WaterNSW



Agency Information Guide 2026

Agency Information Guide

Implementation officer	Assistant Company Secretary & Information Access Advisor
Relevant to	WaterNSW
Relevant documents	Nil
Relevant legislation	*Water NSW Act 2014* (NSW) *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW)

Monitoring, evaluation and review, revision history

Monitoring	Right to Information Officer
Evaluation and review	Reviewed October 2022 Reviewed July 2023 Reviewed July 2024 Reviewed August 2025 Reviewed September 2026 Next Review September 2027

Approval

General Counsel

1. Introduction and Statement of Commitment

1.1 Introduction

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (the Act) requires that agencies such as WaterNSW have an open and facilitative approach to the public's ability to access government information.

The Act creates rights to information that are designed to meet community expectations of more open and transparent public administration, subject only to the circumstance where there is an overriding public interest against a disclosure.

Section 20 of the Act:

- requires agencies to develop and adopt an agency information guide as a part of their mandatory open access information; and
- sets out what topics the guide must cover, as a minimum.

This document is WaterNSW's Agency Information Guide 2026 (Guide).

References to sections contained in topic headings below are references to sections in the Act.

1.2 Statement of Commitment

WaterNSW is committed to achieving the objects of the Act by:

- authorising and encouraging the proactive release of government information on its website;
- assuring the public's enforceable rights under the Act to access government information, by having systems and procedures in place that express those rights and facilitate implementation; and
- restricting access to government information only where there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The General Counsel oversees the implementation and maintenance of the Guide to ensure compliance with the objects of the Act.

2. WaterNSW's structure and functions (section 20(1)(a))

2.1 Structure

WaterNSW has two voting Shareholder Ministers who own all the shares in WaterNSW on behalf of the people of NSW, being the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance.

WaterNSW's Portfolio Minister is the Minister for Water.

One of the key responsibilities of the Shareholder Ministers is the appointment of WaterNSW's directors.

WaterNSW's Board of directors set the organisation's strategic direction, oversight performance and governance and appoint the Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director (CEO).

Responsibility for the day to day management of WaterNSW and the implementation of the Board's strategic agenda resides with the WaterNSW CEO & Managing Director.

The Executive Team manages WaterNSW in accordance with the policies and other decisions determined by the Board by, amongst other things:

- preparing proposed plans, policies, strategies, budgets and reports for approval by the Board;
- establishing, maintaining and ensuring compliance with internal controls, compliance systems, management and information systems and accounting records;
- ensuring WaterNSW meets all workplace health and safety requirements; and
- regular reporting to the Board on matters associated with performance, the efficient and effective management of WaterNSW and the achievement of its objectives.

WaterNSW's management structure can be found on its website.

The management structure is subject to ongoing review and change.

2.2 Functions

2.2.1 Legislative basis

WaterNSW has functions under a number of Acts and legislative instruments including the:

- *Water NSW Act 2014;*
- *State Owned Corporations Act 1989;*
- *Water Management Act 2000* and *Water Act 1912*;
- *Dams Safety Act 2015*; and
- *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*.

2.2.2 Derivative Instruments

WaterNSW's activities are variously framed and guided by

- Water Sharing Plans made under the Water Management Act 2000;
- WaterNSW Operating Licence;
- Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) Pricing Determinations;
- The Roles and Responsibilities Agreement between the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, WaterNSW and the Natural Resources Access Regulator;
- Catchment Audits; and
- Water Supply Agreements.

2.2.3 Functions under the Water NSW Act 2014

WaterNSW is committed to achieving the objects of the Act by WaterNSW's listed functions are set out in section 7 of the *Water NSW Act 2014*.

These functions include to:

- capture, store and release water to persons entitled to take that water and for other lawful purposes;
- supply water to the Sydney Water Corporation (Sydney Water);
- supply water to water supply authorities;
- supply water to licensed operators and licensed retailers;
- construct, maintain and operate water management works;
- protect and enhance the quality and quantity of water in declared catchment areas;
- manage and protect declared catchment areas and water management works vested in or under the control of Water NSW;
- undertake flood mitigation and management;
- undertake research on catchments generally and in particular on the health of declared catchment areas;
- undertake an educative role within the community; and
- release or supply water, including environmental water, and operate works, to inundate land for an environmental purpose.

Listed functions can only be exercised by WaterNSW under the authority of its operating licence.

The WaterNSW Operating Licence 2024 – 2028 is publicly available on its website.

WaterNSW is responsible for supplying the State's bulk water needs, operating the State's river systems and the bulk water supply system for Greater Sydney and providing services to its customers with respect to licensing and approvals, water allocation trades ("temporary trades"), water licence trades ("permanent trades") and water resource information.

WaterNSW supplies two thirds of water used in NSW from over 40 dams, rivers and pipelines to regional towns, irrigators, Sydney Water and local water utilities.

WaterNSW owns and operates the largest surface and groundwater monitoring network in the southern hemisphere and builds, maintains and operates essential infrastructure.

2.2.4 What we do

WaterNSW supplies two-thirds of water used in NSW. But we are more than a system operator. We are catchment protectors and water quality experts. We maintain and operate the assets that supply water to our customers and communities and skillfully manage the system through floods and drought. We are advocates for our customers and educators to the broader community.

Our purpose is to deliver water, when and where it matters.

In achieving this purpose, WaterNSW delivers on five main functions:

- We manage dams and protect the Greater Sydney drinking water catchment.
- We supply water to customers, communities and the environment.

- We build, maintain and operate essential infrastructure.
- We service customers – from farmers to local councils – providing support for water licensing and approvals, trades and billing, to meet their water needs.
- We own and operate the largest surface and groundwater monitoring network in the southern hemisphere.

3. How WaterNSW's functions affect the public (section 20(1)(c)

WaterNSW is a State-Owned Corporation established under the *Water NSW Act 2014* and operates under an Operating Licence issued issued by the Governor, on the recommendation of the Minister for Water. The IPART reports to the Minister on WaterNSW's compliance with the licence and conducts end-of-term reviews.

WaterNSW operates the state's rivers and water supply systems in accordance with the rules set out by regulators. With more than 40 dams across the state, WaterNSW supplies two-thirds of water used in NSW to regional towns, irrigators, Sydney Water and local water utilities.

WaterNSW also owns and operates the largest surface and groundwater monitoring network in the southern hemisphere and build, maintain and operate essential infrastructure.

WaterNSW receives and processes water orders from licensed water users and releases water to meet water orders, along with managing water allocation trades, within the requirements of NSW's State's Water Sharing Plans made under the *Water Management Act 2000*.

On a local level, WaterNSW's customer field officers work directly with customers to manage water accounts and improve water delivery efficiency.

WaterNSW's teams operate from regional centres throughout NSW and work closely with water users and Customer Advisory Groups (**CAGs**) to discuss asset management priorities and the efficient distribution of water.

WaterNSW also monitors water usage, manages customer accounts, bills and collects bulk water charges.

4. Arrangements for the public to participate in the formulation of policy and the exercise of functions (section 20(1)(c))

WaterNSW has established area-based CAGs across rural and metro NSW.

CAGs are the primary forum for WaterNSW to regularly consult, on an area basis, with a broad cross-section of its customers on issues relevant to the performance of WaterNSW's obligations to customers under the WaterNSW Operating Licence or WaterNSW Customer Service Charter.

Membership includes WaterNSW customers from the regulated and unregulated streams, groundwater irrigators, stock and domestic water users, major water utilities, local water utilities, local government, environmental water users and Indigenous Australian water users.

More information about your local representative on the CAG is available at Customer Services.

WaterNSW has developed its Customer Service Charter which sets out information, communications and consultation commitments of WaterNSW.

The Charter is reviewed in consultation with all of the CAGs.

WaterNSW's Customer Service Charter is available on its website.

5. Kinds of government information held by WaterNSW (section 20(1)(d))

WaterNSW keeps information developed and associated with its statutory functions together with associated administrative and business documents. Documents held include:

5.1 General publications, reports and policy documents

General publications, such as:

- development guidelines
- maps and diagrams
- newsletters and brochures
- strategies, plans and policies
- visitor information
- water supply projects.

General Reports, such as or concerning:

- Annual Reports
- catchment audits
- catchment reports
- general water reports
- water quality monitoring.

Policy documents, such as:

- Asset Management Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Compliance Management Policy
- Continuous Disclosure Policy
- Data Breach Policy
- Debt Management Code of Practice
- Environmental Policy
- Feedback Compliments and Complaints Policy
- Fraud & Corruption Prevention Policy
- IT Information Security Policy
- Privacy Management Plan
- Privacy Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy
- Supplier Code of Conduct
- Water Quality Policy
- Work, Health and Safety (WHS) Policy.

5.2 Internal business and administrative documents

WaterNSW's internal administrative and business documents concern or contain information such as:

- legal and governmental affairs;
- letters and emails;
- contracts and miscellaneous agreements;
- agenda and meeting minutes;
- business files;
- confidential employee files;
- reports and papers – professional and administrative; and
- confidential customer details.

6. Kinds of government information that WaterNSW makes publicly available (section 20(1)(e))

6.1 Reports and publications

The reports referred to in Part 5.1 above and related information added from time to time can be accessed by visiting WaterNSW website.

6.2 Policy documents

WaterNSW policies are continuously being reviewed and revised to respond to the needs of WaterNSW.

If a person requires access to a copy of any of the policies identified in Part 5, they should contact WaterNSW's Right to Information Officer.

7. How WaterNSW makes government information publicly available (section 20(1)(f))

WaterNSW makes government information publicly available either:

- through publication on the WaterNSW website; or
- by an information access application under the Act.

Anyone may contact WaterNSW's Right to information Officer to make an access application. The Right to Information Officer will guide a member of the public through the information access processes and applicable fees described at Part 8 of this Guide.

8. Information available free of charge and information for which a charge may apply (section 20(1)(g))

WaterNSW is committed to openness and transparency. There are four main ways in which WaterNSW's information is made available under the Act.

8.1 Open access information

Information including policy documents, register of contracts and land, disclosure log and this agency information guide can be found at Accessing Our Information on WaterNSW's website.

8.2 Proactive release

WaterNSW is committed to providing our customers with the highest level of service and support as efficiently as possible.

WaterNSW aims to work with customers in a long-term partnership to help customers achieve their business goals. To do this, WaterNSW offers on-line services for:

- Water Licensing – Everything customers need to know about water access licences and approvals;
- Order, trading and pricing – Managing customer water orders and trades;
- Service and help – Help with customer account and customer support;
- Community news and updates – Find all the information customers need to stay up to date with the latest news and announcements that impact them; and
- Giving us feedback – Our customers are important to us, we want customers to provide us feedback to help us improve our service to them.

WaterNSW proactively releases information primarily through its website. The main areas of information currently available relate to:

- the role of WaterNSW;
- water supply;
- individual dam levels;
- NSW Metering Scheme;
- major projects;
- environmental management;
- customer news and updates;
- early warning network system; and
- water quality.

WaterNSW operates two primary online tools on its website to make a variety of water information publicly available:

- **WaterInsights** – this interactive online tool provides information about:
  - water availability, allocation, and account balances
  - water quality data such as algal levels and dissolved oxygen saturation
  - volumes in storage, used and traded
  - river flows and levels
  - WaterNSW updates and notifications
  - historical data on dam and stream levels, water allocation and usage
  - rules and conditions that govern water management.
- **NSW Water Register** – provides public access to information about water licences, approvals, water trading, water dealings, environmental water and other matters related to water entitlements in NSW.

Information on the website is available to download free of charge. If you are unable to download information, please contact WaterNSW's Right to Information Officer.

8.3 Informal release

Members of the public can request information on an informal basis relating to any WaterNSW information. If the information requested is easily accessible and disclosure is clearly in the public interest, the information will be provided free of charge.

To make an informal request, applicants should contact the Right to Information Officer.

8.4 Formal release

Requests for detailed information need to be made using the formal process, and an application form is to be lodged.

Download an application form.

Formal applications and enquiries under the Act can be directed to WaterNSW's Right to Information Officer.

In order for an application to be valid it must:

- be in writing, sent to or lodged at the address shown above;
- clearly indicate that it is an access application made under the Act;
- be accompanied by an application fee of $30;
- state postal address in Australia as the address for correspondence in connection with the application; and
- include such information as is reasonably necessary to enable the government information applied for to be identified.

There may be further charges for processing an application. If this is the case the $30 application fee paid will count towards these charges. WaterNSW will provide an estimate of any additional charges that may be incurred in processing the application.

Further information explaining the public's rights under the Act is available by contacting the Right to Information Officer.

8.5 Register of Contracts and Land

The Act encourages the routine and proactive release of government information, including information held by providers of goods and services by government agencies. WaterNSW has a register of contracts and land which can be found here.

9. Contacting our Right to Information Officer

WaterNSW's Right to Information Officer can be contacted by:

Mail:	Right to Information Officer WaterNSW PO Box 398 Parramatta NSW 2124
Telephone:	1300 662 077
Email:	GIPA@waternsw.com.au

Telephone enquiries can be made between the business hours of 8:30am to 4:30pm

Further information in relation to the Act can be made to the Information and Privacy Commission.

free call:	1800 472 679 or visit the website, www.ipc.nsw.gov.au
Email:	ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au
Postal Address:	GPO Box 7011 Sydney NSW 2001
Office Location:	Level 15, McKell Building, 2-24 Rawson Place Haymarket NSW 2000