

# Process to assess applications for dealings and temporary trades

## Fact sheet

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WaterNSW is responsible for managing access to water, ensuring water is shared equitably between the environment, landholders and industries. This fact sheet outlines the steps in assessing applications for permanent dealings and temporary trades (allocation assignments). To find more information on dealings and trades, please visit our website.

### Water access licence (WAL), dealings and trade

To extract water, you must have a current WAL nominated to an active water supply work approval and have the appropriate share component and/or water allocation, subject to the approval conditions

#### Water access licence (WAL)

is a legal tradeable entitlement that allows holders to extract specific share of water in a specific water source and a specific water management zone. It is separate from land ownership and does not automatically transfer with any land sales. A WAL may also be for a specific purpose (SPAL) i.e. domestic or stock, which is not tradeable and must be transferred as part of the sale to stay with the land or it may be cancelled

#### Temporary trades

are short-term, seasonal transfers of water allocations between accounts, rather than the permanent sale of the license itself. These transactions allow users to buy/sell water allocations within a water year subject to assessment, and resets at every 1 July.

**Note – term transfer 71N (lease) are lodged directly with the NSW Land registry service (LRS).**

#### Share component

This is the specific entitlement on the WAL to a share of the available water within a designated water source or management area. It represents the maximum portion of water a holder can extract, varying annually based on water availability.

#### Dealings

include transfer of ownership, assignment of share components (71Q), assignment of daily extraction component (71QA), or change of water source (71O). These dealings allow holders to buy, sell, or transfer water rights, change the location of extraction, or amend the nomination of water supply works (71W).

**Note – transfer of ownership (71M) are lodged directly with the NSW Land registry service (LRS).**

Further details about dealings and trades can be found on our [managing your licence webpage](#).

WaterNSW and the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (NSW DCCEEW) each conduct thorough assessments before approving any application. The steps involved in assessing applications are outlined on the next page.

## Steps in assessing applications

**Check & receipt** WaterNSW checks the application to ensure all relevant information has been received and that the water allocation account linked to the water access licence has enough credit. The application fee also needs to be received at this time. The application assessment will not commence until payment has been received.

**Register** The application is registered and receives a unique reference which is supplied to the applicant. A detailed assessment commences - this may require referral to external agencies. The applicant can track the progress of their application for permanent trades in the [application tracker](#); you will need your application number and applicant surname or full company name. For temporary trades (allocation assignments) please contact us on 1300 662 077 or email [customer.helpdesk@waternsw.com.au](mailto:customer.helpdesk@waternsw.com.au)

**Assess**  
[Water sharing plans \(WSP\)](#) **Is the application consistent with the rules and principles of the *Water Management Act 2000 (WMA) & the water sharing plan?***  
WaterNSW is required to consider the relevant water sharing plan (WSP) to which the application relates. These include trading zone restrictions, WSPs may differ because of the nature of specific water source/s. Water resource plans compliment WSPs. More information can be found via the links below:

- [How water sharing plans work](#)
- [Water resource plans in NSW](#)

[Access Licence Dealings Principles Order 2004 \(ALDPO\)](#) **Is the application consistent with the *Access Licence Dealings Principles Order?***  
The Access Licence Dealing Principles Order 2004 (NSW) establishes mandatory rules for trading, converting, and amending water access licences to ensure environmental protection, minimise impact on other users, and maximise economic benefits. It prohibits dealings and trades that negatively affect cultural heritage, indigenous sites, or essential water access.

[Hydrogeological assessment \(groundwater applications only\)](#) **Will the application impact on the groundwater source and its dependent ecosystems?**  
Potential impact of groundwater extraction is assessed through NSW DCCEEW. WaterNSW may refer the application to NSW DCCEEW for hydrogeological assessment to ensure that no more than minimal harm will be done to any water source. Bore extraction limits may be imposed on nominated water supply work approvals as part of the permanent dealings assessment. For further information on how groundwater is assessed see:

- [Assessing groundwater applications](#)
- [Groundwater temporary trades factsheet](#)

WaterNSW refers applications to NSW DCCEEW as early as possible.



### Manage your account in the Customer Portal

Register for the [Customer Portal](#) to manage your water-related matters. Once you have registered, you can submit available applications online, track the application process, manage your profile or business account and amend the status of your work.

## Steps in assessing applications

### Ecohydrology assessment (surface water applications only)

#### **Will the application impact a wetland and its dependent ecosystem?**

In some WSPs, permanent and temporary trades may be prohibited based on their location of the nominated works on the WAL in relation to wetlands and groundwater dependent ecosystems. This may result in refusal, and others may need further impact assessments to ensure that no more than minimal harm will be done to the water source. These applications may be referred to NSW DCCEEW ecohydrology assessment. Further information on NSW wetlands can be found:

- [NSW Wetlands Policy](#)

WaterNSW refers applications to NSW DCCEEW as early as possible.

### Native title

#### **Will the application impact on the individual or communal rights of Aboriginal people?**

If required, the application may be referred to Native Title Services (NTSCORP) for assessment.\*

### Interstate trades only

#### **Interstate trading rules allow the trade to proceed?**

Trades across state borders must be assessed against Murray-Darling Basin Authority schedule D (permissible transfers between trading zones) and an application is made to WaterNSW as well as the required application form for the other state.

- [Murray-Darling Basin agreement schedule D](#)

### Temporary trades only

#### **Temporary trades & Inter-Valley Trades (IVT)**

Sufficient water must be available in the seller's account for a trade to proceed. IVT rules in the Murray-Darling Basin regulate the movement of water allocations between valleys to prevent environmental damage from high flows and to ensure sustainable delivery. As part of the assessment process, metering compliance is also required, and buyers should ensure they meet all non-urban metering regulations prior to lodging an application. Please visit our website to [understand your metering requirements](#) for any works nominated to the WAL or [book a meeting](#) with our metering team.

- [Trading water](#)
- [Trading water FAQ's](#)

### Notification

The applicant is notified in writing of the outcome of the application as soon as it has been determined. The applicant can appeal to the Land and Environment Court within 28 days of receiving notification of the decision.

*\*There may be additional costs charged for referrals to other agencies or third parties in the assessment process – this is covered on our [application fees webpage](#). If issues are identified as a result of these assessments, WaterNSW will contact the applicant to discuss options. If an application is refused, the applicant can appeal to the Land and Environment Court within 28 days of receiving notification of the decision.*

### Need help?

If you need more information, please contact our Customer Service Centre on **1300 662 077**, Monday to Friday between 8am-5pm or email [Customer.Helpdesk@waternsw.com.au](mailto:Customer.Helpdesk@waternsw.com.au)