

## Non-urban water measurement policy proposals

### Metering costs

#### Frequently asked questions

##### Who is responsible for metering costs?

Water entitlement holders will continue to be responsible for all costs relating to installation, maintenance and operation of their meters and measurement equipment. This is consistent with the existing policy. There are no proposed changes to meter ownership arrangements.

##### What are the cost implications of the policy proposals for water entitlement holders?

Some entitlement holders will be required to invest in new water infrastructure to meet the new requirements. The department is working closely with industry and will consult with water users to minimise these impacts.

The department has identified the indicative costs for individual water users of new and replacement water meters, data loggers and telemetry, which may arise from the new policy. The unit cost of meters, including data loggers and telemetry, as well as associated costs such as pipework, labour and validation, has been taken into account. Costs vary according to meter size and the total cost will depend on the number of meters to be subject to the policy. In Queensland, over 75 per cent of meters will be smaller meters in the 100 mm to 200 mm size range. Cost estimates per installation are:

- For smaller meters – up to 200 mm – \$8000 to \$12,000
- For medium-sized meters – approximately 300 mm – \$14,000 to \$18,000
- For large meters – 450 mm to 600mm - \$25,000 to \$50,000
- For very large meters – approximately 1200 mm - \$90,000 to \$100,000

##### Won't pattern approved meters, data loggers and telemetry make metering costs higher than in the past putting more pressure on water users?

Entitlement holders are already responsible for metering costs associated with purchasing, installing and maintaining meters.

The proposals introduce new costs that ensure meter accuracy and improve data availability and timeliness. Meters have a finite life and require replacement over time. However, some existing meters may be able to be retained if they can meet the new proposed standards.

For most entitlement holders the total cost of a new metering installation of up to 200 mm is not expected to exceed \$12,000 dollars, including meter, data logger, telemetry and associated costs.

More accurate, real-time metering has the potential to reduce costs over time by helping entitlement holders identify loss, leakage and waste early. It will also allow entitlement holders to transparently demonstrate they are meeting their obligations and support their social licence.

### **What is the department doing to minimise/mitigate metering costs?**

The department is working closely with industry to identify approaches as well as exploring other funding options that can mitigate costs for entitlement holders.

The department is also working with other states, Irrigation Australia and the meter industry to ensure there is more comprehensive range of pattern approved meters coming onto the market.

### **Why is the government proposing to implement metering when there is a drought and many landholders are under financial stress?**

The drought emphasises how important it is for water to be taken fairly and according to the rules.

Metering ensures that we know whether water is being taken according to the rules. The vast majority of water users do the right thing, and they want those who don't to be held accountable.

### **What is the government doing to help farmers?**

The government recognises that the current drought conditions are making things tough for farmers.

You can find information about state and federal government drought assistance programs here: <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/agriculture/disaster-recovery/drought/assistance-programs>.