

Fact Sheet

Non-Urban Water Metering Action Plan

Melbourne Water manages licensed surface water diversions in accordance with the *Water Act 1989*, State Government policy and state-wide diversions management practices, on behalf of the Victorian Minister for Water.

Melbourne Water manages approximately 1,800 licences annually to use water from farm dams and waterways in the Yarra catchment, lower Maribyrnong River and minor western tributaries of Stony, Kororoit, Laverton and Skeleton Creeks. Water is mainly used for agricultural, industrial, commercial, domestic and stock purposes.

Melbourne Water's approach to Non-Urban Water Metering

Non-Urban Water metering is water metering used as the basis to monitor compliance with an entitlement and/or related resource management activities in a non-urban setting.

Melbourne Water has implemented a non-urban water metering program since 1999. This has involved metering active licence holders with annual volumes greater than 5 ML per year; replacing meter assets nearing the end of their life; and since 2013, investing in our telemetry network to provide real time usage data.

Telemetry, is an important aspect of managing our water resources, as it allows licence holders to assess their current water use, and for Melbourne Water to detect metering faults and failures early, improve our understanding of licence holder water usage trends, process water trades faster, and detect possible breaches of the *Water Act 1989*.

Approximately 75% (or 30,302 ML/yr) of the water volume available under all Melbourne Water issued licenses is being metered. Table 1 summarises the number and volume of take

& use licences for irrigation purposes, including current meter and telemetry installations.

Table 1: Licence and metering statistics.

<i>Take & Use licences (no. of)</i>	1,195
<i>Farm Dam Registration Licences (no. of)</i>	616
<i>Take & Use volume</i>	40,467 ML/yr
<i>Meter installations (no. of)</i>	786
<i>Telemetry installations (no. of)</i>	268

The effective management of the licensing function is essential to ensure the health of our waterways is protected while promoting the beneficial use of these water resources within sustainable limits.

Why does Melbourne Water have a Metering Action Plan?

Under the Statement of Obligations issued under the *Water Industry Act 1994* Water Corporations, like Melbourne Water, are required to prepare, implement and maintain a metering action plan. Melbourne Water's latest Metering Action Plan details how we will continue to ensure water resources are effectively managed and accounted for and to meet the requirements of the [Victorian Non-urban Water Metering Policy \(2020\)](#).

The state-wide Non-urban Water Metering Policy was recently revised to align with the [Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact \(2018\)](#). The policy aims to ensure that water taken under entitlements is accurately and comprehensively metered, considering risks to water resources and the cost-benefits of metering. This ensures that water users and the community can be confident about

Victoria's water resource management and accounting.

Under state policy and the Compact, metering of non-urban water is required to comply with the Australian Standards, specifically AS4747.

What does Melbourne Water's Metering Action Plan aim to achieve?

Melbourne Water's Metering Action Plan aims to outline our commitment to improving our metering and telemetry assets, how processes are managed and information is shared and to remain at the forefront of effective water resource management.

To ensure our non-urban water meters meet national standards, by 2025:

- all new, upgraded and existing extraction sites, for licences with volumes greater than 5 ML, will be metered with an AS4747 compliant meter; and,
- fifty nine percent (59%) of all metered Melbourne Water issued licences will be telemetered. This equates to 100% of all planned telemetry installations. Melbourne Water has undertaken a cost-benefit assessment and determined the number of licences requiring telemetry installations.

A summary of our key objectives and activities are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Key performance objectives for Melbourne Water's Metering Action Plan.

Key performance objectives	Due by
Deliver and install 60 meters (AS4747 compliant) and telemetry	2021
Upgrade 188 meters to AS4747 compliant meters	2025
Installation of 195 new telemetry sites	2025/26
Validation of existing meter fleet	On-going
Installation of 20 Internet of Things (IoT) data loggers	Dec 2020
Complete Diversion Customer Portal	Dec 2021

This Metering Action Plan does not address the following licence types, due to their lower risk

and/or cost outweighing benefits: meters <80 mm; domestic and stock; registered farm dam and low use (sleeper) licences; Bulk Entitlements; and, extraction from irrigation drainage systems.

Melbourne Water will continue to inspect and manually read meters at least once a year on low volume and low risk licence holders, and at least twice a year for surface water winter-fill licences. We will also regularly report on our meter assets, annual consumption to the Victorian Water Register and volumes of potential unauthorised take.

Melbourne Water's past investment and planned capital program for the next 5 years ensures that we are already well down the path of being compliant with actions of the Victorian policy and Compliance Compact, and ensuring fair and consistent access to water for our customers.

What is Melbourne Water's Meter Lifecycle Management process?

The lifecycle for non-urban water meters involves: installation, maintenance, validation, verification, decommissioning and disposal.

Once a meter is installed on a licence holder's pumping equipment or offtake, the meter remains the property of Melbourne Water. Melbourne Water is then responsible for maintaining and replacing meters as necessary.

All meters are on programmed maintenance involving regular inspections and validations, consistent with AS4747. Meters are verified for accuracy against this standard, and once the meter reaches the end of its operational life, it is replaced.

The lifecycle management of meters is undertaken by Melbourne Water's Diversion team and approved contractors.

How do I find out more information?

For more information, please call the Diversions team on 131 722 or visit the Melbourne Water website:

www.melbournewater.com.au/water-data-and-education/waterway-diversions