

1 October 2025

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Dear Water Monitoring Staff and PSA Representatives,

**Concerns related to organisational structure for water monitoring**

Thank you for your recent email to Sam Ebzery (29/09/25) about WaterNSW's water monitoring structure, and for joining today's special Peak Consultation Group (PCG) meeting.

I appreciate the dedication and professionalism of our water monitoring teams and value their continued involvement in these important issues.

**Rationale for the Regional Model**

WaterNSW is currently implementing a restructure to support the long-term financial sustainability of the organisation. This process necessitates cost reductions and may involve adjustments to certain service standards. The regional model will be retained, as it has proven effective in enhancing work management efficiency and facilitating resource sharing across functional areas—an approach that remains essential given the current fiscal climate.

We will continue to uphold technical standards through a centralised team, recognising that past technical and functional models have contributed to standardisation and operational excellence. However, our current corporate strategy prioritises cost efficiency, making the regional model more suitable at this time. While previous technical achievements were essential, our focus has now shifted to supporting cost reduction rather than further technical improvements.

**Performance Metrics and Quality Outcomes**

We understand the concern that a regional model could impact technical standards and data quality. However, our performance data does not support the inference that standards have declined since the regional model commenced in 2022. In fact, the most recent Quality Management System (QMS) Steering Committee report shows that over the past two years, we have seen either improving or stable trends in key quality metrics, including:

- The number of sites with gauging exceptions
- Overdue staff gauges
- Overdue groundwater and surface water sensor calibrations
- Open RACS (non-conformities and corrective actions)

We have also acknowledged improved water monitoring performance via the annual Team Contribution Bonus, as the gauging exceptions metric was "exceeded" in FY24/25. Further details on these KPI's are provided in the appendix.

### **System and Process Improvements**

We have also invested significantly in modernising our systems to support quality outcomes. Over the past two years, we have:

- Invested \$0.5 million in upgrading the Hydstra platform, which is central to our data management and reporting – feedback from our water monitoring field teams acknowledges this as a significant improvement.
- Trialling new digital tools and apps, including Upvise, Waterlog, and Sida, to streamline field operations and data capture.
- Continued to update and expand our technical procedures and competency frameworks to ensure staff are supported and standards are maintained.

### **Committed to a successful WaterNSW and Built Infrastructure Portfolio**

We are dedicated to further improving the regional structure to achieve our financial goals and for the benefit of our employees and customers. Understanding the challenges of change, we will maintain regular engagement with employees and the PSA. Performance metrics will be closely monitored, and any concerns regarding technical standards or data quality will be addressed promptly. As discussed today, I am happy to review this with the PCG in about six months time.

Over the coming weeks, I look forward to discussing with the water monitoring team how we can strengthen connections among employees, managers, and other WaterNSW teams. I am confident the team will suggest effective ways to enhance engagement.

Thank you again for your dedication to delivering high-quality water monitoring services for the people of NSW.

Yours sincerely,



### **Geoff Watson**

A/Executive General Manager Built Infrastructure  
WaterNSW

## Appendix: Key Performance Metrics

(from 2025-05-28 QMS Steering Committee Meeting - Agenda\_Report water monitoring)

Metric	Trend (Past 2 Years)	Current Status/Notes
<b>Sites with Gauging Exceptions</b>	Decreasing since Oct-24	Running average for overdue gaugings steady or decreasing in most regions
<b>Overdue Staff Gauges</b>	Similar levels to 2023, slight increase in 2024-25	Most regions below target; state-wide overdue sites at 6.7%
<b>Overdue Sensor Calibrations</b>	Static since 2023	Most locations below target; some local increases but overall trend steady/decreasing
<b>Open RACS (Corrective Actions)</b>	Decreasing	Significant progress closing overdue actions; open issues down in most areas
<b>Daily Data Availability (6am/3pm)</b>	Consistently meets/exceeds	6am: ~92% (target 90%); 3pm: ~97-98% (target 95%)

### Additional Notes:

- Audit findings and non-conformities are being addressed, with overdue actions prioritised for closure.
- Technical procedures and competency frameworks have been updated and expanded.
- Customer feedback and KPI monitoring are ongoing, with continuous improvement actions in place.