

20 DEC 2018



Department of
Natural Resources,
Mines and Energy

Mr Russell James
Executive Director, Office of Compliance
Murray-Darling Basin Authority
GPO BOX 1801
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Dear Mr James

Thank you for your email of 18 December 2018 concerning the revised Compliance Compact assessment for Queensland.

Queensland remains committed to the Compact and has provided input to the interim assurance report. This commitment is demonstrated by the establishment within the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (the department) of a Rural Water Management Program, which is delivering on the Queensland Government's commitments in response to the Independent Audit of Qld non-urban water measurement and compliance (independent audit) and the Murray Darling-Basin Compliance Compact (Compact).

The department is developing legislative reforms and improvements to internal procedures and systems to strengthen our approach to compliance and enforcement activities across Queensland, as well as progress on reforms to metering policy and systems to provide increased transparency of water-related information.

Queensland has provided an update of progress against Compact action and has provided supporting documentation. I acknowledge that the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) has sought further documentary evidence. It is not practicable at this time to do so, as many of the actions that Queensland is taking are subject to whole of Queensland Government consideration and decision. In particular, this includes Queensland's proposed water measurement policy enhancements, which following whole of government consideration, will be progressed for state-wide stakeholder consultation during 2019.

For these reasons, Queensland undertook to verbally update and present as much documentation as possible on key commitments to MDBA officials at a meeting in Brisbane on 7 December 2018.

This briefing included advice that a number of actions are well advanced including:

- establishing the Rural Water Management Program (RWMP) which is delivering on the Queensland Government response to both independent audit and the compact
- realigning the department to establish the Water Markets and Supply division, which will have a water plan assurance role and oversight of the RWMP
- completing a state-wide risk assessment based on pressure on water resources
- trialling a water dashboard in two water management areas
- developing the Water Information Viewer, which is scheduled to be released publicly in January 2019

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- preparing regulatory amendments to strengthen the framework for supporting metering and compliance.

Queensland has also engaged with key stakeholders and peak bodies in progressing the RWMP. Initial engagement has occurred with the Water Engagement Forum over the latter half of 2018. Consultation has also occurred, particularly in relation to water measurement and metering, with irrigator representatives and with Queensland Farmers Federation and Irrigation Australia.

While Queensland considers the Murray-Darling Basin to be a priority, the delivery of actions under the RWMP are to apply state-wide, hence there are a range of matters that need to be considered that are not MDB related. Taking account for these matters takes time and there will be a significant local level engagement across the state during 2019.

Queensland will keep the MDBA informed of progress against its compact commitments as the RWMP advances and we will continue to work closely with the MDBA during 2019.

Queensland remains committed to meeting its compact requirements through key actions under the RWMP which is delivering on the Queensland Government response to both independent audit and the compact.

Should you have any further enquiries, please contact Ms Stephenie Hogan, Acting Executive Director, Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy on telephone (07) 3166 0118 or 0455 083 517.

Yours sincerely,



Benn Barr
Deputy Director-General
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