WATER RESOURCES
COMPLIANCE PLAN 2023-24

Department of
ENVIRONMENT, PARKS AND WATER SECURITY

NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

This compliance plan is published each year to highlight what we will be doing to deliver on compliance and enforcement priorities.

PRIORITIES

MEASURING AND REPORTING WATER USE

- Monthly reminders for reporting water use are sent to licence holders
- Quarterly audit of water use records and meter compliance
- Audit accuracy of meter entries quarterly and take actions where necessary
  - ☑ 98% of licence holders are reporting water use
  - ☑ 80% of licensed bores are fitted with a meter

REGISTERING BORES AND STATEMENT OF BORES

- Audit of statement of bore to check driller licence restrictions and submission dates
- Field verification of audit outcomes
- Improve public facing guidance for drilling and bore work permits
  - ☑ 80% of Statements of bore are submitted within 28 days
  - ☑ 95% of bore work complies with driller licence restrictions
  - ☑ 95% of bore work complies with bore work permits

INTERFERING WITH A WATERWAY

- Finalise guidelines and standards for work that interferes with a waterway, in accordance with Cabinet policy
- Undertake proactive inspections of permitted interference with a waterway
  - ☑ Outward facing guidance in place (application forms, permit with standard terms and conditions etc.)
  - ☑ Inspect 5 permitted interferences

UNLAWFUL WATER EXTRACTION

- Mid-water-year water use updates sent to licence holders
  - ☑ 98% of water licences do not exceed their licence entitlement

☑ Actions   ☑ Targets

RECOVERY OF UNUSED LICENSED WATER ENTITLEMENTS

- Run a regional campaign about unused licence allocations in 2 water allocation plan areas
- Make the process for recovery more transparent by updating and publishing our internal procedure for recovering water
  - ☑ Volume of water allocated to the environment, culture, or available in for economic benefit increases in a plan area

FOUNDATIONAL ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO ALL COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT PRIORITIES

- 120 licence inspections
- Undertake 2 campaigns to check compliance on licences with tailored conditions
- Entry of data from licence holders into central systems
  - ☑ Foundational tasks contribute to all targets for the compliance and enforcement priorities

PROACTIVE SITE INSPECTIONS

Proactive site inspections are integral to the compliance plan. Choosing which sites to inspect is done applying a risk based approach. Due to the nature of our work that requires us to travel long distances sometimes sites are also selected because we are in that area. The following is a list of criteria Regulatory Officers use to prioritise water extraction licences for inspection.

HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
a new water licence holder	the licence has not had an inspection	a licence has had an inspection
an application was declined	the licence has been surrendered	the licence holder has not exceeded the entitlement
the licence was granted for less than the application volume	the licence requires an amendment	water is being used in accordance with the development plan
the licence is due for renewal within the next two years	the licence is due for renewal within the next 2-5 years	the licence holder maintains regular contact and notifies of any change to circumstance
has exceeded the entitlement in a previous period	the licence has Special Conditions	water meters are fit for purpose
the licence has staging conditions	the licence holder is reporting water use infrequently	water use is reported as required
the licence is for the beneficial use of mining or petroleum	water use is less than the entitlement for consecutive periods	
the licence holder does not report water use		
the licence has unmetered extraction points		

FOCUS REGIONS

In 2023, Water Resources will focus compliance on the Darwin Rural Water Control District as there is high competition for use and known unlicensed use. Katherine Tindall Water Allocation Plan area will also be a focus for compliance as the majority of licence holders under used their water entitlements in the Plan area, and the Plan is due for renewal in 2024.

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