



Stream Flow Management Plan Annual Report 2022-23

Annual report for Melbourne Waters Stream Flow Management Plans (SFMPs): Hoddles Creek, Little Yarra and Don Rivers, Olinda Creek, Plenty River, Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks, Stringybark Creek, Woori Yallock Creek.

September 2023

Cover photo : Doug Gimesy

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge the Victorian Traditional Owners and their Elders past and present as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to the ongoing living culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Foreword

Melbourne Water is pleased to present Water Supply Protection Areas (WSPAs) Stream Flow Management Plans (SFMPs) Annual Report for the 2022-23 water year. This Annual Report is a consolidated report for seven river systems in the Yarra River Basin specifically the Hoddles Creek, Little Yarra and Don Rivers, Olinda Creek, Plenty River, Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks, Stringybark Creek, and Woori Yallock Creek.

Melbourne Water is responsible for the implementation, administration and enforcement of the SFMPs (the Plans) as approved by the Minister administering the Victorian *Water Act 1989*.

This report provides an overview of the surface water management activities relating to the implementation, administration and enforcement of each SFMPs in the seven creeks and waterways of the Yarra River basin during the 2022-23 water year.

This report has been prepared and submitted to the Minister for Water in accordance with [section 32C](#) of the Victorian *Water Act 1989*.

A copy of this report is available on the Melbourne Water [Website](#).

Executive Summary

Melbourne Water is responsible for managing 1,810 surface water diverters in the Yarra catchment, parts of the lower Maribyrnong River and some creeks in the western catchments.

Waterways and catchments, that are considered ecologically important and where water supply is considered under stress may be declared as Water Supply Protection Areas (WSPAs) by the Minister for Water. Currently there are seven waterways in the Yarra River Basin that have been declared WSPAs. Under the Victorian Water Act 1989 (the Act), Melbourne Water is required to develop and implement Stream Flow Management Plans (SFMPs) (the plans) for the WSPAs .

The objective of the SFMPs is to ensure that the water resources of the relevant WSPAs are managed in an equitable manner for the long-term sustainability of those resources.

Seven waterways in the Yarra River Basin for which SFMP's are in place are:

1. Hoddles Creek
2. Little Yarra and Don Rivers
3. Olinda Creek
4. Plenty River
5. Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks
6. Stringybark Creek
7. Woori Yallock Creek

Section 32C of the Victorian Water Act requires Melbourne Water to prepare an Annual Report for each approved SFMPs in respect of carrying out its duties and activities administering and enforcing the plan. The Act also requires Melbourne Water to submit an Annual Report to the Minister for Water (The Minister). Also, Section 32D of the Victorian Water Act requires Melbourne Water to make the annual report available to the public. Melbourne Water is no longer required to submit the report and a separate letter to the Port Philip and Western Port Catchment Management Authority (PPWCMA) as it was integrated into Melbourne Water on 1st January 2022.

This Annual Report provides an overview of the surface water status and summarises the surface water management activities undertaken in accordance with the Plans during the 2022-23 water year (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023). This report also summarises the performance of reportable prescriptions for the seven individual plans. The specific details of each plan's prescriptions are included in a separate SFMPs Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data files with a detailed compliance table for each plan. A secondary table of summary statistics for volumetric allowances, bans and rosters and volumetric use from metered licences is also included for each plan. The SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 supplementary data file (comprising annual prescription and data) is supplied to the Minister for Water together with this Annual Report. The annual report and associated supplementary data files can be accessed at Melbourne Water [Website](#) and are made available to public upon request by advertising in the Newspaper.

In developing this year's Annual Report, Melbourne Water has consulted with the Water and Catchments Group within DECCA. The SFMPs activities were also informed to the SFMP representative committees via 'StreamNews' newsletter.

Melbourne Water continues to work with the Traditional Owners - Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (Wurundjeri) and has kept the Traditional Owners informed of the progress and performance of the plans. Melbourne Water has commenced engagement with the Wurundjeri group and DECCA to ensure that any formal reviews of the plans which require the establishment of a consultative committee includes Wurundjeri representation as per Section 29 of the Victorian Water Act 1989.

Stream flow in the catchments in 2022-23 were generally higher than in recent years, reflecting the increased rainfall experienced across the Yarra Basin. Due to higher rainfall and stream flows, there was an observed reduction in extracted volumes in all catchments.

Licensed allocation caps for each catchment are defined within the plans Prescriptions and Woori Yallock remains the only catchment with current licensed allocation volumes greater than the licensed allocation cap volume.

Melbourne Water manages access to water and stream flows to protect key environmental values through the implementation of bans and restrictions across the catchments. If real time daily flow data indicates low flows in the waterways in any of the seven SFMPs, Melbourne Water notifies

licence holders on bans and restrictions through direct SMS messaging. Information on bans and restrictions is available on the Melbourne Water Website, updated daily.

There were several compliance exceptions in the SFMPs' prescriptions in this year's report that carry over from previous years. Two plans, Plenty River and Steels, Pauls and Dixons creeks continue to carry legacy prescriptions. These prescriptions required the investigation and implementation of meters on all licences (Plenty) and rosters (Steels, Pauls and Dixons). Melbourne Water has previously investigated the feasibility of implementing these prescriptions:

- For the Plenty catchment it was determined the cost disproportionately outweighed the benefit of installing meters on dams in the Plenty River system. Meters have been fitted to all active commercial or irrigation licensees' equipment greater than 5ML which does not include all registered farm dams. The investigation and outcomes have been reported in previous Annual Reports.
- For Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks, the hydraulic nature of the creeks shows rapid rise and fall of stream levels, and due to this characteristic the implementation of rosters was deemed unworkable as a management practice. This outcome has also been reported in previous Annual Reports.

No formal reviews were required during the current reporting period.

Melbourne Water continues to undertake legislative renewal and has updated our Compliance and Enforcement Policy to reflect the changes in the Victorian Water Act. In 2021-22, Melbourne Water participated in an Independent Review of our Compliance and Enforcement policies, systems and processes, as part of the Victorian Government's activities to improve compliance and enforcement across the state. Melbourne Water has also revised its Metering Action Plan which aims to upgrade and expand our metering fleet to AS4747 compliant meters and expand our telemetry network to increase real time access to usage data. Rollout of our Metering Action Plan is progressing ahead of schedule, and we currently have 95% of total required meter fleet compliant with the Victorian Metering Policy. During 2022-23 we appointed two Authorised Water Officers as part of our compliance and enforcement program.

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Glossary

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Actions (DEECA, formerly DELWP)

State Government department responsible for overseeing the Victorian *Water Act 1989* and associated policy. Prior 1st Jan 2023, DEECA was termed as DELWP.

Licensed Allocation Cap

The total volume of licensed entitlement set in a Water Supply Protection Area prescription to allow an 80% reliability of supply.

Local Management Plan (LMP)

A local management plan (previously known as local management rules prior to 2015) are for an area with a Permissible Consumptive Volume and include appropriate tools such as trading rules, triggers for restrictions and monitoring requirements.

Permissible Consumptive Volume (PCV)

Declared by the Minister, Permissible Consumptive Volumes (PCVs) cap the total volume of licensed entitlement in a river basin.

Stream Flow Management Plan (SFMP)

A statutory plan developed under the *Water Act 1989* to make sure that the water resources of the relevant water supply protection area are managed in an equitable manner and so as to ensure the long-term sustainability of those resources.

Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA)

An area declared by the Minister for Water which is set aside to protect the water resources through the development of a management plan. The Water Supply Protection Area may cover groundwater, surface water or both resources.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Melbourne Water is responsible for managing 1,810 surface water diverters in the Yarra catchment, parts of the lower Maribyrnong River and some creeks in the western catchments.

Waterways and catchments, that are considered ecologically important and where water supply is considered under stress may be declared as Water Supply Protection Areas (WSPAs) by the Minister of Water. Currently there are seven waterways in the Yarra River basin that have been declared as WSPAs. Under the Victorian Water Act 1989 (the Act), Melbourne Water is required to develop Stream Flow Management Plans (SFMP) (plans) for the WSPAs.

The objective of the SFMP's, developed by a ministerially appointed committee, is to ensure that the water resources of the relevant WSPA are managed in an equitable manner for the long-term sustainability of those resources.

SFMPs seek to recognise the needs of existing and future users whilst aiming to maintain or improve waterway health by protecting minimum flows for the environment. Providing sufficient environmental flows to achieve healthy rivers is a key component in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the water resource.

The SFMPs consider the amount of water set aside in a water supply protection area (usually an entire catchment) and prescribes how it will be shared between water users and the environment. It aims to recognise the needs of existing and future water users whilst maintaining waterway's health by protecting environmental flows.

Section 32C of the Act requires Melbourne Water to prepare an Annual Report for each approved SFMPs. The Act also requires Melbourne Water to submit an Annual Report (this document) to the Minister for Water, the relevant Catchment Management Authority for each approved plan by 30 September each year and make it available to the public. Melbourne Water is no longer required to submit the report and a separate letter to the Port Philip and Western Port Catchment Management Authority (PPWCMA) as it was integrated into Melbourne Water on 1st January 2022.

This Annual Report provides an overview of the surface water status and summarises the surface water management activities undertaken relating to the implementation, administration and enforcement of each Plan during the 2022/23 water year (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023).

The report summarises key reporting obligations, described in this report as ‘reportable prescriptions’ for the individual plans. The number of prescriptions range between eight and twenty-eight per plan varying with relevant complexity and were developed through the consultative phase for each individual plan development.

The specific details of each plan’s prescriptions are included in the SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data file with a detailed compliance table for each plan. A secondary table of summary statistics for volumetric allowances, bans and rosters and volumetric use from metered licences are also included. The SFMP Annual Report for 2022-23 and SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data file are also available in the Melbourne Water [Website](#).

1.2 Water Supply Protection Areas

Melbourne Water uses i) Stream Flow Management Plans, ii) Local Management Plans and iii) Drought Response Plans - to develop water management strategy across the Yarra River basin to ensure water is shared fairly between diverters and the environment in order to comply with the Victorian Water Act 1989. Catchments and waterways that are ecologically important and are water stressed, may be declared as Water Supply Protection Areas (WSPAs). WSPAs require statutory enforcement for the sustainable management of healthy waterways and catchments – thus specific SFMPs are developed for individual rivers and creeks in the Yarra catchment. For other catchments, Melbourne Water has developed Local Management Plans (LMPs). Prior to 2015, LMPs were termed as Local Management Rules (LMR’s).

During drought or low flow conditions, licenced diverters’ access to water may be restricted or banned to protect the environment. Melbourne Water’s Drought Response Plan/Water Sharing Plan is active all the time and specifies how water is shared when there is not enough to meet all users’ needs. Melbourne Water monitors river flow levels in SFMPs, LMPs and triggers restrictions or bans in case of low flow.

SFMPs outline the catchment descriptions and ecological values within them. They contain statutory requirements stated as ‘prescriptions’ that cover requirements such as water sharing and trade

rules, requirements for metering of licences and rules regarding dams used for take and use within the various catchments. SFMPs also contain rules around cease to take, bans, and restrictions based on stream flow levels. The SFMP prescriptions are different for different waterways and creeks in the Yarra River Basin. There is a monitoring requirement as part of SFMPs.

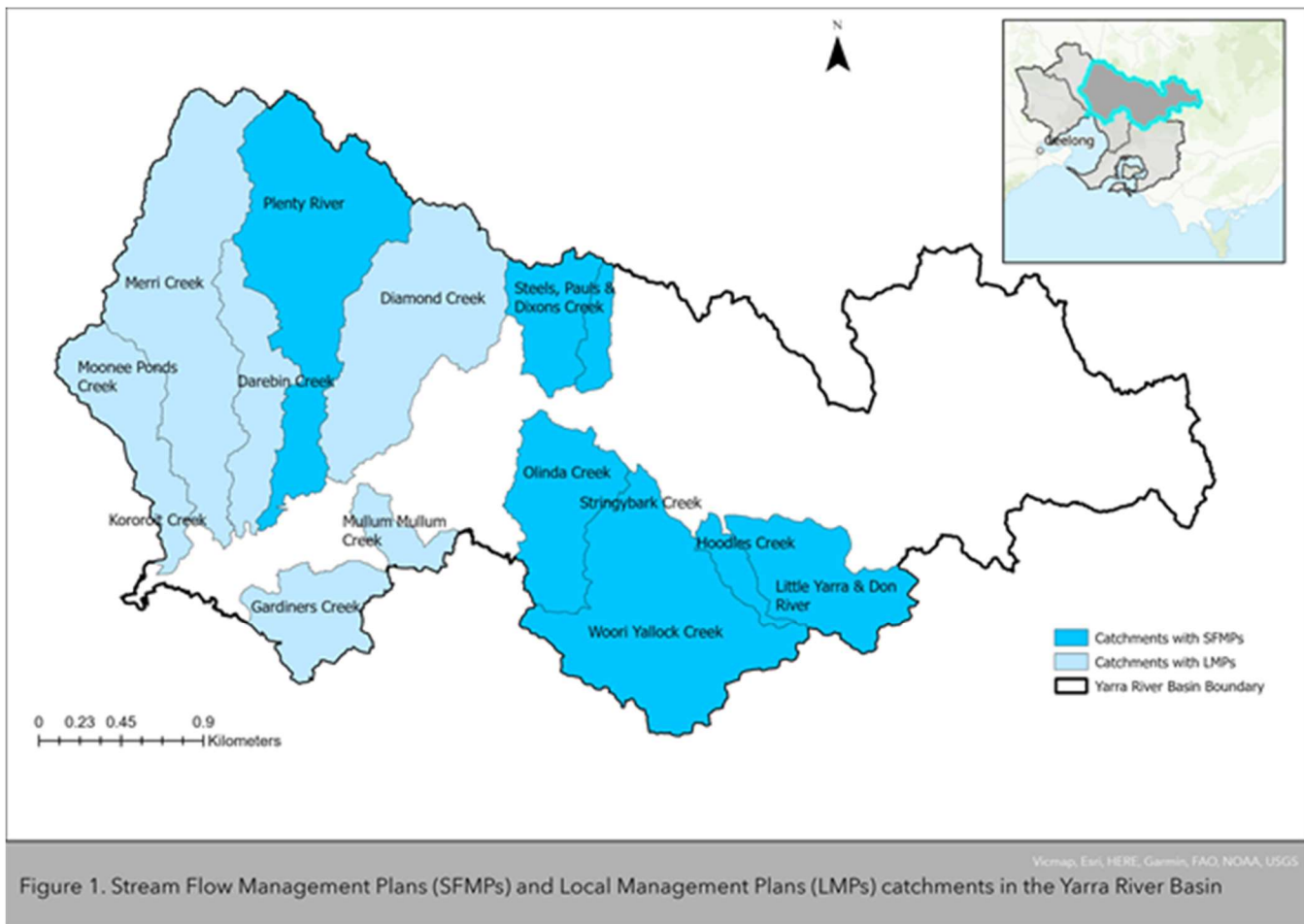
Melbourne Water has supported the development and approval of seven SFMPs, in the Yarra River basin which are the focus of this Annual Report (Figure 1):

1. Hoddles Creek
2. Little Yarra and Don Rivers
3. Olinda Creek
4. Plenty River
5. Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks
6. Stringybark Creek
7. Woori Yallock Creek

LMPs are similar in a way that they are also a management tool that help describe the catchment and ecological values within them that Melbourne Water aims to protect and enhance. The LMPs state the access rules to water governing the various catchments. Individual licence holders have conditions on their take and use licences which reflect these rules. Unlike the SFMPs, they do not contain additional statutory prescriptions

A copy of the SFMP's and LMPs can be downloaded from the Melbourne Water Website:

[Stream flow management | Melbourne Water](#)



1.3 Consultation

Melbourne Water has consulted with a range of groups in the preparation of the 2022-23 Annual Report and on the implementation of the SFMPs, including several divisions within the Water and Catchments Group within Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA- formerly DELWP).

Melbourne Water continues to work with the Traditional Owners in the area, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (Wurundjeri) and has kept the Traditional Owners informed of the progress and performance of the plans. Melbourne Water has commenced engagement with the Wurundjeri group and DECCA to ensure that any formal reviews of the plans which require the establishment of a consultative committee includes Wurundjeri representation as per Section 29 of the Victorian Water Act.

In alignment with Water for Victoria, Melbourne Water informs Traditional Owners of all the current opportunities to engage in managing the water cycle through our Traditional Owner Relationship Manager. Major strategic opportunities also exist through the implementation of the Healthy Waterways Strategy, Central and Gippsland Sustainable Water Strategy, Greater Melbourne Urban Water System Strategy and Melbourne Sewerage Strategy. Melbourne Water also supports the Traditional Owners in achieving the aspirations of the Water is Life strategy.

Wurundjeri have identified a number of priority projects that they wish to pursue at present and are listed in the Yarra Strategic Plan. Current projects Melbourne Water are working with Wurundjeri (Narrap team) include condition monitoring of billabongs along the Birrarung (Yarra), discussion around landscape watering decisions and ecological monitoring opportunities along the Birrarung such as Eels.

2. Surface Water Management

2.1 Licensed allocation volume

A limit on surface water licensed volume, known as a Permissible Consumptive Volume (PCV), for the Yarra River Basin has been set by the Minister at 435,982 mega litres per year (ML/year) (Government of Victoria, 2010). The individual WSPA sub-catchments located within the greater Yarra Basin have their own specific Licenced Allocation Caps (allocation caps) associated with them as a subset of the Yarra. All plans are operating within their allocation caps with the exception of Woori Yallock. The Woori Yallock SFMP calculated an Allocation Cap based a 80 per cent reliability as it was considered a reasonable benchmark for acceptable reliability for a licence in an unregulated river. Melbourne Water is working from the allocation level of 9,548.2 ML in 2012 towards an Allocation Cap of 8,828 ML through application of prescriptions in the Woori Yallock SFMP. This includes a 20 percent reduction of licence volume on transfer (permanent and temporary) that will continue to apply until the Allocation Cap is reached or reviewed by a consultative committee as part of any Woori Yallock SFMP review. The current allocation caps (PCV) and licenced volumes are outlined in Table 1 against the individual WSPAs which take into account temporary trades in and out of the catchments. Further information is also available in the SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data file.

Table 1 Surface water licensed allocated volume in all WSPA's as June 2023

Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA)	WSPA allocation cap (PCV) (ML)	Allocated Volumes (ML)	Difference (ML)
Hoddles Creek	1,207	674	-533
Little Yarra and Dons River	1,502	1430	-72
Olinda Creek	686	532	-154
Plenty River	669	660	-9
Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks	1,684 (Total)	626	-1058
	988 All-Year	2	-986
	696 Winter-Fill	629	-67
Stringybark Creek	2,664	2,579	-85
Woori Yallock Creek	8,828 (Total)	8,950	122
	4029 (Winter-Fill)	1457	-2572

2.2 Bans & Rosters

Melbourne Water oversees equitable water sharing of diverters and the environment within the seven SFMPs during dry periods (winter and summer) through a schedule of bans and rosters. These are notified to licence holders through direct SMS messaging and is available on the Melbourne Water Website, updated daily. As the stream flows approach the total ban threshold (designed to protect instream values at critical low flow periods) some catchments have specific rostering prescriptions that allow a sharing arrangement between users on specific days of the week. This helps manage the interaction of water users impacts between themselves and also eases the transition down to critical low flows. These bans and rosters ensure that the equitable sharing between diverters is managed as stream flows begin to recede from typical high flow periods. Information for each SFMPs bans and rosters is available in the SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data file.

2.3 Metering of Surface Water Use

Melbourne Water has implemented a metering program to ensure the effective management of condition of the licences, take and use rules in WSPAs. This section on the metering of surface water use reports on the volumes metered as taken and used during the 2022-23 water year. Australian standard compliant AS4747 meters have been installed on licences with an annual licence volume greater than 5 ML. The volume of licences metered within a specific WSPA is outlined for the specific SFMP catchments in the SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data file.

It is assumed that all unmetered active diverters (those with an annual licence of less than 5 ML) are taking and using water in a similar manner and pattern of behaviour to the metered users, reflecting crop growth rates and watering requirements. This, therefore, assumes a uniform pattern of response to antecedent conditions of dry periods requiring more supplemental irrigation water compared to periods of high precipitation requiring less irrigation demand. Information relating to the number of licences for each SFMPs, and annual usage are given in the SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data file.

2.4 Licence Transfers

Melbourne Water manages the permanent and temporary trade of licences throughout seven SFMPs in the Yarra River basin. All trades are reviewed during the application process to determine

the potential risks to instream values by transferring an irrigation demand from one location to another in the catchments. Further restrictions and specific catchment rules are summarised in the individual plans available on the Melbourne Water Website.

The plans allow licence holders to temporarily or permanently transfer allocation licence volume within or outside of the WSPAs. There was a permanent trading of 280.4 ML, temporary trading of 187.2 ML within WSPAs, and the permanent licence transfer of 75 ML outside the WSPAs in the Yarra Catchment in the water year 2022-23. Surface water licence transfer activity during 2022-23 is available in the SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data file.

2.5 Licence Compliance

Compliance actions are undertaken in accordance with Melbourne Water's Compliance and Enforcement Strategy. Melbourne Water takes a risk-based approach looking at impacts and consequences against evidence and other information available. Compliance approaches are focussed on education and informal warnings for first or low volume offenders, escalating through formal written warnings and notices to prosecution for more serious offences.

The majority of unauthorised take cases tend to relate to only small volumes or percentage unauthorised take against licenced allocation volumes as genuine operator error. At this stage there are potential breaches until a full investigation is undertaken to ensure errors such as faulty meters have been eliminated. The severity of each suspected breach is assessed against the compliance procedure and appropriate responses will be undertaken.

2.5.1 Compliance and Enforcement Actions

Compliance and enforcement actions undertaken by Melbourne Water during 2022-23 are summarised in **Table 2**. Melbourne Water will continue to engage with licence holders to ensure they are aware of their responsibility to comply with their licence conditions, including Melbourne Water's obligations under the Victorian Water Act 1989 to assess water use compliance. Overall, 25 detected breaches were reported between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, 6 less than the previous year.

Table 2: Compliance and Enforcement actions undertaken by Melbourne Water as of 30 June 2023

Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA)	Detected unauthorised takes	Under Investigation	Investigated - No further action	Formal warning	Formal interview
Hoddles Creek	0	0	0	0	0
Little Yarra and Don River	1	0	1	0	0
Olinda Creek	1	1	0	0	0
Plenty River	0	0	0	0	0
Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks	0	0	0	1	0
Stringybark Creek	5	1	4	0	0
Woori Yallock Creek	18	14	3	1	0

2.5.2 Compliance and Enforcement Policy

In 2020, Melbourne Water updated its Water and Land Enforcement Policy to match the guidelines as directed by DEECA (formerly DELWP). This policy outlines the key principles and minimum standards for fair and consistent enforcement within Melbourne Water’s Service Delivery - Waterways and Land Group and is intended to inform everyone including those who administer the legislation how enforcement will be carried out.

The policy is aimed at providing a consistent framework for the application of enforcement issues and to provide transparency to Melbourne Water employees and other stakeholders interested or affected by Melbourne Water’s enforcement or compliance activities.

For waterway and land management functions, this policy focuses on compliance and enforcement of the Victorian Water Act relating to:

- Construction, operation, maintenance, alteration and decommissioning of works including, but not limited to, works on waterways, works on drains or other constructed assets, private crossings, stormwater outlets, etc.
- Earth works or deposition of soil or material on designated land that impacts on flooding or hydraulic performance of waterways and drains.

For the Diversions function, this policy focuses on compliance and enforcement of the Victorian Water Act relating to:

- Taking and using water.
- Construction, operation, maintenance, alteration and decommissioning of works including, but not limited to, works on waterways for the take and use of water.

Melbourne Water is also a participant in the Water Compliance Community of Practice, which is also coordinated by DEECA (formerly DELWP). Melbourne Water participates in the community of practice as a working group member of both the Water Compliance Communications Working Group and the Authorised Water Officer Network. During 2022/23 we appointed two authorised water officers who have the authority to issue notices under various sections of the Act. From July 2023 we have the ability to issue Penalty Infringement Notices via Fines Victoria for illegal use of water.

As part of the activities in compliance and enforcement renewal across the state, Melbourne Water has upgraded its Metering Action Plan, which aims to upgrade and expand our metering fleet to AS4747 compliant meters. Additional activities also include expanding our telemetry network to increase real time access to usage data.

Rollout of our Metering Action Plan across our entire diversions area is progressing ahead of schedule, and on our current implementation trajectory we anticipate we will be fully compliant to the implementation program of the Victorian Metering Policy by the required date of 2025. This will involve the upgrade of 130 meters and the installation of 195 data loggers remaining by 2025. As of June 2023, we have 95% of total meter fleet compliant with AS4747 meters with the remaining 24 meters scheduled to be upgraded to AS4747 by 2025.

In addition, Melbourne Water has created a Compliance and Enforcement Statement. The Statement is now available on our [website](#) and outlines our approach to compliance and

enforcement and was developed in line with DEECA's (formerly DELWP's) Non-Urban Compliance and Enforcement Guidelines for Water Corporations 2019.

To inform customers and promote our approach to zero tolerance on water theft Melbourne Water have undertaken a number of initiatives including, developing a compliance and enforcement web page, adding Zero Tolerance to water theft banners on invoices, having a compliance focus for the annual 'StreamNews' newsletter, conversations with customers by our officers in the field and the creating of four Fact Sheets.

3. Plan Implementation

3.2 Plan Prescriptions

Each of the Water Supply Protection Areas (WSPAs) contain specific management prescriptions within a Stream Flow Management Plans (SFMPs). In accordance with section 32C of the Victorian Water Act 1989, Melbourne Water is required to annually report on the implementation of the management prescriptions of each SFMP.

All plans have remained compliant with the associated prescriptions with no non-compliances detected. Two plans, Plenty River and Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks continue to carry legacy prescriptions that have not been implemented. These prescriptions require the investigation and implementation of meters on all licences (Plenty) and rosters (Steels, Pauls and Dixons). The number of compliant and non-compliant prescriptions for each WSPAs have been summarised in **Table 3**.

Melbourne Water has previously investigated the feasibility of implementing these prescriptions. For the Plenty catchment it was determined the cost disproportionately outweighed the benefit of installing meters on dams in the Plenty River system. Meters have been fitted to all active commercial or irrigation licensees' equipment greater than 5ML which does not include all registered farm dams. The investigation and outcomes have been reported in previous Annual Reports.

For Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks, the hydraulic nature of the creeks shows rapid rise and fall of stream levels, and due to this characteristic, the implementation of rosters was deemed unworkable as a management practice. This outcome has also been reported in previous Annual Reports.

Melbourne Water will continue to report these exceptions until it is agreed that they can be removed through an approved minor plan amendment process or during a full formal plan amendment.

Detailed descriptions of each WSPAs management prescription contained within their associated SFMPs and a copy of the detailed compliance assessment can be requested by contacting Melbourne Water via 131 722 or enquiry@melbournewater.com.au, or visiting the Melbourne Water Website: <https://www.melbournewater.com.au/contact-us>

Table 3: Assessment of Stream Flow Management Plan prescriptions.

Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA)	Number of prescriptions reported within the WSPA	Number of compliant prescriptions	Number of non-compliant prescriptions	Name of non-compliant prescription(s)
Hoddles Creek	13	13	0	0
Little Yarra and Dons Rivers	8	8	0	0
Olinda Creek	13	13	0	0
Plenty River	12	11	1	Installing Meters (14.1 - 14.2)
Steels, Pauls and Dixons Creeks	13	12	1	Rosters (16.1 - 16.2)
Stringybark Creek	8	8	0	0
Woori Yallock Creek	28	28	0	0

3.2 Monitoring

To evaluate the performance of SFMPs in protecting instream aquatic values, Melbourne Water has initiated ecological (fish, eDNA and platypus) monitoring program across seven SFMPs in the Yarra River Basin. This monitoring program is designed to determine the long-term condition and trend of aquatic species in each SFMPs. Melbourne Water has collected eDNA for three consecutive years (to date), is in the process of determining a standard eDNA analysis approach and aiming to compare monitored results to historical data where appropriate. A protocol will also need to be developed

that trigger further assessment - for example what would happen if a priority species were detected one year but not the next.

Additional monitoring has also been undertaken through supplementary monitoring programs for Melbourne Water's Healthy Waterways Strategy. This supplementary monitoring captures and records information on fish, macroinvertebrates, platypus, water quality and vegetation condition and extent. This information is collected and is interrogated as part of each plan's five year review phase to determine the performance of the plan in protecting instream aquatic values. Ecological monitoring for the water year 2022-23 is available in the SFMP Annual Report 2022-23 Supplementary data file.

4. Future Management Considerations

4.1 SFMPs Review Updates

No formal SFMP reviews were required during the current reporting period. Melbourne Water has completed the process of drafting a Lower Yarra and Kororoit Creek amalgamated LMPs. This plan proposes to update existing LMPs documents to bring them in line with the updated policy to establish LMP's. This amalgamated LMPs seek to incorporate the following catchments:

1. Darebin Creek,
2. Diamond Creek
3. Gardiners Creek.
4. Kororoit Creek
5. Merri Creek
6. Moonee Ponds Creek,
7. Mullum Mullum Creek
8. Plenty River

Melbourne Water will submit a request to the Minister to approve the revocation of the Plenty River, specifically after submitting the SFMPs annual report 2022-23. Once revocation request is approved, Melbourne Water will commence i) community, relevant Traditional Owner groups and licence holder consultation meeting to inform communities on the revocation of the Plenty River. Thereafter, Plenty River will be incorporated into Melbourne Water's single LMP planning document which is in line with (DEPI, 2014) LMP policy.

4.2 Continual Improvement

Melbourne Water is focused on continual improvement and evolving to be a leading water licencing authority. Melbourne Water maintains an active role in licencing matters and legislative amendments through the State-wide Water Licencing Committee and as an active member on the Murray Darling Basin Compliance compact. Through continual improvement, we are better able to serve our customers, the community and the environment.

Melbourne Water has completed activities to meet ministerial expectations in line with the current compliance and enforcement policies and amendments to the Victorian Water Act 1989 outlining provisions for Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs). From 1st July 2023 Melbourne Water can issue PINs for various activities relating to water theft. Melbourne Water has been an active participant

in legislative renewal and improvements to compliance and enforcement. In June 2020 we participated in an Independent Review of our Compliance and Enforcement policies, systems and processes, undertaken on behalf of DELWP. The review confirmed we have the necessary procedures and practices in place to successfully manage compliance matters with only one recommendation put forward. This was to ensure that the development of the Melbourne Water Compliance & Enforcement Strategy and review of our Compliance and Enforcement Manual be finalised, which was completed in April 2021.

Melbourne Water will be commencing a Traditional Owner engagement program with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (Wurundjeri) to inform Traditional Owners on the current SFMP's and work together to identify the role they wish to play in the statutory planning process. This program will seek to work with Traditional Owners to identify cultural values and identify their roles on SFMP consultative committees should a plan need amendment following identification of Traditional Owner Values or establishment of Traditional Owner water rights. The program will also engage various Divisions of the Water and Catchments Group of DEECA and Melbourne Water's Traditional Owner Relationship Manager.

5. References

1. Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI), 2014. Local Management Plan Guidelines. Retrieved on 20 July 2020 from:
https://www.water.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/53822/LMP-guidelines_approved-13-June-2014_po00_20140508.pdf
2. Melbourne Waters Compliance and Enforcement webpage:
<https://www.melbournewater.com.au/water-data-and-education/waterway-diversions/water-use-compliance>
3. Melbourne Waters Compliance and Enforcement Statement:
<https://www.melbournewater.com.au/media/16801/download>
4. Victorian Government, 2010. Victorian Government Gazette No. G31 Thursday 5 August 2010. Victoria State Government, Melbourne.
5. Water Act 1989