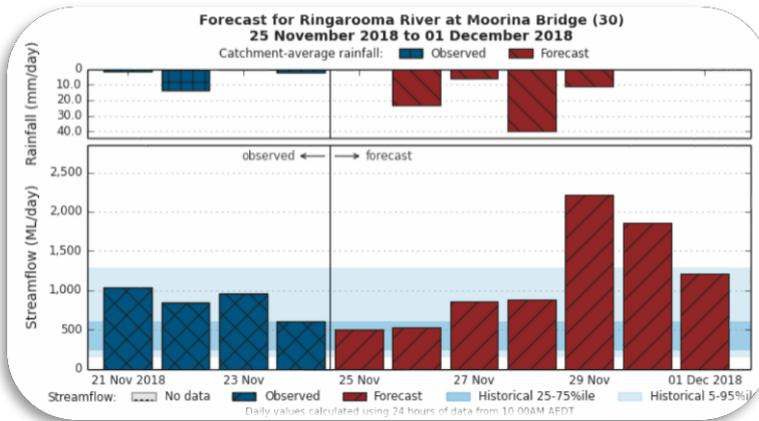
The Bureau often meets with other agencies to discuss sharing of water information. We also have agreements to share information with other Commonwealth regulators (KPI 4).

We provide considerable data and services back to data providers in the form of aggregated water information analysis as well as flood, climate, and weather services (see Box 2).

We regularly brief the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources on our work (metric 6.2). This includes work to improve the Water Regulations and feedback from data providers. We also share our work with other Commonwealth agencies that have a water interest.

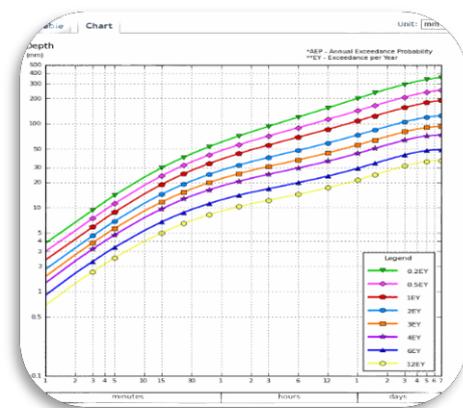
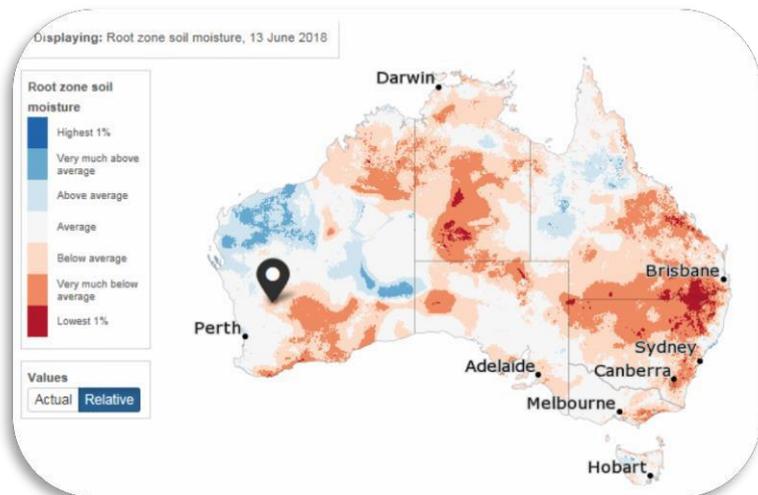
I'd like to thank you for making stream gauge data so much easier to access. Great you guys have made life easier for us users!

Box 2: Adding value for data providers



The Bureau provides seven day and seasonal streamflow forecasts for more than 200 sites across Australia. Our forecasts have been developed in partnership with key members of the water industry and rely on timely provision of water data from many providers. We are looking to improve the timeliness and quality of forecasts and to expand the number, and extent of catchments and locations for which they are given.

The AWRA landscape model integrates our meteorological data with data from Regulations organisations to provide information on the state of water resources and their distribution across Australia. Key outputs available to users include daily estimates of rainfall, evaporation, soil moisture and runoff.



Revised rainfall intensity, frequency and duration (IFD) data and analysis are available through the Bureau's design rainfall service. This service uses extensive observations made available by data providers and is vital for good design of hydraulic structures, from culverts to dams. It informs hundreds of millions of dollars of planning and investment decisions each year across Australia.

Performance evidence

KPI 1

Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities

Metric	Evidence
1.1 We have documented mechanisms in place to understand the operating environment of regulated entities, including use of feedback from existing complaint mechanisms and surveys of the regulated entities.	<p>In 2017–18 we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> met with data providers at least 30 times replied to more than 40 email queries in our dedicated email inboxes tracked 1200 interactions with data providers including emails, letters, and phone calls attended 20 conferences and industry events; made 21 presentations; and staffed five trade stands (Appendix B).
1.2 The Bureau regularly reviews policies, procedures and requirements and consults with stakeholders, independent experts and industry associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We updated two incorporated documents in the regulations and have the final metadata requirements under review. Our policies and procedures are published (Appendix D). We have not yet published periodic reviews to these policies. We consulted with seventeen affected parties before updating organisation names in the regulations. We held eleven meetings with dedicated consultative groups (Appendix C). The Bureau is a corporate member of the Australian Water Association. Our staff are also members of more than 24 industry organisations or groups (Appendix A).

KPI 2

Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective

Metric	Evidence
2.1 Advice and guidance is widely available to stakeholders, with feedback mechanisms in place to support and inform continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up-to-date requirements for individual organisations are available at Regulations Online—visited more than 470 times a month, on average. More than 40 emails received during the year via dedicated email addresses. More than 130 letters, emails, and newsletters sent to assist organisations with changes in reporting requirements. Nearly 20,000 views of the Water Regulations web pages through the year. More than 1400 downloads of supporting documents. Twenty-three updates to Bureau water information web pages.
2.2 The Bureau seeks feedback from stakeholders on guidance and advice provided via a wide range of mechanisms, including stakeholder surveys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 40 emails received during the year via dedicated email addresses. Feedback from stakeholders captured in nearly 1,200 interactions recorded in our customer relationship management database.

KPI 3

Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed

Metric	Evidence
3.1 Our risk management policies and procedures are available to regulator staff and the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The public can access the Bureau-wide risk management framework on pages 25–27 of our 2018–19 Corporate Plan.• Bureau staff can access risk management policies, registers and business continuity plans on the intranet. These apply to the regulations and are reviewed annually.
3.2 Our compliance and enforcement strategies are published and are consistent with agreed risk management policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our compliance and enforcement strategies are published and are consistent with agreed risk management policies.• A summary of our compliance and enforcement approach is on our website (see the Principles, policies and procedures section of Appendix D).• Internal compliance and enforcement policies and procedures were last reviewed in 2016 and are available to staff.

KPI 4

Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated

Metric	Evidence
4.1 Demonstrated effort to reduce number and crossover of information requirements imposed on regulated entities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We implemented a single data provision portal for urban water information.• Internal policies and customer relations software are in place to manage and streamline compliance interactions with data providers.
4.2 Demonstrated effort to share and receive information among regulators, where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborative Head Agreement to share water information with Geoscience Australia.• Datasets sought from or given to Commonwealth, State and local government agencies, publicly owned utilities or their contractors on more than 50 occasions, including the ABS, ABARES, ACCC, CEWO, DAWR, GA, and the MDBA.⁶• Twenty five formal meetings with other Commonwealth regulators to discuss collaboration and sharing of information including National Water Information Exchange meetings (see Appendix C) and interactions with representatives from the ABS, ABARES, ACCC, ATO, CEWO, DAWR, and the MDBA.

⁶ ABARES: Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics; ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics; ACCC: Australian Competition and Consumer Commission; ATO: Australian Taxation Office; CEWO: Commonwealth Environmental Water Office; DAWR: Department of Agriculture and Water Resources; GA: Geoscience Australia; and MDBA: Murray Darling Basin Authority.

KPI 5

Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities

Metric	Evidence
5.1 Our responses to requests from regulated entities are provided within specified timeframes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enquiries to regulations@bom.gov.au had average response times of less than five days.
5.2 We undertake appropriate consultation with stakeholders prior to significant regulatory or policy changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All updates to organisation names in 2017–18 preceded by consultation.• Regular e-newsletters sent to update recipients on water information and regulations activities. Up to 40 per cent of recipients open these messages.

KPI 6

Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks

Metric	Evidence
6.1 We hold stakeholder events regularly to inform the development and/or amendment of regulatory frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eleven meetings held with dedicated advisory groups (Appendix C).• More than 15 meetings held with data providers to discuss data and data requirements.
6.2 Documented procedures are in place to facilitate the flow of information between the Bureau and Commonwealth policy departments.	<p>In 2017–18 we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sent five briefs to the Minister about water information• held eleven meetings on the regulations and water information with the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources• chaired two National Water Information Exchange meetings to share information among Commonwealth agencies that have water information and policy responsibilities (Appendix C).

Appendix A. Industry memberships

Australian Hydrographers Association	International Association of Hydrogeologists
Australian National Committee on Large Dams (ANCOLD)	International Association of Hydrological Sciences
Australian Water Association (AWA)	International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID)
Australian Water Association ACT State Branch Committee	International Water Association
AWA Regional and Remote Water panel	National Flood Warning Infrastructure Standards Technical Advisory Committee
Board of Professional Engineers, Queensland	National Groundwater Subcommittee
Canberra Hydrological Society	National Water Reform Committee
Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand	Nile Basin Capacity Building Network
Engineers Australia NSW Water Panel	Queensland Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem Working Group
Environmental Engineering Society	Water Monitoring Standardisation Technical Committee
European Geosciences Union	World Meteorological Organization
Financial Services Institute of Australasia (FINSIA)	
Hydrological Society of South Australia	

Appendix B. Industry events attended

2018 HEPEX (Hydrologic Ensemble Prediction Experiment) Workshop

22nd International Congress on Modelling and Simulation (MODSIM2017)

ABARES Outlook Conference

Aither Consulting Water Markets Report Launch

Australasian Groundwater Conference

Australian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society (AMOS)

Australian Water Association WA Conference

AWA Victorian Chapter - annual dinner

Burdekin Water Forum

European Geosciences Union General Assembly 2018

Goyder Water Forum 2017

Industry technical forum on water metering and telemetry

Irrigation Australia Conference

National workshop on Environmental Economic Accounting

NT Water in the Bush

Oz Water Brisbane

QLD water modelling network

River Symposium

Water Industry Alliance briefing on water markets and the Aither report

Appendix C. Consultative and reference groups

Consultative group	Description	Meetings
Jurisdictional Reference Group for Water Information (JRGWI)	Coordinates water information activities with States and Territories. The group has members from major water utilities and State water agencies.	Nov 2017 Jun 2018
National Water Information Exchange (NWIE)	Forum to coordinate water information activities across ten Commonwealth agencies that have an interest in water.	Oct 2017 Mar 2018
Water Monitoring Standardisation Technical Committee (WaMSTeC)	Water industry forum to develop water monitoring guidelines for Australia. Includes 27 representatives from industry, Commonwealth and State agencies.	Nov 2017 May 2018
National Water Account Committee (NWAC)	Representatives from Commonwealth Government, and State and Territory lead water agencies. Gives strategic advice on the National Water Account. It also guides the collaborative development of the account and its alignment to user needs.	Nov 2017
Urban National Performance Report Roundtable Group	Representatives from State water agencies and the Water Services Association. Advise on urban water information data requirements.	Nov 2017 Jun 2018
Groundwater Products Reference Group	Representatives from Commonwealth and State agencies advise on groundwater products and data requirements.	Oct 2017 Jun 2018

Appendix D. Key documents and web pages

Document	URL	Reviewed
Regulations documents, requirements, formats, and schemas		
Persons and Classes of Persons <i>(incorporated document)</i>	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Persons_and_Classes_of_Persons.pdf	Aug 2017 Mar 2018
Metadata and Contextual Information Requirements <i>(incorporated document)</i>	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Metadata_and_contextual_information_requirements-v5.pdf	Mar 2017
Urban water management <i>(incorporated document)</i>	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Urban_Water_Management_Information_Requirements_v1.1.pdf	Apr 2018
Commercially sensitive sites <i>(incorporated document)</i>	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Commercially_sensitive_sites.pdf	Nov 2016
Administrative Instrument <i>(prescribing required formats)</i>	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/dataFormat/document/Current_AI.pdf	Mar 2017
Category 7 Reporting Handbook	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/CategorySevenReportingHandbook.pdf	Mar 2017
Water Data Transfer Format Resources	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/standards/wdff/index.shtml	Dec 2013
National Groundwater Information System schema	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/dataDelivery/overview/cat2eDataFormat.shtml	Jan 2013
Register of changes	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Register_of_changes.pdf	Mar 2018
Explanatory notes – Surface water resource information metadata requirements	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Expl_notes_metadata_cat1-v1.pdf	May 2014
Explanatory notes – Ground water resource information metadata requirements	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Expl_notes_metadata_cat2-v1.pdf	Mar 2017
Explanatory notes – Water storage information metadata requirements	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Expl_notes_metadata_cat3-v1.pdf	Jan 2015
Explanatory notes – Meteorological information metadata requirements	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Expl_notes_metadata_cat4-v1.pdf	Aug 2016
Explanatory Notes for Water Regulations Metadata and Contextual Information. Category 5: Water use information	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Expl_notes_metadata_cat5-v1.pdf	Jan 2018
Explanatory notes – Information about water rights, allocations and trades, metadata requirements	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Expl_notes_metadata_cat6-v1.pdf	Aug 2016
Explanatory notes – Water quality information metadata requirements	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/schedules/document/Expl_notes_metadata_cat9-v1.pdf	Aug 2016

Document	URL	Reviewed
Corporate documents		
Corporate plan	http://www.bom.gov.au/inside/Corporate_Plan_2018-19.pdf Risk management framework on pages 25–27	2018
Privacy policy	http://www.bom.gov.au/inside/BoMPrivacyPolicy_v1_Aproved_20140307.pdf	Mar 2014
Principles, policies and procedures		
Water Regulations Compliance Strategy	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/complianceStrategy.shtml	2016
Overarching principles for maintaining the Water Regulations	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/document/Principles_for_maintaining_Water_Regs.pdf	Feb 2014
Amending Part 7 of the <i>Water Regulations 2008</i>	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/document/Regs_Amendment_Policy.pdf	Mar 2016
Changing the Persons and Classes of Persons incorporated document	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/document/Regs_Name_Changes_Policy.pdf	Mar 2016
Issuing and maintaining the Administrative Instrument	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/document/Administrative_Instrument_Policy.pdf	Mar 2016
Changing the Metadata and Contextual Information Requirements incorporated document	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/document/Regs_Metadata_Requirements_Policy.pdf	Mar 2016
Changing the Commercially Sensitive Sites incorporated document	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/document/Regs_Commercially_Sensitive_Sites_Policy.pdf	Mar 2016
Versioning and release of the Water Data Transfer Format	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/document/WDTF_Versioning_Policy.pdf	Feb 2014
Publication policy	<i>Bureau of Meteorology internal document</i>	Mar 2016
Other advice and guidance		
Data Licensing	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/dataLicensing/index.shtml	2013
Regulations online	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/search.php	Mar 2018
Data delivery	http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/dataDelivery/index.shtml	Mar 2017

