

# WRP Fact Sheet 2: Water management in the Basin

## Victoria's water resource plans

## Basin water management

In Australia, water is managed by states. Although there is a national approach to some issues, each state retains control of its own water industry.

For the Murray-Darling Basin, which crosses a number of state borders, Victoria has agreed to take an intergovernmental approach. Victoria's main commitment relates to the shared management of the resources of the Murray-Darling Basin.

### Minister for Water (Commonwealth)

Responsible for management of the Commonwealth *Water Act 2007* and accreditation of Basin States water resource plans (WRPs). See *WRP Fact Sheet 1 Water Resource Plans*

### Murray-Darling Basin Authority

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) is a Commonwealth agency. Its role includes assisting and assessing WRPs and advising the Commonwealth Minister for Water on the accreditation of Basin State WRPs. The MDBA also has a role in setting sustainable diversion limits (SDLs) (see *WRP Fact Sheet 6 Sustainable Diversion Limits*), developing the Basin-wide environmental watering strategy and managing compliance with WRPs.

### The Minister for Water (Victoria)

Ministers are accountable to Parliament for the performance of departments, authorities and public entities within their portfolio.

Under the Victorian *Water Act 1989*, the Minister for Water is responsible for the control and management of Victoria's water. The Minister for Water has specific responsibilities for issuing water entitlements and managing Victoria's water resources and supply.

Therefore, management of Victoria's entitlement framework to ensure compliance with the Basin Plan SDLs is the responsibility of the Minister. See *WRP Factsheet 6 Sustainable Diversion Limits* for more information on SDLs.

## Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

To assist the management of the water industry DELWP supports the Minister by:

- providing policy advice and guidance
- implementing government policies
- acting as a liaison between the Minister and each water corporation
- monitoring performance and compliance

DELWP has six groups that make up the department, with the Water and Catchment division being the main contact for water sector organisations.

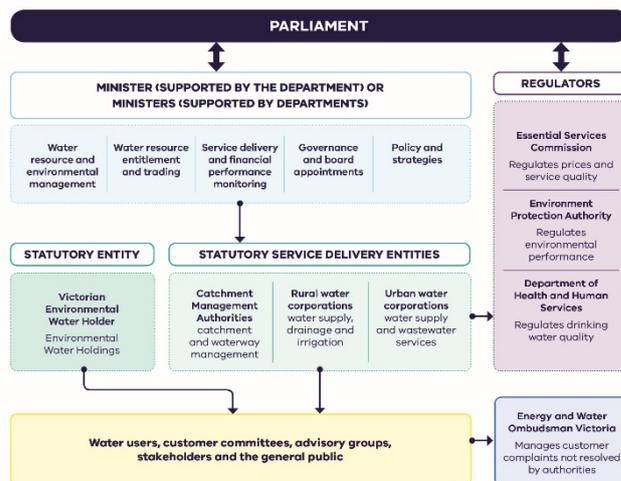


Figure 1 Structure of the Victorian water sector

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## Rural Water Corporations

Rural water corporations in Victoria are independent statutory bodies established under the *Water Act 1989* to manage the state's water resources and provide services such as water supply, irrigation drainage and salinity mitigation services for irrigation and land management. They have authority to operate surface water and groundwater management infrastructure including storages, channels, weirs and bores. They also work with catchment management authorities to protect and improve land and waterways to support consumptive use and environmental outcomes.

Under Victoria's WRPs two water corporations, Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water and Goulburn-Murray Water, are responsible for the following:

- managing entitlements to ensure compliance with SDLs and with conditions of entitlements
- management of trade
- management to support environmental watering outcomes
- responding to extreme events to ensure critical human needs can be met
- respond to risks to water quality and availability

## Urban Water Corporations

Urban water corporations are also independent statutory bodies established under the Victorian *Water Act 1989* and are responsible to their urban customers for water supply, sewage and trade waste disposal services. Under the Victoria's WRPs, urban water corporations support the management of water to ensure critical human needs are met during extreme events.

## Catchment Management Authorities

Victoria's catchment management authorities (CMAs) are statutory bodies established under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*. Part 10 of the Victorian Water Act outlines CMA responsibilities in relation to waterway management where they have been appointed to carry out that function.

CMAs are instrumental in ensuring Victoria meets its environmental watering requirements under the Basin Plan (See *WRP Fact Sheet 4 and 5 for more information*). This includes:

- identification of priority environmental assets and priority ecosystem functions
- preparing environmental watering strategies which inform the development of long-term watering plans informing annual environmental watering plans prepared by the Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH).

For more information about the Authorities' areas see Part 5 in the Wimmera-Mallee Comprehensive Report and Chapter 6 of Victoria's North and Murray Comprehensive Report available at <https://www.water.vic.gov.au/mdb/mdbp/water-resource-plans>

## Victorian Environmental Water Holder (VEWH)

The VEWH is an independent statutory body established under the *Water Act 1989* and is responsible for the use of environmental water across the state. While DELWP and CMAs are responsible for setting environmental watering strategies, the VEWH is responsible for management of annual environmental watering plans.

VEWH also holds water entitlements in its own right. This water is termed *held environmental water* and is used to meet the environmental watering objectives under the Basin Plan.

For more information on the VEWH's water holdings see <https://waterregister.vic.gov.au/>

VEWH's annual seasonal watering plans are available at: <http://www.vewh.vic.gov.au/news-and-publications/publications>

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