

# Dam Owner Responsibilities – What You Need to Know

FACT SHEET 2 – October 2025

## Understanding Your Legal Responsibilities as a Dam Owner

Owning a dam in Tasmania entails legal obligations to ensure the safety of people, the environment, and property. The *Water Management Act 1999* mandates that dam owners maintain and operate their dams responsibly:

*"An owner of a dam must, so far as is reasonably practicable, maintain and operate the dam so as not to cause, or be likely to cause, material environmental harm or danger to any person or property."* – *Water Management Act 1999*, Section 165G

For comprehensive information on dam owner obligations, visit: [www.nre.tas.gov.au/DamSafety](http://www.nre.tas.gov.au/DamSafety) or scan the QR code on page 2 below.

### What is a Comprehensive Surveillance Report (CSR)?

A CSR is a detailed inspection and report assessing the current condition of your dam. It's required every five years for dams with a Consequence category of **Significant or above**. It looks at the dam's condition, identifies any issues, and recommends safety actions.



### The importance of compliance

Adhering to dam safety regulations is crucial not only to avoid penalties but also to safeguard your property, community, and business.

A well-maintained dam is a valuable asset, and compliance ensures its longevity and safety.



## What steps follow the completion of a CSR?

1. You need to engage a suitably qualified consultant who prepares the report and assesses any changes in the dam's Consequence category.
2. As the dam owner, you must sign the report to confirm the review and accept the recommendations.
3. Submit a copy of the signed report to the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) for review.
4. If the assessment indicates a **Potential Loss of Life** (PLL > 1) in the event of dam failure, you are required to develop a **Dam Safety Emergency Plan** (DSEP).

## What is a Dam Safety Emergency Plan (DSEP)?

A DSEP outlines procedures in the event of a dam failure, including:

- Details about the dam and downstream areas.
- Maps illustrating potential flood impact zones.
- Contact procedures and evacuation steps.

DSEPs are mandatory if a failure could result in potential loss of life. These plans assist emergency services in coordinating responses during a dam safety emergency.

- Prepared by your consultant.
- Signed by you and the consultant and submitted to NRE Tas.
- Shared via LISTmap with response agencies (Tasmania Police) and Emergency Services personnel.

For guidelines, consultant list and other information: scan below



## What is a Consequence Category Assessment (CONCAT)?

A CONCAT evaluates the potential impact if your dam was to fail, considering:

- Downstream infrastructure (homes, roads, businesses, farms).
- Environmental and economic consequences.
- Risks to human life.

This assessment is part of your CSR and may lead to recategorisation of your dam's Consequence category. Changes in downstream land use i.e. urbanisation can affect this category.


Scan the QR code or access the link below for more information

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## Questions?

### Dam Safety and Regulatory Assurance Program

Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania

 1300 368 550

 [damsafety@nre.tas.gov.au](mailto:damsafety@nre.tas.gov.au)

For more information:

<https://nre.tas.gov.au/DamSafety>

