



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 or previously named in the Water Regulations 2008, with information about amendments made to the Regulations on 2 December 2008, which may impact their organisations.

Amendments to the Water Regulations 2008

The Water Regulations 2008 were amended on 2 December 2008. The full text of the amendment can be viewed on the Federal Register of Legislative Instruments (FRLI) website or via a link from the Bureau of Meteorology website:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/water/regulations/water-2008.shtml>

The amendments have a range of impacts on organisations depending on how they are categorised under the Regulations. Some organisations will experience no changes to their requirements and others have been completely removed from the Regulations.

Changes to supply deadlines

From 2 December 2008, the six month deadline for organisations in Categories A, B, C, D, E and F supplying specified water data to the Bureau has been extended to seven months. This means that instead of first supplying daily data by 31 December 2008, daily data from these organisations will be due by 2 February 2009. Weekly data will be due by 9 February 2009 and monthly data by 2 March 2009. Those organisations supplying yearly data must submit their information by 20 July 2009. Historic information must be given to the Bureau by 13 February 2009. The Bureau's Regulations Online webpage:

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

has been updated to include all of the date changes listed above.

Changes to supply of short-term information

Under the changes, organisations in Categories A and B are no longer obliged to give the Bureau specified information, such as wind speed readings recorded during bushfires, as these are collected episodically and not part of a longer data series or record. Organisations in Categories C through H are already exempt from providing such short-term information.

Organisation name changes

Other amendments affecting some organisations include updates to the list of persons named in the Regulations. Some of these changes reflect recent amalgamations of Queensland's local government areas.

Additions to commercially sensitive sites

New sites have also been added to the list of Commercially Sensitive Sites. For commercial reasons, provision of information from these sites can be delayed.

For further information about changes to the regulations please contact Stephanie Holden by email s.holden@bom.gov.au

Deferment of enforcement action

The *Water Act 2007* grants a range of enforcement powers to the Minister for Climate Change and Water. These enforcement powers extend to non-compliance with the Water Regulations 2008, such as not meeting obligations to fully supply water information to the Bureau.

The Bureau acknowledges the significant implementation challenges faced by many organisations, including ourselves, in this first year of the regulations and have advised deferment of enforcement action. During this time, however, it is important to continue to work together and maintain close communication so that issues are resolved as quickly as possible.

The Minister will not initiate an enforcement action for up to six months from the date on which an organisation was required to first give information, subject to the following conditions being met:

- the organisation is in communication with the Bureau regarding their difficulties
- the organisation has returned a completed Water Information Survey identifying the extent and format of water information it holds
- the organisation has developed a Data Delivery Plan with agreement from the Bureau. This Plan must detail how and when the organisation will meet their obligations within the six month period.

Organisations requiring more information about either the Bureau's Water Information Survey or Data Delivery Plans should contact David Nicholls by email: d.nicholls@bom.gov.au

For further information please visit:

www.bom.gov.au/water