



The National Water Account

The Bureau's National Water Account contains standardised information about the management of Australia's water resources.

Under the Commonwealth *Water Act 2007* the Bureau of Meteorology is responsible for compiling and delivering comprehensive water information across Australia. This includes publishing an annual National Water Account.

As the competition for water resources increases, it is more important than ever to fully account for how water is shared between the economy, critical human needs and the environment.

The National Water Account provides a detailed insight into the management of Australia's water resources at the national and regional scale. It supports the National Water Initiative, disclosing the total water resource, the volume of water available for abstraction, the rights to abstract water, and the actual abstraction of water for economic, social, cultural and environmental benefit across Australia.

The National Water Account is produced for a water year from 1 July to 30 June. It focuses on hydrologically defined regions of national significance and is:

- compiled from the best available data
- produced and reviewed using standardised processes
- guided by Australian Water Accounting Standard 1.

The National Water Account complements the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Water Account, Australia, which provides information on the supply and use of water within the Australian economy

Together these accounts inform water resources planning, water market activity, investment and environmental management decisions. They also inform research and discussion within governments and the community to improve Australia's water information and knowledge.

The Bureau partners with State and Territory water agencies—as well as other Australian Government agencies, water utilities and other water agencies to collect data used in the National Water Account.

Advancing water information

The National Water Account provides information that has previously been difficult to access or unavailable to general users in a standardised form. It highlights gaps and inconsistencies in data, allowing improvements to be made to our national water information base.

The information presented in the National Water Account is:

- nationally consistent and comparable
- publicly available
- comprehensive
- useful to governments, the water sector, industry and the general community
- transparent about the source and quality of the data.

The National Water Account provides a national picture of water resources management, answering the following questions for each region:

- What were the changes in water inflows, outflows and storages?
- What water access entitlements existed?
- What water management plans applied to govern water access?
- How much water was allocated for use during the reporting period?
- How much of the total water entitlement was traded?
- How much water was abstracted for use?
- How much water was made available to the environment?



The National Water Account makes a significant contribution to the management of Australia’s water resources by informing decision making.

The process of reporting in the National Water Account is transparent which builds confidence and understanding in the volumes published regarding water traded, extracted for use, recovered and managed for economic, public and environmental purposes.

National Water Account

The National Water Account was first published in 2010 for eight nationally significant water use regions. Each year improvements are made to the report, and in some years new regions are added.

The National Water Account currently presents reports for:

- Adelaide
- Burdekin
- Canberra
- Daly
- Melbourne
- Murray–Darling Basin
- Ord
- Perth
- South East Queensland
- Sydney.

The compilation of the reports for these regions is guided by the Australian Water Accounting Standards 1.

Consultation

The Bureau acknowledges the many partners who directly contribute to the production of the National Water Account.

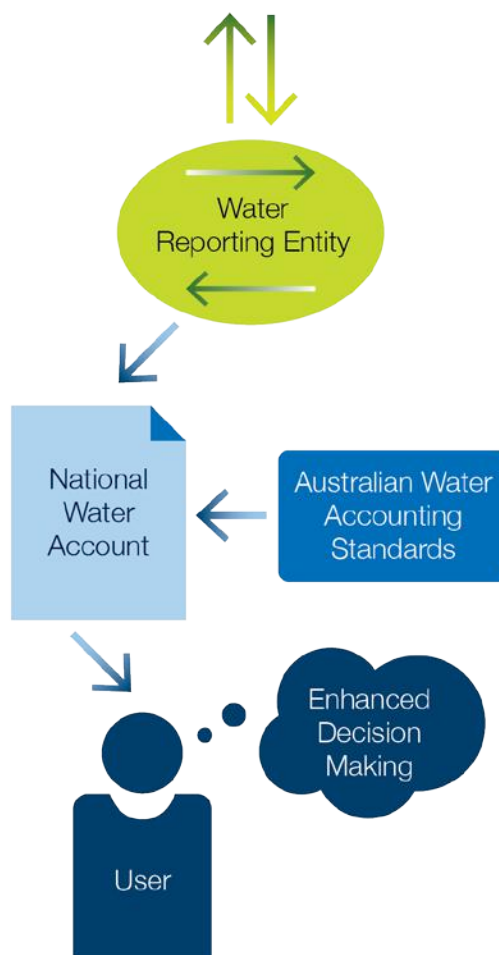
The National Water Account Committee, chaired by the Bureau, has provided advice throughout the production of the National Water Account. The Committee’s membership includes representatives from each State and Territory’s lead water agency, urban and rural peak industry bodies and Australian Government agencies.

Looking to the future

Water accounting is a relatively new concept in water resources management, and Australia is leading the world in this discipline.

The accuracy of the National Water Account will improve as estimation and measurement techniques, and monitoring and reporting systems develop and the Bureau’s analytical capacity increases. End user feedback is vital for ongoing development and refinement.

All comments and suggestions on the National Water Account are welcome and can be sent to nwa@bom.gov.au



Delivery of a water account to a user

Top image: Alison Pouliot

FIND OUT MORE

To access the National Water Account and for further information about the Bureau’s water information role, visit www.bom.gov.au/water/nwa.

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