Water Accountability

FACT SHEET – January 2025

Water accountability is essential for managing water resources effectively. It provides reliable information at both system-wide and individual levels, supporting evidence-based decision-making for sustainable management of water resources.

Demand and competition for water is increasing as Tasmania's climate is changing. As the value of our agricultural sector grows, we experience changes in patterns of water use in our towns and regions. These challenges require a strategic approach to water accounting.

Key points

- Enhanced water accountability measures are being developed following an independent review of Tasmania's Water Accountability Framework.
- The review recommends a tailored, risk-based approach, where different catchments adopt measures suited to their specific risks.
- Opportunities for engagement with water managers and water users will be a key focus during implementation.

Photograph by Wendy Wyker, NRE Tas.

Working towards enhanced water accountability

Appropriate and risk-based accounting of water use in our catchments through water licences, irrigation rights and other water access agreements will support effective management of the State's water resources.

Water use accountability and water accounting provides information to support sustainable water resource planning as well as providing water users the information they need to understand their own water use and enable improved on-farm management.

The recent independent review of Tasmania's Water Accountability Framework found that the current framework has served the State well but requires modernising to meet current and emerging challenges.

Recommendations span policy, legislative, administrative and operational changes. NRE Tas will be working closely with water managers and other stakeholders to progress the recommendations in stages.

Department of
Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania

Tasmanian Government

What are the benefits of improved water accountability?

The benefits of this project include:

- Improved accuracy, reliability and timeliness of water take data for evidence-based water resource planning and management.
- Protects ecosystems by preventing over-extraction.
- Supports access to water for irrigation, commercial uses and other public benefits such as drinking water. Supports businesses with improved information for decision-making.

Timeline

2024-2027	• New Catchment Risk Assessment Framework developed to inform risk-based water accountability measures • Water accountability policy and regulatory settings updates • Updating compliance & enforcement systems and data management and reporting systems
2027	• Commence roll-out of new water accountability measures

Photograph by Daniel Peck

This project is being delivered under Tasmanian's Rural Water Use Strategy.

The review of the Water Accountability Framework was jointly funded by the Tasmanian Government and Australian Government through the National Water Grid Fund.

Australian Government

National Water Grid

More information

Learn more about this project – www.nre.tas.gov.au/water/water-legislation-policies-and-strategies/rural-water-use-strategy/activities-underway/water-accountability-project

Read more about the Rural Water Use Strategy – www.nre.tas.gov.au/rural-water

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