

Impact Analysis Statement

Summary IAS

Details

Lead department	Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers (DLGWW)
Name of the proposal	<i>Water Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2025</i>
Submission type	Summary IAS
Title of related legislative or regulatory instrument	<i>Water Regulation 2016</i>
Date of issue	December 2025

Proposal type	Details
Minor and machinery in nature	<p>The <i>Water Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2025</i> (the Amendment Regulation) amends the <i>Water Regulation 2016</i> (the Water Regulation) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dissolve the Fernlee Water Authority (FWA) and convert to an alternative institutional arrangement, namely multiple Closed Water Activity Agreements (CWAAs). <p>The Webbe-Weller Review recommended to abolish water authorities and deliver their responsibilities through alternative non-governmental institutional arrangements. A CWAA is a specific voluntary agreement where all registered landowners in an authority area agree on how water activities will be carried out on their land. Establishing CWAAs will allow operations to be more independent and efficient, in alignment with the scale of its activities.</p> <p>The FWA is responsible for three separate bore systems within the authority area. The FWA has met the requirements of section 695A of the <i>Water Act 2000</i> (Water Act) and will convert into three CWAAs – the Boanbirra Bore Water Scheme, the Booroomba Bore Water Scheme and the Janalian Bore Water Scheme.</p> <p>The board of the FWA voted affirmative, by special resolution, to dissolve the FWA to multiple CWAAs on 7 July 2023. The ratepayers of the FWA have been fully informed of the proposal, given details of the possible consequences and the opportunity to vote by a special ballot.</p> <p>A notice of the proposed dissolution is not required to be published by the chief executive under section 692(1) of the Water Act due to the conditions of section 692(2) having been satisfied. Specifically: (1) the ratepayers in the authority area to which the proposed dissolution relates have been informed about the proposal by the FWA; (2) the proposed dissolution is because of action taken by the State in response to the Webbe-Weller Review (the Review); and (3) the publication of the notice is not appropriate, having regard to public interest.</p>

Proposal type	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first condition has been met, as discussed above. • The second condition has been met due to the Review recommending that water authorities be abolished and their responsibilities delivered through alternative non-government institutional arrangements. The Queensland Government supported this in principle, with the State since facilitating the dissolution of 39 water authorities by amendments. • The third condition has been met, as the dissolution would be delayed by allowing for a gazette notice to be published and subsequent submission and review periods. Ratepayers may also feel obliged to make a submission when their preference for dissolution is already known, with DLGWV required to resource a process related to any submissions received. This reduced effectiveness, responsiveness, efficiency and economy is not in the public interest. <p>The FWA is a small water authority with 9 ratepayers, no other stakeholders and receives no government funding. The risks associated with this proposal are low and have no implications for the general public.</p> <p>This proposal is minor and machinery in nature (being consequential to a procedure for dissolution carried out under the Water Act) and has no regulatory costs. DLGWV has identified that no further regulatory impact analysis is required under the <i>Queensland Government Better Regulation Policy</i>.</p>
Regulatory proposals where no RIA is required	<p>The Amendment Regulation also amends the Water Regulation to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Defer compliance requirements for telemetry devices in specific Queensland Murray-Darling Basin water management areas. <p>Telemetry is a recent regulatory requirement for the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin (QMDB) under the Queensland Non-urban Measurement Policy 2022 implemented through legislative amendments that took effect in July 2024. This delivered on Queensland Government's obligations under the Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact to have a timetable by 2025, for the implementation of telemetry.</p> <p>Holders of relevant authorisations in six water management areas within two QMDB water plans – <i>Water Plan (Border Rivers and Moonie) 2019</i> and <i>Water Plan (Condamine and Balonne) 2019</i> – have a regulatory requirement to attach a telemetry device to their water meters before 1 December 2025. In late 2023, Queensland secured funding from the Australian Government to subsidise the cost of this requirement. The funding fully subsidises the cost of a telemetry device, its installation and the first year of data services and maintenance. Installation of telemetry devices and uptake of the subsidy has been well below expectations.</p> <p>DLGWV acknowledges that the requirement for telemetry devices is a recent regulatory requirement. Deferral of the compliance timeframe to attach a telemetry device by 12 months will provide additional time for DLGWV to engage with affected water entitlement holders to educate them on these recent regulatory obligations and encourage uptake of the telemetry subsidy to reduce implementation costs. The Australian Government funding of the subsidy remains available to December 2027 to support implementation.</p>

Proposal type	Details
	<p>3. Defer compliance requirements for meter installation and revalidation in specific North Region water management areas.</p> <p>Meters that were in operation prior to commencement of the current measurement requirements in the Water Regulation, which came into effect in 2024, required revalidation by the date defined in the Water Regulation. Revalidation requires having an existing meter inspected and certified by a qualified person as being compliant with the Queensland metering standards. Once a meter has been revalidated, it transitions to the current framework which requires this process to occur every 5 years. The same process applies to the installation of a new meter. A meter or measurement device must be certified every 5 years, or sooner if it becomes faulty or the installation set-up is changed. Certified meter installation and revalidation dates prescribed in the Water Regulation for North Queensland water plan areas require deferral to better align with the intended 5-year certification cycle, water plan reviews and delivery of the Unlocking Water project to make more unallocated water available for consumptive use. Extension of the compliance timeframe will ensure DLGWW resources can be appropriately focussed on meeting these commitments and deliver better alignment with the intended 5-year certification cycle.</p> <p>These proposals are deregulatory in nature as they defer regulatory requirements and do not increase costs or regulatory burden on business or the community. These proposals are not subject to the regulatory impact analysis requirements and do not require further impact analysis under the <i>Queensland Government Better Regulation Policy</i>.</p>

Signed


Bronwyn Blagoev
Director-General

Date: 13/11/2025



Ann Leahy MP
Minister for Local Government and Water and
Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and
Volunteers

Date: 17/11/2025