

Making the most of your water - *Reviewing your water use*

Factsheet 4 | Version 1 | April 2015

New conditions are being added to all water licences that will require you to keep records to demonstrate compliance. DPIPWE has developed some factsheets to assist you in understanding how planning, recording and reviewing your water use can assist you in being compliant with your water licence.

The final step in managing your water is reviewing what you have done at the end of the season. This review will help you be accountable for your water, but also may provide some business and planning benefits.

By knowing how much water you are using from each allocation and for each crop, you may be able to plan with more certainty into the future.

This review does not need to be time consuming and can be as simple as looking at the water you budgeted against the water you have used.

I. Business Management Review

You could then add value to your review by asking some key financial management questions, including:

- How does my water use compare to industry benchmarks?
- Can I identify any unused carry-over water (eg winter allocations unused in my dam) which I can use next year in addition to next year's allocations?
- Are there water trading opportunities? Maybe I could temporarily trade water?
- Is there a need to supplement my water with high reliability water from irrigation schemes?
- Can I use these tools for monitoring the water from a shared dam?
- Now that I know how much water I used
 - Can I reduce my energy costs in some way?
 - Which crops give me the best return per megalitre?
- Can I now make my water go further?

You may then be able to use this information to make decisions that see you using your water in the most profitable way.

2. Water Compliance Review

Once you have addressed the financial side of your business, you can then look at how your records have assisted in demonstrating compliance with your water licence. Some questions you may be able to answer from a review include:

- Do my records show what volumes I have taken from each allocation (period amount) as shown on my licence?
- Do I have sufficient information recorded to explain where all water came from?
- Do my meter records or irrigation use records show that an amount greater than my allocations was used? For example can I show records of the volumes purchased from others including any irrigation scheme, the amount of groundwater I used and water used from catchment dams?
- Can I show that I have taken all my water in the appropriate take periods specified on my licence?
- Can I demonstrate that there have been no unauthorised takes? For example water taken without a Water Course Authority, Temporary Allocation, or unlicensed takes.
- Do my records show that I have responded appropriately to any restrictions placed on the taking of any water allocations during the season?
- For my Surety 7 or Surety 8, do my records show that this was taken when authorised to do so?
- Do my records show that the use from in-stream dams was no more than the water taken under the allocation volume to fill the dam?

As you undertake your self-assessment and complete the end-of -season review, it may be apparent that your self-assessment process may need improvement or that some non-compliance issues need to be addressed. For example not enough detail was collected during the season or water used exceeded or mismatched available allocations.

Seek help from a consultant or local Regional Water Management Officer if you need to look at options to become compliant:

For example:

- Reduce water use— less cropping and water efficiency
- Seek extra allocations
- Purchase or lease extra water
- Explore the use of groundwater

You will only need to provide these and or any other records as evidence your compliance with your licence upon request by the Minister for Primary Industries and Water.

What is a Water Balance?

In order to demonstrate whether or not you have exceeded your allocations it may be useful to work out your water balance.

A water balance is the comparison between the water used, detailed in Factsheet 3: Recording Your Water Use and the water available to be used, as detailed in Factsheet 2: Planning Your Water Use.

For example - Add up all the water used by source in Table 4: Irrigation Water Used Record (Factsheet 3) and record in the Water Used column of Table 1: Water Available (Factsheet 2).

¹ Crop	Date	Amount (mm/ha)	Area (ha)	² Total ML	³ Water Source
1	15 October	25	20	5	A
2	17 October	20	10	2	A
1	1 December	20	20	4	B
3	14 January	25	10	2.5	C
Total				11	

Water Source and Surety ¹		Water on licence (ML)	Water historically available (ML) ²	Water used (ML) ³
A	Winter allocation Surety 5	100	100	7
B	Summer allocation Surety 5	50	50	
C	Summer allocation Surety 6	50	40	
D	Groundwater	100	100	
E	Purchased water	150	150	
F	Catchment Dam	50	50	
Total		500	480	

To be compliant with your licence, the water used should not be greater than the water available. If this is not the case, then, depending upon the margin of error you may need to review your records in more detail.

If you approach DPIPWE for assistance with any issues you have identified through undertaking a self-assessment of your water use, we will work with you rather than take enforcement action.

What about Stock and Domestic Water?

Stock and Domestic water does not generally come out of water licence allocations (unless you have a non-riparian water licence). However, it may be worthwhile knowing and considering these amounts in your water balance.

If you have a non-riparian Stock and Domestic water licence, adding up the values below and comparing them with your licensed allocation is a worthwhile exercise to determine your compliance.

Stock & Domestic Water Estimations

Under the *Water Management Regulations 2009* the amount of water that can be taken by a person or stock and domestic purpose is:

- a maximum of 440L a day for each dwelling on the relevant land; or
- a maximum of 100L a day for each person if there is no dwelling on the relevant land;
- for irrigation of a household garden, a maximum of 0.6L a day for each square meter, but not exceeding 1500L a day
- for watering cattle, a maximum of 90L a day for each head
- for watering horses, a maximum of 45L a day for each head
- for watering sheep, a maximum of 8.5L a day for each head
- for watering goats, a maximum of 8.5L a day for each head
- for watering pigs, a maximum of 20L a day for each head
- for watering chickens, a maximum of 3L a day for each 10 head
- for watering turkeys, a maximum of 5.5L a day for each 10 head