

# Water (SEQ Bulk Suppliers and Bulk Water Customers) Amendment Regulation 2020

Explanatory notes for SL 2020 No. 33

made under the

*Water Act 2000*

## General Outline

### Short title

*Water (SEQ Bulk Suppliers and Bulk Water Customers) Amendment Regulation 2020*

### Authorising law

Sections 360C, 1014(1) and 1014(2)(j)(i) and (iii) of the *Water Act 2000*.

### Policy objectives and the reasons for them

The objective of the *Water (SEQ Bulk Suppliers and Bulk Water Customers) Amendment Regulation 2020* is to allow Central SEQ Distributor-Retailer Authority as established under the *South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009* (trading as Urban Utilities), and the Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority as established under the same Act (trading as Seqwater) to respectively supply and receive treated wastewater (feedwater).

### Achievement of policy objectives

Seqwater's '*Water for Life: South East Queensland's Water Security Program 2016-2046 version 2*' (Water Security Program) outlines when drought response measures are implemented, such as the recommissioning of the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme (WCRWS) when the South East Queensland (SEQ) Water Grid reaches 60%.

The WCRWS was constructed during the Millennium Drought and is designed to provide a climate resilient water source to help provide for water security in SEQ. The WCRWS is comprised of three advanced wastewater treatment plants and the western corridor pipeline. The scheme can supply up to 180 megalitres per day of purified recycled water to be pumped to Wivenhoe Dam to augment the volume of water in the

dam. In June 2013, before the WCRWS was used to augment urban water for the SEQ Water Grid, the WCRWS was placed into care and maintenance mode.

Purified recycled water is produced by taking feedwater and purifying it to drinking water quality standards. The WCRWS is designed to accept feedwater from six Urban Utilities wastewater treatment plants. In 2019, a review of the readiness of the WCRWS, as part of SEQ drought readiness preparations, identified that a legislative oversight existed concerning the declaration under regulation of Urban Utilities and Seqwater as supplier and customer respectively, to allow this relationship to happen.

The policy objective will therefore be achieved by enabling Urban Utilities to provide feedwater to Seqwater's advanced wastewater treatment plants. This will happen through the appropriate declaration of Urban Utilities as an SEQ bulk supplier, and Seqwater as a bulk water customer, under the *Water Regulation 2016*, consistent with sections 1014(2)(j)(i) and (iii) of the *Water Act 2000*.

## **Consistency with policy objectives of authorising law**

The amendments are consistent with the policy objectives of the authorising law.

## **Inconsistency with policy objectives of other legislation**

Inconsistency between the amendments and policy objectives of other legislation does not exist.

## **Benefits and costs of implementation**

The amendment regulation will benefit Seqwater and Urban Utilities allowing the two entities to prepare and execute a bulk water supply agreement. It will also benefit the SEQ community by providing them with improved water security by providing a mechanism to leverage a climate resilient water source for an industrial purpose.

The government will not incur any costs in the implementation of the amendment regulation.

## **Consistency with fundamental legislative principles**

The proposed amendments are consistent with fundamental legislative principles.

## **Consultation**

Both Seqwater and Urban Utilities support the amendments.

In accordance with the Queensland Government Guide to Better Regulation, the Office of Best Practice Regulation was not consulted in relation to the regulatory proposal. The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy applied a self-assessable exclusion from undertaking further regulatory impact analysis (category g - Regulatory proposals that are of a machinery nature).

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