



Water Services Authority - Taumata Arowai update February 2025

Tēnā koe

I hope you've had a great start to 2025. It's all systems go here at the Water Services Authority–Taumata Arowai – and it's gearing up to be a big year for all of us in the water sector.

Consultation on proposed wastewater standards starting soon

As mentioned in our December newsletter, we expect consultation to begin shortly on proposed wastewater environmental performance standards, which seek to reduce the consenting burden and provide greater certainty of costs for wastewater investments for network operators. We'll be in touch again when we can tell you more. In the meantime, you can read the [fact sheet on wastewater and stormwater environmental performance standards](#) prepared as one of the key aspects of the Local Government (Water Services) Bill currently in select committee.

Have you registered for the Drinking Water Science Forum yet?

The forum, being held at Te Papa Wellington on 26 February, is focused on sharing research, fostering collaboration, and improving knowledge of drinking water science. The programme features a diverse speaker lineup including Jim Graham, our Chief Advisor Water Science, presenting the latest research on critical issues ranging from PFAS and viruses in groundwater to the extraordinary potential of metagenomics.

Jim has been pivotal to the design of the Forum, created as an opportunity for people to find out about the cutting-edge science issues that face the water sector and the critical new things that are changing how we need to think about what we do. It is looking to be a full house so get in quick if you are keen to come along! [Register now](#).

Jim Graham, Chief Advisor Water Science – “a passion for water quality”

Jim is a key figure here at the Authority and is well known to many of you across the water sector. He recently celebrated his fifth year, having joined the organisation during its establishment in 2020. Jim ensures that robust science underpins our work and is a driving force behind many of our initiatives.

We recently talked to Jim about his career and passion for public health and water quality. [Read further here.](#)

Acceptable Solutions are in our sights

In our last newsletter, we told you we've begun work to review Acceptable Solutions. We've heard that some suppliers are finding it challenging to determine if an Acceptable Solution is right for their smaller supplies, in particular, those that provide water primarily for agricultural use (irrigation or stock) but also for people to drink, which we refer to as 'mixed-use rural supplies'.

We want to provide greater clarity and certainty to these suppliers. As a start, we've published a [policy statement](#) and [flowchart](#) that clarify supplier responsibilities for end-point treatment when following an Acceptable Solution.

Improving our understanding of mixed-use rural supplies

We've established a Mixed-Use Rural Suppliers and Consumers Group to help us understand the challenges facing mixed-use rural drinking water supplies and barriers to using Acceptable Solutions more broadly. Meetings began in January 2025 and are already proving fruitful.

Our aim is to help drinking water suppliers identify the right compliance path for them – potentially saving them time, effort and cost, while delivering good quality drinking water for communities. We'll keep you updated as this work progresses.

Seeking information on end-point treatment options

We are also seeking market information on the current and future drinking water end-point treatment provision options in New Zealand.

We recently put a Request for Information (RFI) on the government information tendering system (GETS): [GETS | Taumata Arowai - End point treatment options and costs](#). The RFI will help us to provide advice, guidance and standards to support safe rural drinking water, as well as confirm whether the right equipment is available in rural areas where centralised treatment is not cost-effective or suitable.

We are interested in hearing from anyone involved in the supply-chain and lifecycle of end-point treatment provision. The RFI closes 27 February at 3pm, or you can contact us at info@taumataarowai.govt.nz by Friday 7 March 2025.

Reporting on the Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules

We've been working our way through a thorough review of the Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules (the Rules) to help make it more straightforward for suppliers to meet their responsibilities.

In 2024, we consulted on and updated the Rules for small to medium drinking water supplies. These [revised Rules](#) came into effect 1 January 2025. We've provided [supporting information](#) to help suppliers understand what the changes mean for them and are currently developing further guidance.

In 2025, we plan to consult on changes to Rules for large drinking water supplies serving 500 or more people.

A **reminder** for registered drinking water suppliers to submit their 2024 annual reports against the Rules by **28 February 2025**. The information provided will inform our annual Drinking Water Regulation Report. We have [guidance](#) on our website to help suppliers meet these reporting requirements.

We are making changes to Hinekōrako so suppliers have more visibility over their Rules reporting. From tomorrow, 20 February 2025, all suppliers will have the ability to download a copy of their Rules reports from the supply summary page. See our updated [summary table Hinekōrako reference guide](#) to find out how to access these. Find out more about the changes on our [website](#).

If you have any questions related to reporting on the Rules or Hinekōrako changes, please email OpsSupport@taumataarowai.govt.nz

Analysis is underway of Network Environmental Performance Measures data reported to us last year. Thank you to those councils that have participated in the internal and external verification processes. Reporting for the 2024-25 financial year is due on 1 July 2025. We have [guidance](#) on our website with details of the measures that must be reported

Strong response to levy proposal

We had good engagement on our consultation on a proposal to introduce a levy to fund our work regulating drinking water suppliers for safety and quality and overseeing the environmental performance of drinking water, stormwater and wastewater networks. We're currently analysing all feedback to inform a final

decision on a proposed levy by Cabinet. We expect to share a summary of submissions and the final decision with you in the next few months.

We look forward to another productive year of working together to provide communities with cost-effective water infrastructure and reliable, safe drinking water.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Allan Prangnell

**Chief Executive
Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai**

If you're receiving this email update because you're a drinking water supplier or network operator and have duties under the Water Services Act 2021 and you don't wish to receive these regular email updates, you can select a different person as your portal user in Hinekōrako. If you have subscribed to be updated you can use the unsubscribe link below.