



Niall Blair

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Regional Water
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MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW LEGISLATION TO SHAKE UP NSW WATER COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Today marks a major milestone in the reform of management of water in NSW, with the passing of the *Natural Resources Access Regulator Bill 2017*.

The new legislation establishes an independent Natural Resources Access Regulator to oversee water compliance and enforcement across the State.

Minister for Regional Water, Niall Blair said the NSW Government responded quickly to the serious allegations aired on ABC Four Corners and immediately commissioned a report from eminent water expert Mr Ken Matthews AO.

“Ken Matthews’ interim report recommended a suite of reforms to improve the administration of water compliance and enforcement in NSW, and the passing of today’s Bill delivers on a major component of those recommendations,” Mr Blair said.

“Our timely and transparent response to these issues is a first step towards a more robust management framework for all water users into the future.

“It’s been a confronting period for water administration in this State but we have wasted no time in making sure we address every recommendation.

“This legislation demonstrates our commitment to once again become national leaders in water management and regulation so that everyone in NSW is confident in how our precious natural resources are used and accounted for.”

In addition to the *Natural Resources Access Regulator Bill*, the NSW Government has already responded to many of Mr Matthews’ recommendations.

The new Crown Lands and Water Division has been created within the Department of Industry and the Secretary has taken steps to ensure personnel have the requisite knowledge and capabilities to make the new regulator a success.

Early next year, the NSW Government will consult broadly with the public to implement other changes including a best-practice water measurement framework focusing on high risk areas and large water users.

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