



Water Services Authority - Taumata Arowai update October 2025

Good afternoon

It was good to see many of you at the IWA Aspire/Water NZ Conference and Expo last week. It was a great event and we really valued the chance to connect with so many of you. The level of engagement and feedback we received was outstanding, and we appreciated people's openness in sharing their experiences and perspectives. The international aspect really added to the overall ambience, bringing fresh energy, enthusiasm and a spirit of innovation to proceedings.

We had many valuable conversations about challenges and opportunities in the local scene. We also signalled a few key focus areas for us in the coming months – ongoing work to clarify compliance expectations, national wastewater standards, downstream supplies, and continued collaboration to support safe, reliable drinking water for all communities. More on these below.

Build confidence through compliance: upcoming CME Strategy webinars

First, we want to encourage you to attend one of two upcoming webinars – the first is next week – on our Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement (CME) Strategy 2025-28.

Steve Taylor, Head of Operations, presented on the CME Strategy at conference, generating strong interest and thoughtful discussion.

To continue the conversation, we're hosting two webinars that will take a closer look at the CME Strategy – what it means in practice, how monitoring and enforcement will be prioritised and how the approach will evolve as the sector matures.

Register for a webinar today

- Thursday 16 October, 1:30-2:30pm: [register here](#)
- Tuesday 21 October, 3:00-4:00pm: [register here](#)

Wastewater standards are coming

We know that many of you are eagerly awaiting decisions on wastewater standards. They're not far away – we expect they will be enacted this year.

So what does that mean for transition? The Water Services Act 2021 introduced a three-year extension to those councils that have wastewater treatment plants with expired (or soon to expire) resource consents. This should give operators additional time to understand what the standards will mean for their arrangements.

Consultation on the Rules for large supplies on the near horizon

We also want to flag that we will launch consultation on the Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules (the Rules) for large supplies (for over 500 people) in November.

We told delegates this at conference last week – and want to ensure the news spreads.

Over the past 18 months, we've been working to make it simpler for drinking water suppliers to understand and follow the Rules. This time last year we published updated Rules for supplies that serve 500 people or fewer. In August, we published a set of improved Acceptable Solutions for rural and smaller suppliers.

These improvements aim to save suppliers time and effort, while providing safe water for people to drink.

We will be in touch again soon to launch the consultation and invite you to provide feedback on our proposals.

Untangling downstream supplies

We've heard that the requirements around "downstream supplies" (currently called "linked supplies" in our online portal, Hinekōrako), are tricky to interpret.

The Water Services Act allows for one drinking water supplier to receive water from another. But it's not always clear when someone who connects to a registered supply and passes that water on to others becomes a separate supplier – or is simply a large consumer.

Questions have come in from councils, property developers and operators of large sites about whether certain setups – like private pipe networks in subdivisions or retirement villages – need to be registered as separate supplies.

This lack of clarity means some downstream suppliers are getting mixed messages about their responsibilities. Over the next few months, we will engage with the sector to better understand the different scenarios in play to help us develop a clear and consistent approach for managing downstream/ linked supplies and ensure expectations are well understood.

If you have a scenario you'd like to discuss, please drop us a line at

info@taumataarowai.govt.nz.

Hamilton boil water advisory

A shout out to Hamilton City Council for the proactive and competent way it handled a recent boil water notice that impacted almost 30,000 people for three days including over a weekend. We were engaged with the council throughout the process.

The council acted quickly to put the boil water notice in place to protect public health. It quickly stood up an incident management team and got to work understanding the risk to consumers. A first step was to identify and inform vulnerable residents who rely on water for medical reasons such as dialysis, as well as advise other consumers such as rest homes, retirement villages, schools and early childhood centres and food premises.

Making Acceptable Solutions more accessible

Last month we shared with you three updated [Acceptable Solutions](#).

Acceptable Solutions provide a compliance pathway for smaller, rural supplies to follow, which enables water to be treated near the buildings where people will drink it. This includes using an 'end-point' treatment system, which uses filters and ultraviolet (UV) light to disinfect the water closer to where it is used.

We are working on some practical resources now. Our new Guidance Design Hub is producing a series of videos to show how different communities (farming, rural schools, marae/hapū) look after their water and how this can be done through Acceptable Solutions/end-point treatment options.

We wanted to give you a sneak peek at the first video which features the Mitimiti drinking water supply, owned and operated by Mātihetihe Marae in Te Rarawa rohe. The video spotlights what's possible when communities unite around a common goal and find ways to meet their responsibilities as drinking water suppliers. [Check it out here](#).

Please give five minutes to help us improve our performance reports

This week we sent out a survey on how we might improve our performance reporting.

Each year we publish the Network Environmental Performance Report (NEPR) and the Drinking Water Regulation Report (DWRR) to provide transparency on the safety of drinking water and the environmental performance of water networks.

We'd love your feedback on how useful [the reports](#) are to you and what we can do to improve the quality of the information we provide. I really encourage you to give us five minutes of your time to complete the [online survey](#) which is open until Monday 20 October 2025.

Thank you.



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.

