



Australian Government  
Bureau of Meteorology



# Policy for licensing information relating to water

**Version 2.0**

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# 1. Introduction

The Bureau of Meteorology (Bureau) collects information relating to water from around 300 organisations across Australia. These organisations provide information required under the *Water Act 2007*, which includes details about water flows, storage, use, services, quality and markets. This information contributes to a national view of water resources and how they are managed.

As part of its functions under the Water Act, the Bureau makes this information available as widely as possible. This includes publishing non-sensitive information to improve access across government, industry, and the community. Access to this information supports informed decision-making in water management and helps respond to changing environmental conditions.

Data licensing provides clear terms for how published information can be used and shared. Applying data licensing can maximise the value of information and support the recognition of the rights of data owners.

## 2. Purpose

This policy explains how the Bureau manages licensing and attribution for information relating to water. It supports three key outcomes:

- Protecting the rights of data owners through licensing agreements. This ensures recognition of data ownership.
- Publishing information with licensing conditions and attribution to support use for public benefit. This ensures users understand how it can be used and the source of the information.
- Supporting the reuse of information by encouraging open licences. This enables wider use and application of information to support research, innovation, and public value.

## 3. Scope

This policy is relevant to data owners and users of information relating to water published by the Bureau.

It applies to information provided to the Bureau, and to information generated by the Bureau where it holds copyright.

For the purposes of this policy, information relating to water includes the following terms defined in the Water Act:

- water information (under Part 7)
- water markets information (under Part 7A)
- information about water markets decisions (under Part 5A).

## 4. Policy

The Bureau's licensing approach supports transparency, trust, and the effective use of information across government, industry, research, and the community. It recognises data ownership, enables appropriate use and publication, and promotes reuse to maximise the value of published information.

### 4.1. Ownership of information

The Bureau recognises that data owners are the source of the information they provide and retain ownership, including any applicable intellectual property rights. Providing information to the Bureau does not transfer ownership, as set out in sections 129 and 135X of the Water Act.

The Bureau will:

- attribute information to the relevant data owner
- work with data owners to understand preferred licensing arrangements.

### 4.2. Use and publication of information

The Bureau publishes information to meet its statutory responsibilities under sections 123 and 135D the Water Act. These responsibilities apply regardless of whether specific licensing information has been provided. The Bureau is also required to share certain information about water markets with regulators under section 135P, including the Inspector-General of Water Compliance and Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

To Bureau will:

- make information available as widely as possible, consistent with obligations under the Water Act and *Privacy Act 1988*
- publish data owners preferred attribution and applicable licensing conditions with datasets, products, and services
- maintain licensing information so it remains current and accessible.

### 4.3. Reuse of published information

The Bureau recommends the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence](#) (CC BY) as the default open data licensing standard. CC BY allows users to access, use, and modify published information with attribution.

The Bureau will:

- promote CC BY licensing to data owners to support broad reuse
- apply CC BY licensing where copyright subsists with the Bureau
- identify where different licensing conditions apply.

## 5. Definitions

Data owner refers to an entity that holds intellectual property rights in information. This may include entities that provide information to the Bureau under the Water Act, such as specified persons or classes of persons named in the Water Regulations 2008.

## 6. Related legislation

[Water Act 2007](#)

[Water Regulations 2008](#)

[Copyright Act 1968](#)

[Privacy Act 1988](#)

### Release history

| Date          | Version | Status     | Description                            | Approver                                       |
|---------------|---------|------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| June 2026     | 2.0     | Approved   | Part 5A and 7A responsibilities update | General Manager, Agriculture and Water Program |
| June 2021     | 1.1     | Superseded | CC BY version update                   | Not recorded                                   |
| December 2019 | 1.0     | Superseded | First published policy                 | Not recorded                                   |



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