

Explanatory text for WRP Position Statements

The *Water Act 2007 (Cwlth)* gives the MDBA the power to recommend that the Minister accredit a water resource plan (WRP).

Any recommendation made by the MDBA will be based on whether or not the WRP meets the requirements of Chapter 10 of the Basin Plan— Water resource plan requirements, and the sustainable diversion limits (SDLs) for that area.

To assist in the development of WRPs by the Basin States we have developed Position Statements. The Position Statements set out, for some requirements of Chapter 10, the information we are seeking from a Basin State in order to be confident that a WRP meets the Basin Plan criteria. The specific content required for accreditation will vary across the Basin, so the management arrangements will be appropriate for the particular WRP area.

The Position Statements:

- Provide clarity around the interpretation of the Chapter 10 requirements.
- Ensure that the SDLs are given consistent effect across the Basin (subject to the Commonwealth Water Recovery Program).
- Assist the MDBA in meeting its obligations regarding the assessment of WRPs in a way that is defensible, repeatable, transparent and consistent.

They also assist in:

- ensuring consistent, fit-for-purpose approaches to managing all Basin water resources (including groundwater)
- promoting greater co-ordination of water planning across boundaries
- increasing recognition of indigenous values and uses in water management.

The Position Statements have no statutory force. They are guidance material only, intended to provide advice and support to the Basin States. It is the responsibility of each Basin State to ensure that the proposed WRP presented for accreditation meet the Basin Plan requirements. Basin States may do more in any area of planning, including of course if this is required under State law.

The Position Statements build on the *Handbook for Practitioners—Water Resource Plan requirements*, which also provides guidance about the development of WRPs. If there are inconsistencies between the Position Statements and the Handbook, the Position Statements are the more up-to-date reference. The Handbook will be updated to reflect the Position Statements.