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## The ACT 2016-17 annual report to satisfy annual reporting obligations for:

- Basin Plan Schedule 12 responses (except Matter 9 – use of environmental water)
- National Partnerships Agreement assurance of milestone achievement
- Basin Plan Implementation Agreement self-assessment of compliance with implementation tasks

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## Reporting context

This template provides a single Commonwealth information collection point, that covers Basin State 2016-17 annual reporting obligations in relation to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan for:

- Basin Plan Schedule 12
- the Basin Plan Implementation Agreement compliance requirements
- the milestone assessments of the National Partnership Agreement (NPA) on Implementing Water Reform in the Murray-Darling Basin

Reporting for Schedule 12 Matter 9 (the identification and use of environmental water) is reported separately.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources will use the information provided in this template as well as multiple other sources to meet NPA reporting requirements. Reporting against NPA milestone 6c is not required as information will be gathered from within the Department. Where milestones have not been met, or not fully met, Basin states should indicate whether they intend to meet the milestone in the future and if not, provide the rationale. Where applicable, describe any intended actions and planned timeframe for the milestone to be met. The Department will seek collaborating information from the MDBA and Commonwealth Environmental Water Office where necessary.

## A. Local Knowledge and Stakeholder Engagement

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
<b><i>The extent to which local knowledge and solutions inform the implementation of the Basin Plan</i></b>		
<p>A1 The outcome of engagement on the implementation of the Basin Plan</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 6, Indicator 6.1 and NPA 8e</i></p>	<p>Provide a descriptive statement. Where possible include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How local knowledge and solutions were used</li> <li>• How involving communities made a difference to Basin Plan implementation</li> <li>• How decisions changed as a result of community involvement</li> <li>• How environmental watering in regulated catchments has occurred having regard to the views of local communities and persons materially affected by the management of environmental water</li> <li>• Local knowledge might include knowledge drawn from Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal people and groups</li> <li>• When reporting on Aboriginal participation and influence, remember processes of involvement may be as important as outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>In 2016/17 reporting, we would expect use of local knowledge to feature in development of Water Resource Plans and the management of environmental water.</p> <p>Examples or case studies are not mandatory, but may be a useful way to describe how local knowledge and solutions inform implementation of the Basin Plan.</p>	<p>The ACT's Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate has engaged key stakeholders throughout the local community to assist with the development of the ACT's Water Resource Plan. The knowledge drawn from the various groups has been used to assist in the development of various aspects of the ACT's water resource plan. More specifically, the engagement with key stakeholders has enabled the ACT to address more comprehensively and on an informed basis the matter of risk assessment and controls on the volume of take.</p> <p>An outcome developed with Rural Landholders was that rural water was to be clearly identified in the Water Resource Plan as a significant component of water use in the ACT and critical for sustainable farm management and agricultural production. The Rural Landholders also requested that they be kept informed including through the governance structure of the catchment coordination group that includes water issues as well as catchment management more broadly.</p> <p>The ACT water utility, Icon Water, has also been consulted on a range of matters related to the development of the ACT water resource plan including their licence to take water and the development of the Source model to account for water use.</p> <p>Through a number of workshops and meetings, ongoing engagement occurred with representatives from local Aboriginal groups including the Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation, King Brown Tribal Group, Little Gudenby River Tribal Group, and Ngarigu Currawong Clan. The United Ngunawal Elders Council has provided advice on particular indigenous issues such as cultural flow health index and developments and the path to indigenous water values and uses. The advice on these issues has been developed with the community and incorporated into WRP.</p> <p>The ACT in collaboration with the MDBA conducted the original Aboriginal Waterways Assessment project in 2015 throughout the ACT to capture the water values and uses and priorities of the Aboriginal community with Traditional Custodians of the ACT region. The project covered 14 sites in 2015 and additional sites were assessed in 2017 as well as repeat assessment at some 2015 sites. The Aboriginal Waterways Assessment will be an ongoing activity to facilitate Aboriginal engagement in water planning and management and as an input to the ACT Water Resource Plan monitoring and evaluation. A number of workshops and meetings have been held to further develop the assessment framework with the Traditional Custodians of the ACT region. The ACT Government has also engaged an Aboriginal Healthy Country Manager to lead Indigenous engagement for water planning, natural resource management policy and projects and parks and conservation activities.</p> <p>The Murray Lower Darling Region Indigenous Nations (MLDRIN) has also been involved in the development of the ACT water resource plan and have attended a number of workshops with the</p>

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
		Traditional Custodians and the ACT Water Policy team.
<p><b>A2</b> Processes used to identify stakeholders and other relevant groups and individuals from local communities and peak bodies</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 6, Indicator 6.2 and NPA 8e</i></p>	<p>Provide a descriptive statement. Where possible include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes used to identify stakeholders and other relevant groups and individuals</li> </ul>	<p>The ACT Government through the Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) has been utilising local knowledge and information in preparing and implementing those aspects of the Basin Plan that relate to the ACT. The involvement of local groups and stakeholders and the use of local knowledge and information are exemplified in the ACT's development of its draft Water Resource Plan.</p> <p>The ACT has close relationships with the key stakeholders that relate to water and water resource planning. For instance, EPSDD works closely with the one ACT water utility, Icon Water, during utility performance reporting, regular water quality monitoring and trade obligations such as the Living Murray Initiative. EPSDD has maintained relationships with the rural lessees, water experts and key community groups that have previously assisted and advised on the development of the ACT Water Strategy. Similarly, the Environmental Flow Guidelines are currently being reviewed by the University of Canberra's Institute of Applied Ecology and local water experts to ensure consistency with the requirements of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, subsequent amendments to the Water Resources Act 2007 and to ensure they operate effectively in the wider regulatory context such as the Commonwealth Water Act 2007 and the National Water Initiative.</p>
<p><b>A3</b> How stakeholders and other relevant groups and individuals were engaged</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 6, Indicator 6.3 and NPA 8e</i></p>	<p>Provide a descriptive statement. Where possible include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of audiences engaged</li> <li>The range of opportunities (types of engagement)</li> </ul> <p>Relate these to the Basin Plan obligations to have regard to local views (for eg, in relation to Chapter 8 (environmental watering); and 10 (water resource planning))</p>	<p>The Draft ACT Water Resource Plan was released for community consultation in June/July 2016. EPSD Directorate held one-on-one consultations with key stakeholders, agencies and groups on the draft ACT Water Resource Plan.</p> <p>These included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Icon Water</li> <li>- ACT water experts, including Professor Ian Falconer and Mr Ian Lawrence,</li> <li>- ACT Government's Directors-General Water Group which comprise, Chief Ministers, Treasury, Economic Development, Territory and Municipal Services Directorate, Health Directorate, General Urban Renewal, Land Development and Emergency Service Agency.</li> <li>- NSW Government. In particular Department of Primary Industries and Water and Office of Environment and Heritage; and Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council.</li> <li>- National Capital Authority</li> <li>- Rural Landholders Association</li> <li>- MILDRIN</li> <li>- Canberra Hydrological Society</li> </ul>

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (response/milestone achievement/compliance status)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Australian Water Association</li> <li>- Office of the Commissioner for Environment and Sustainability</li> </ul> <p>The Directorate invited the community via web advertisements and social media to attend two public consultations sessions to present and allow feedback on the draft ACT Water Resource Plan.</p> <p>Additionally, the copies of the draft ACT Water Resource Plan were provided to the following organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NSW Dept of Primary Industries</li> <li>- Queanbeyan &amp; Palerang Regional Council</li> <li>- SMEC Australia</li> <li>- Alluvium</li> <li>- DELWP Victorian Government</li> <li>- ACT Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment</li> </ul> <p>The ACT has worked and continues to work closely with these groups over a number of years and on a range of policy developments. Engagement with these groups was mainly through meetings and workshops. For example, EPSD Directorate had previously established a panel of local scientific water experts to draw independent expert advice when required. This panel was approached for consultation on the assessment of the ACT's risk assessment process for the Water Resource Plan.</p> <p>The ACT, in partnership with the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, conducted a series of indigenous engagement workshops to develop an Aboriginal Waterways Assessment Tool. The identification of the local Indigenous community was made through EPSDD's Aboriginal Healthy Country Manager and Natural Resource Management Facilitator who were able to identify members within the local Representative Aboriginal Organisations and groups (RAO's) to initiate engagement with the ACT regional indigenous communities on aspects of the water resource plan.</p> <p>The ACT has also been consulting with the New South Wales government on various aspects of water resource planning and environmental management particularly with respect to catchment management and improving water quality.</p> <p>Note: the ACT is not involved in a number of Basin Plan water recovery projects, such as constraints measures and efficiency measures, that involve community groups more broadly.</p>

## B. Environmental Watering

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
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**The implementation of the environmental management framework (Part 4 of Chapter 8)**

<p><b>B1</b> Long-term watering plans were prepared, with the required content, published, reviewed and updated as obligated under Part 4 of Chapter 8, Divisions 3.</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 10, Indicator 10.1; NPA 8f and BPIA 18.1</i></p>	<p>What progress has the Basin State made in preparing long-term watering plans for each surface water resource plan area as agreed?</p> <p><i>[Background: Each Basin State will prepare long-term watering plans aligning with the Plan's surface water resource plan areas.</i></p> <p>The level of detail in a long-term watering plan will vary according to local conditions, levels of development and regulation, the influence on other water resources, and statutory and other arrangements prevailing in the surface water resource plan area.</p> <p>A long-term watering plan may provide that an existing or other specified instrument or text comprises or is part of a Basin State's plan.</p> <p>The plans will be developed by dates agreed between the MDBA and each Basin State.</p> <p>The MDBA and each Basin State will separately agree on what further material would be required for each of the State's long-term watering plans. As part of this, the MDBA and each Basin State will also agree on the standards required for this material.]</p>	<p>The ACT drafted a long term watering plan as a component / section of the draft ACT Water Resource Plan based on the ACT's environmental flow guidelines. The aim was to provide a strong link between the MDBA's Basin-wide environmental watering strategy (2014) and the approach taken by the ACT for environmental watering, given the particular nature of the provision of environmental watering in the ACT.</p> <p>The MDBA informally assessed the draft and provided a commentary on the issues identified by the Authority on the draft ACT Water Resource Plan. The Authority suggested that consideration should be given to seeking a formal extension on the ACT Interim WRP to 30 June 2019. In December 2016 an amendment to the Commonwealth Water Regulations gave effect to extend the ACT's WRP through to 30 June 2018. Following the in-principle agreement to establish interstate water trade between NSW and ACT at the June 2017 Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council meeting the ACT will now submit its WRP in the first half of 2019 so that it can be coordinated with NSW's WRP for the Murrumbidgee River and in order to address the development any necessary protocols to implement interstate water trading arrangements with NSW. This approach will enable the alignment of the ACT WRP with the NSW Murrumbidgee WRP enabling both jurisdictions to progress interstate trade and any other cross-border issues in parallel. This will also allow the revised ACT environmental flow guidelines, due in 2018, to be incorporated into the Water Resource Plan.</p> <p>The ACT's existing environmental flow guidelines have continually met the ACT's ecological objectives by providing well over and above the required amounts of environmental water into ACT rivers over an extended period, including during the Millennium drought.</p> <p>The ACT will submit its long term environmental watering plan in late 2017 utilising the revised environmental flow guidelines that have been reviewed and revised by the Institute of Applied Ecology of the University of Canberra.</p>
<p><b>B2</b> Annual priorities were prepared, with the required content, published, reviewed and updated as obligated under Part 4 of Chapter 8, Divisions 4</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 10, Indicator 10.1; NPA 8c and BPIA 19.1</i></p>	<p>Were annual environmental watering priorities (AEWP) or other relevant instruments submitted as agreed with the MDBA, for the purposes of identifying the Basin annual environmental watering priorities for the water resource plan areas?</p> <p><i>[Background: The level of detail for annual environmental watering priorities will vary according to local conditions, levels of development and regulation, influence on other water resources and statutory and other arrangements in the water resource plan area.</i></p> <p>The principle of fit for purpose management will inform the development and assessment of annual environmental watering priorities by Basin States and the MDBA</p>	<p>The ACT does not have any Held Environmental Water (HEW) therefore the ACT does not make decisions about when and where to use HEW.</p> <p>The only ACT considered Planned Environmental Waters (PEW) are within the water supply storages managed by Icon Water. Environmental watering releases comply with the ACT environmental flow guidelines. The MDBA consider all waters protected from take by both the environmental flow guidelines and the Basin Plan SDL, as PEW.</p> <p>The ACT provides environmental watering through the primacy given to its legislated environmental flows framework. In regard to planned environmental flow releases by Icon Water, regulated through the ACT environmental flow guidelines, a holistic approach was adopted for the setting of environmental flows (originally based on the work of Dr. A. H. Arthington). Although updated and improved, the approach within the guidelines identifies the essential features of the flow regime,</p>

	respectively.]	<p>including the natural variability, seasonal variation, floods and intermittent dry periods. The guideline specifies the ecological objectives for the territory's aquatic ecosystems and specifies the surface water rules to maintain the relevant aquatic ecosystems. These rules are also conditions in the Icon Water licence to manage and extract water.</p> <p>The ACT will present its approach to environmental watering in its revised water resource plan and has had extensive discussions with the MDBA on this aspect. Any opportunities for providing additional environmental watering to achieve environmental outcomes are reviewed by the Environmental Flow Technical Advisory Group (EFTAG) and approved by the responsible Authority, the ACT Environmental Protection Authority. To date these opportunities have only occurred with the storages managed by ICON Water and hence their Licence is amended accordingly and published on the ACT Government web site, This constitutes the annual environmental watering priorities in the ACT.</p>
<p><b>B3</b> Watering strategies, plans and priorities are prepared consistently with Part 4 of Chapter 8, in relation to coordinating, consulting and cooperating with other Reporters and the matters to which regard must be had (Chapter 8, Part 4)</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 10, Indicator 10.2; NPA 8c, 8d and 8f and BPIA 20.1</i></p>	<p>Describe how coordination, consultation and cooperation occurred, including with other governments, was undertaken in preparing watering strategies, plans and priorities.</p> <p>Describe how coordination, consultation and cooperation made a difference.</p> <p>Also describe how regard was had for particular matters as obligated in Part 4 of Chapter 8</p>	<p>The ACT and NSW have held discussions on environmental watering and agree on the current arrangements. To date these discussions have failed to identify significant opportunity for improved outcomes from coordinated environmental water releases in the Murrumbidgee River system upstream of Burrinjuck Dam and downstream of Tantangara Dam.</p> <p>The ACT's environmental flow guideline review is currently underway, however, once finalised the ACT will first consult the Environmental Flow Technical Advisory Group (EFTAG) before seeking community consultation in late 2017.</p>
<p><b>B4</b> How Environmental watering principles were applied consistent with Chapter 8, Part 4, Division 6.</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 10, Indicator 10.3; NPA 8a, 8b and 8d and BPIA 20.2</i></p>	<p>Provide at least one case study that demonstrates how environmental watering principles were applied and identify the relevant principles.</p> <p>Provide reasons for any environmental watering that was not in accordance with annual watering priorities (please provide answer in the <i>statement of reasons</i> table at bottom of this document).</p> <p>Confirmation that the characteristics of licensed entitlements held for environmental use have not been enhanced or diminished relative to like entitlements held for other purposes.</p> <p>Where feasible and agreed by the relevant basin state, confirm that measures have been implemented to facilitate the use of environmental water through water shepherding and return flow provisions.</p>	<p>Planned environmental watering occurs in the ACT in accordance with the ACT Water Resources Act 2007 and the ACT's environmental flow guidelines.</p> <p>The environmental watering system in the Cotter River is an excellent example of consistency with the Basin Plan environmental watering principles. No additional annual watering priorities were identified over and above those in the ACT environmental flow guidelines.</p> <p>No licences are held for environmental use.</p> <p>See B3 for coordinated environmental watering.</p>

## C. Water Quality and Salinity Management

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
<b>Implementation of the water quality and salinity management plan, including the extent to which regard is had to the targets in Chapter 9 when making flow management decisions.</b>		
<p>C1 Regard had to the targets in s9.14 when managing water flows</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 14, Indicator 14.1 and BPIA 21.1</i></p>	<p>Provide a summary of how your State 'had regard' to water quality targets when managing water flows, including a statement that procedures and tools were in place, and how these were used in the reporting year. Provide a case study where possible.</p>	<p>The ACT Environmental Protection Regulations 2005 sets out a range of water quality objectives and criteria related to the protection of each designated environmental and use value as prescribed in the ACT's Territory Plan. A set of secondary or loading water quality criteria is also identified in the Regulations in respect to the urban lakes and the Murrumbidgee River. The ACT Guidelines for Recreational Water Quality 2010 provides a framework for monitoring blue green algal blooms and high levels of faecal coliforms throughout Canberra's lakes. In 2012, the National Capital Authority released their revised Lake Burley Griffin Water Quality Management Plan, containing recommended water quality targets in respect to protection of lake ecosystems, aesthetic values, recreational waters, and irrigation water supply that specifically targets the waters of Lake Burley Griffin. The ACT Aquatic Species and Riparian Zone Conservation Strategy 2007 seeks to maintain and improve the natural integrity of the rivers and riparian zones in the ACT within a regional context. In fact the strategy was reviewed in 2013 which highlighted activities that should lead to more native fish and plants, less erosion, improved water flow and fewer weeds in the longer term. The draft ACT Aquatic Species and Riparian Zone Conservation Strategy 2017 is expected to be finalised during 2017.</p> <p>A good example of how the ACT continually develops tools and policy towards improved water management is the ACT Water Strategy (Striking the Balance, EPSP Directorate 2014a). The Water Strategy identifies the strategies and related actions that will assist the ACT in achieving the water quality outcomes, which are aligned with the Basin water quality objectives. For example, Strategy 2 is to 'Protect and restore aquatic ecosystems in urban and non-urban areas' set out the three following actions: 1. Improve water quality and ecosystem health in the ACT and region's rivers, lakes, aquifers, ponds and wetlands; 2. Ensure appropriate management (volume, timing, and quality) of environmental flows; and 3. Strengthen compliance and enforcement for water resource management.</p> <p>The ACT Water Strategy continues to follow a number of progressive policy positions that strengthen the sustainable management of water within the environment, such as the approach of the ACT's Water Resource Act 2007 that has the key principal of the environment being provided with water first, then consumptive water allocation is determined. Additionally, the environmental flow guidelines are set to determine the amount of water needed to maintain aquatic ecosystems of the ACT.</p> <p>The Water Strategy not only contains strategies and actions, but also includes measureable targets with performance indicators. The approach taken by the ACT to develop further procedures and tools provides a good example of policy development focused on water quality improvement.</p>

		In addition, the ACT's Basin Priority Project, ACT Healthy Waterways, is focused upon improving water quality in its catchments (covering a range of urban catchments and streams flowing into the ACT) which in turn is expected to benefit the water quality of the Murrumbidgee River
<p><b>C2</b> Regard had to the targets in s9.14 when making decisions about the use of environmental water</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 14, Indicator 14.2 and BPIA 21.1</i></p>	<p>Provide a summary of how your State 'had regard' to the targets in s9.14 when making decisions about the use of environmental water. Include a statement that procedures and tools were in place, and how these were used in the reporting year.</p> <p>Provide a case study where possible.</p>	<p>Not only is there a comprehensive and integrated water quality planning and management framework in place for waters of the ACT and the Upper Murrumbidgee Basin, there are strong legislated requirements on Commonwealth and Territory Agencies to comply with meeting prescribed water quality criteria associated with designated uses and values of ACT, NCA and Upper Murrumbidgee Basin water uses and values, as described in C2 above.</p> <p>The ACT is located entirely within the Murrumbidgee River catchment and hence dependent of upstream environmental flow arrangements controlled by New South Wales and the Snowy Hydro Agreement.</p> <p>The ACT environmental flow guidelines protect base flows in unregulated rivers and abstraction in unregulated rivers and require environmental watering releases from the water supply dams. These flows effectively ensure that streams are generally meeting the appropriate water quality targets.</p> <p>The annual ACT Water Report (EPD, 2016) outlines water quality in the ACT waterways and summarises activities involved in improving water quality.</p> <p>Therefore, in the framework of the ACT, all stakeholders, including the MDBA, should have confidence that the requirements under the Basin Plan are being fully met.</p>
<b>Application of salinity targets for the purposes of long-term salinity planning and management (Refers compliance status with section s9.19 of the Basin Plan).</b>		
<p><b>C3</b> Apply salinity targets in the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement for salinity planning and management.</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 14 and BPIA 23.1</i></p>	<p>The MDBA, the BOC, and Basin States are to undertake any long-term salinity planning and management functions in accordance with the targets in Appendix 1 of Schedule B of the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement (including the Basin Salinity Management Strategy Operational Protocols).</p> <p>Please indicate how this is done.</p>	<p>The ACT is subject to the new Basin Salinity Management 2030 Strategy and reports on performance as required and given the ACT's situation in the Basin. Historically and for the foreseeable future, salinity is not considered to be a significant issue in the ACT, as the ACT stays within the targets that have been set and salinity reports are provided annually. Note that the majority of salinity in ACT waters is not the harmful form sodium chloride.</p>
<b>Water quality and salinity trigger points</b>		
<p><b>C4</b> Determine whether the trigger is reached.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 26.1</i></p>	<p>The Guideline for the triggers and processes for changing water sharing Tiers provides guidance on how the MDBA and Basin States should communicate if the triggers are reached.</p> <p>Please indicate if a trigger was reached and if so, what action was taken.</p>	N/A to the ACT



## D. Water Trading

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
<b><i>The implementation of water trading rules.</i></b>		
<p><b>D1 Compliance with the Basin Plan water trading rules</b></p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 16, Indicator 16.1 and BPIA 29.1-31.1</i></p>	<p>Provide website links to the publication of information regarding an Approval Authority's interest in a trade (s12.38(2)).</p> <p>Provide documentation to support compliance with s12.37 (notice of disclosure)</p> <p>Describe how you have notified affected parties with the decision to restrict a trade and reasons for the restriction consistent with 12.39.</p> <p>How has your State undertaken best endeavours to ensure water announcements have been made generally available?</p> <p>Provide documentation that supports a compliance with s12.50 (water announcements to be made generally available).</p>	<p>Following the in-principle agreement to establish interstate water trade between NSW and ACT at the June 2017 Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council meeting the ACT will now submit its WRP in the first half of 2019 so that it can be coordinated with NSW's WRP for the Murrumbidgee River and in order to address the development any necessary protocols to implement interstate water trading arrangements with NSW. This approach will enable the alignment of the ACT WRP with the NSW Murrumbidgee WRP enabling both jurisdictions to progress interstate trade and any other cross-border issues in parallel.</p> <p>The ACT has exercised its best endeavours to ensure that its water trading rules, policies and processes meet the obligations under the Implementation Agreement and the Basin Plan. The ACT is compliant with the Basin Plan water trading rules as commenced 2014. The ACT has previously been characterised as non-compliant with respect to interstate water trading as arrangements are not yet in place for interstate trading with New South Wales.</p> <p>However, the lack of any interstate water trading arrangements in place at this point in time is the result of the previous inability of New South Wales to commit priority and resources to address and progress this matter (refer to discussions with the water trading group of the MDBA and minutes from related working group).</p> <p>The extension on the ACT Interim WRP to 30 June 2019 will enable the alignment of the ACT WRP with the NSW Murrumbidgee WRP and operationalise interstate water trade and other issues in parallel.</p>
<p><b>D2 Trade processing times</b></p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 16, Indicator 16.2; NPA 6d and BPIA 29.1-31.1</i></p>	<p>Report on interstate and intrastate trade processing times (as per the COAG service and reporting standards for trade processing times).</p> <p>Can you provide confirmation that applications for entitlement and allocation trades to which the Commonwealth was a party were processed consistent with the agreed service standards.</p>	<p>There is very limited water trading occurring within the ACT and intrastate water trading was conducted in keeping with set processing times and reporting standards.</p> <p>The ACT supports the Basin Plan trading rules and has implemented procedures to facilitate their application in the ACT. The ACT has adopted the trading rules for internal water trade. The ACT has processed water trade applications in accordance with the national processing time requirements. Indeed, the ACT has adopted the national processing times as the ACT's own performance reporting for its annual report. Note that there are very few water trades in the ACT. Reports for 2016-17 are not yet available; however, the 3 trades in 2015-16 reflect the low trade numbers and volumes.</p> <p>There were no trades where the Commonwealth was a participant for water resources within the ACT.</p>
<b><i>Restrictions on trade and their application (Refers compliance status with sections s12.02-12.27 of the Basin Plan).</i></b>		

<p><b>D3</b> Ensure trades are consistent with the water trading rules</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 16; NPA 6a, 6b and 6e and BPIA 29.1</i></p>	<p>Describe how the Basin State exercised its best endeavours to ensure that Basin States trading rules are consistent with the Basin Plan water trading rules</p> <p>If your State has implemented any new restrictions on trade, have you notified the MDBA of the restriction and notified if consistent with s12.19.</p> <p>You must also report on any surface water entitlements which are not consistent with clauses 28 to 32 of the NWI.</p>	<p>The ACT's Interim Plan is to be extended to 30 June 2019.</p> <p>There are no restrictions on internal water trading in the ACT, as long as there is a physical connection.</p>
<p><b>Information and reporting requirements</b></p>		
<p><b>D4</b> Provide information on water access rights and water trade rules.</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 16 and BPIA 31.1</i></p>	<p>Has the Basin State made any changes to the water access rights displayed on the MDBA's Water Market products page? If so what documentation has been provided to the MDBA with the updated information as required un s12.43?</p> <p>Has the Basin State implemented any new trade rules that regulate the trade of tradable water access rights? If so have they provided these rules to the MDBA as required under s12.46?</p>	<p>Provisions and amendments to legislation relating to water trade are published on the ACT legislation register.</p> <p>No changes have been made to, water access rights, or new trade rules implemented.</p>
<p><b>D5</b> Report trade prices</p> <p><i>Applicable to Schedule 12, Matter 16 and BPIA 31.2</i></p>	<p>Has the Basin State sold water in the previous year? If so, did they notify the approval or registration authority of the price agreed for the trade?</p>	<p>At this point in time, there are no interstate water trading mechanisms established between the ACT and NSW and no trades or seller prices to report.</p>

## E. Northern Basin Review

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
<b>Reviews of the Plan</b>		
<p>E1 Provide advice and assessments of the MDBA's studies for, and review of, the work underpinning the SDLs in the Northern Basin.</p> <p><i>Applicable to BPIA 13.1</i></p>	<p>The MDBA will undertake the review of the work underpinning SDLs for the Northern Basin, in collaboration with New South Wales and Queensland, who will participate in the review and advise on associated studies, processes and final recommendations.</p> <p>Relevant States should provide evidence of their involvement in the review, including their participation in relevant advisory groups.</p>	N/A

## F. SDL Adjustment & Constraints Management

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
<b>Constraints Management Strategy</b>		
<b>F1</b> Review and provide advice on measures recommended in the Constraints Management Strategy.  <i>Applicable to NPA 7 and BPIA 14.1</i>	<p>The Basin States will review the recommendations of the Constraints Management Strategy having regard to benefits and costs, available funding, third party impacts and community views.</p> <p>Basin States will advise the MDBA of their proposed responses to the relevant Constraints Management Strategy recommendations.</p>	<p>The ACT is not directly involved in the Constraints Management Strategy. There are no projects proposed for the ACT nor does the Strategy have any application to the ACT.</p>
<b>F2:</b> Develop constraint management proposals.  <i>Applicable to NPA 7 and BPIA 14.2</i>	<p>Basin States may develop proposals to address constraints, having regard to the Constraints Management Strategy</p>	<p>N/A to the ACT</p>
<b>Preparation of proposed measures for SDL adjustment</b>		
<b>F3</b> Prepare and assess proposals for supply measures.  <i>Applicable to BPIA 15.1</i>	<p>Proponents will prepare proposals in accordance with assessment guideline and informed by the method for calculation of supply contribution. SDLAAC and BOC will assess the proposals.</p>	<p>The ACT is not involved in the preparation of any SDL supply measures due to the location and nature of the ACT.</p>
<b>F4</b> Prepare and assess proposals for efficiency measures  <i>Applicable to BPIA 15.2</i>	<p>Basin States may develop and implement proposals for efficiency measures for inclusion in the BOC package of measures prior to 30 June 2016. Basin States may also develop and implement proposals for additional efficiency measures after 30 June 2016.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<b>Reallocation of reduction requests</b>		
<b>F5</b> Request MDBA to propose re-allocation of shared reduction amount.  <i>Applicable to BPIA 16.1</i>	<p>Basin States can request the MDBA to propose a re-allocation of the shared reduction amount within affected SDL resource units in that Basin State.</p>	<p>The ACT did not seek a re-allocation of the shared reduction amount.</p>

## G. Critical Human Water Needs

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
<b><i>Risk management approach for inter-annual planning for critical human water needs arrangements</i></b>		
<b>G1</b> Consider the water available for critical human water needs before allocating water to other uses.  <i>Applicable to BPIA 27.1</i>	<p>The MDBA will provide New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia with Water Resource Assessments, from which the States make decisions about allocations. Assessments will be provided at least monthly, and more frequently if conditions warrant.</p>	N/A to the ACT
<b>G2</b> Make decisions on allocations.  <i>Applicable to BPIA 27.2</i>	<p>During periods of Tier 3 water sharing arrangements, the MDBA will provide the Ministerial Council with Water Resource Assessments, from which New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia make decisions about allocations when determining if water can be made available for uses other than critical human water. Assessments will be provided at least monthly, and more frequently if conditions warrant.</p> <p>A Basin State must have regard to advice from the Authority regarding the volume of water to be made available to it in a particular year, when making decisions about whether water is made available for uses other than meeting critical human water needs (s11.08(3)).</p>	N/A to the ACT
<b><i>Commencement and cessation of Tier 3 water sharing arrangements</i></b>		
<b>G3</b> Determine whether the trigger is reached and Tier 3 applies.  <i>Applicable to BPIA 28.1</i>	<p>The MDBA, through the preparation of the Water Resource Assessment will determine if the appropriate conditions apply. If New South Wales, Victoria or South Australia considers the triggers have been reached, its BOC member should advise the Executive Director, River Management Division, MDBA. The Guideline for triggers and processes for changing water sharing Tiers provides more information on how the MDBA will communicate a change in water sharing arrangements to the Basin States, CEWH and the Department.</p> <p>Please indicate if a trigger was reached and what action was taken to implement water sharing arrangements.</p>	N/A to the ACT

## H. Water Resource Plans

Reporting Matter	Supporting evidence to be provided by Basin States	Response (milestone achievement/compliance status)
<b>Reporting requirements</b>		
<b>H1</b> Develop water quality management plans as part of their water resource plans that identify measures to achieve objectives.  <i>Applicable to BPIA 22.1</i>	Please provide a statement of progress where water quality management plans have not yet been developed.  The Handbook for Practitioners for Chapter 10, Water Resource Plan Requirements provides guidance regarding the development and accreditation of water resource plans.	The ACT has provided a draft water quality and salinity management plan under the draft water resource plan (May 2016). The ACT's Interim WRP is to be extended to 30 June 2019. A revised water quality and salinity management plan will be provided in a new draft of the water resource plan.
<b>Develop of water resource plans for accreditation</b>		
<b>H2</b> Develop water resource plans for accreditation  <i>Applicable to BPIA 24.1</i>	Please provide a statement of progress where water resource plans have not yet been developed.	The Draft ACT Water Resource Plan was released publicly for community consultation in June/July 2016. Significant comment was provided by the MDBA on the draft plan and revisions are currently being incorporated.  Following the in-principle agreement to establish interstate water trade between NSW and ACT at the June 2017 Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council meeting the ACT will now submit its WRP in the first half of 2019 so that it can be coordinated with NSW's WRP for the Murrumbidgee River and in order to address the development any necessary protocols to implement interstate water trading arrangements with NSW. This approach will enable the alignment of the ACT WRP with the NSW Murrumbidgee WRP enabling both jurisdictions to progress interstate trade and any other cross-border issues in parallel.
<b>Development of an integrated hydrologic model across the Basin</b>		
<b>H3</b> Adopt eWater source  <i>Applicable to BPIA 25.1</i>	Please provide a statement of progress where eWater source has not yet been adopted.  The MDBA standard for water resource plan accreditation is eWater Source for water resource planning and operations, having regard to the modelling practices of Basin States and the nature of water resource plan areas and operational readiness of the model as it relates to a water resource plan area.	To assist to determine and to manage flows and water quality throughout the Territory, and to be consistent with NSW and the Basin as a whole, the ACT Source model is being developed and will be finalised in late 2017. However, formal adoption of the ACT Source model is subject to its ability to accurately model the ACT water resources. In the interim the ACT's current model of water use is considered suitable for meeting Basin Plan requirements.

# Statement of reasons why watering not undertaken in accordance with Basin Environmental Watering Priorities (BAEWP) for 2016-17 (Refer Matter 10 – Indicator 10.3 and BP IA Task 20.2)

Section 8.44 of the Basin Plan (2012) requires that: If a person undertakes environmental watering other than in accordance with the Basin annual environmental watering priorities accessible on MDBA's website, that a person must give to the Authority a statement of reasons why environmental watering has not been undertaken in accordance with the Basin annual environmental watering priorities (8.44(1)). The person must give the statement to the Authority as soon as practicable, but in any event within four months after the end of the water accounting period in which the environmental watering was undertaken (8.44(2)). The Authority may publish on its website the statement of reasons given.

	Basin annual environmental watering (BAEWP) priorities for 2016–17	Jurisdictions to consider reporting	Please tick (x), where BAEWP not followed	Statement of reasons why BAEP not followed
<i>River flows and connectivity</i>				
1	Overarching: to provide longitudinal connectivity and variable flow patterns for water quality and ecological benefit — particularly for native fish.	NSW, Vic, Qld, SA, ACT, CEWH, TLM		N/A
2	Maintain waterholes in the Lower Balonne Floodplain to provide critical refuge for water-dependent species.	Qld, NSW, CEWH		N/A
3	Protect aquatic habitat conditions in the Coorong and support native fish movement by optimising flows into the Coorong and through the Murray Mouth. <b>November 2016 addendum:</b> Protect aquatic habitat conditions in the Coorong and support native fish movement by optimising flows into the Coorong and through the Murray Mouth. In particular, promote <i>Ruppia</i> recruitment by elevating water levels in the Coorong from October to December by building on the unregulated flows with environmental	SA, CEWH, TLM		N/A

	Basin annual environmental watering (BAEWP) priorities for 2016–17	Jurisdictions to consider reporting	Please tick (x), where BAEWP not followed	Statement of reasons why BAEP not followed
	water.			
<b>Native vegetation</b>				
4	Overarching: to water discrete locations that include threatened vegetation or support other threatened species and communities, including vegetation that is critical waterbird foraging or breeding habitat.	NSW, Vic, Qld, SA, ACT, CEWH, TLM		N/A
5	Improve the condition of wetland vegetation communities in the mid-Murrumbidgee wetlands that provide critical habitat for threatened species and communities.	NSW, CEWH		N/A
6	Improve the health and complexity of waterbird rookery habitat in the northern Narran Lakes system.	NSW, QLD CEWH		N/A
7	<b>November 2016 addendum:</b> Prevent further critical deterioration of Moira grass in Barmah–Millewa Forest, subject to resolving natural resource management issues.	NSW, Vic, CEWH, TLM		N/A
8	<b>November 2016 addendum:</b> Maintain inundation of floodplain areas for sufficient duration to: freshen groundwater; reduce soil salinity; improve health of mature trees; and promote recruitment of long-lived floodplain vegetation, including seed set and germination.	NSW, Vic, Qld, SA, ACT, CEWH, TLM		N/A
<b>Waterbirds</b>				



	Basin annual environmental watering (BAEWP) priorities for 2016–17	Jurisdictions to consider reporting	Please tick (x), where BAEWP not followed	Statement of reasons why BAEP not followed
9	Overarching: to prevent further decline in habitat that supports waterbird breeding across the basin and thereby to help stabilise waterbird populations, albeit at lower levels than are sought over the long term.	NSW, Vic, ACT, SA, Qld, CEWH, TLM		N/A
10	<b>November 2016 addendum:</b> Capitalise on opportunities to support waterbird breeding. Sites in the Lachlan, Macquarie and Murray catchments now show potential for successful waterbird breeding in the coming months. At these sites, environmental water should be used to sustain the duration and depth of inundation so that the waterbirds can reproduce successfully.	NSW, Vic, ACT, SA, Qld, CEWH, TLM		N/A
<b>Native fish</b>				
11	Overarching: to protect drought refuge habitats, to maintain in-stream habitats, and to ensure existing populations of threatened species remain viable.	NSW, Vic, ACT, SA, Qld, CEWH, TLM		N/A
12	Contribute to the long-term recovery of silver perch by improving existing populations and enhancing conditions for recruitment and dispersal to and from suitable habitat.	NSW, Vic, ACT, SA, Qld, CEWH, TLM		N/A
13	Support viable populations of threatened native fish by protecting drought refuges and	NSW, Vic, ACT, SA, Qld, CEWH, TLM		N/A

	Basin annual environmental watering (BAEWP) priorities for 2016–17	Jurisdictions to consider reporting	Please tick (x), where BAEWP not followed	Statement of reasons why BAEP not followed
	maintaining in-stream habitats and essential functions.			
14	Maximise opportunities for range expansion and the establishment of new populations of silver perch and other threatened fish, as conditions allow.	NSW, Vic, ACT, SA, Qld, CEWH, TLM		N/A
15	<b>November 2016 addendum:</b> Contribute to the long-term recovery of threatened fish species, including silver perch, through range expansion and establishment of new populations. Environmental water can benefit silver perch recruitment by dampening sharp and extended drops in River Murray levels downstream of Yarrawonga during late spring and summer. Provision of water for small in-channel rises in Victorian tributaries and the Murray in summer and autumn will support dispersal of young silver perch.	NSW, Vic, ACT, SA, Qld, CEWH, TLM		N/A

To: Ms Dianne Mead  
Chair, MEWG  
Director, Basin Plan Evaluation and Coordination  
Murray-Darling Basin Authority

From: Ben Ponton  
Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate  
Australian Capital Territory

**Australian Capital Territory annual reporting for 2016-17**

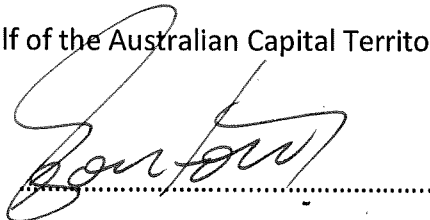
The ACT's 2016-17 Basin Plan annual report combines reporting requirements for the Implementation Agreement Statement of Assurance with additions to satisfy the Basin Plan Schedule 12 and the National Partnership Agreement to enable the MDBA to complete a 5-year reporting requirement.

I certify that to best of my knowledge, for the 2016-17 water accounting period the information provided in the self-assessment attached to this statement accurately reflects the extent to which Australian Capital Territory is compliant with the its obligations under the Basin Plan 2012.

The ACT has met obligations under the requirements of the 2012 Basin Plan and has been self assessed as being compliant. No non-compliance or partial compliance has been detected.

Ben Ponton on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory.

Ben Ponton

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Ponton', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

11/19 / 2017