INCIDENT RESPONSE MANAGEMENT PLAN

MARCH 2019

HUNTER WATER

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A copy if this plan will be made publicly available on the Hunter Water website:

http://www.hunterwater.com.au/Water-and-Sewer/Incident-Response-Management/

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This Plan summarises the rationale and approach undertaken by Hunter Water Corporation (HWC) to manage any incidents involving its assets and / or operations in order to minimise impact to the community and the environment.

1.2 Legislative Requirements

The *Protection of the Environment Legislation Amendment Act 2011* (POELA Act) came into effect on 16 November 2011. The Act seeks to improve the way pollution incidents are reported and managed. It requires holders of an Environment Protection Licence (EPL) to prepare, implement and test Pollution Incident Response Management Plans (PIRMPs) for each of their licensed activities.

The specific requirements for PIRMPs are set out in Part 5.7A of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) and the Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2009 (POEO (General) Regulation). In summary, the legislation requires the following:

- Prepare a pollution incident response management plan for each licenced premises.

- The plan must include all information detailed in section 153C of the POEO Act and be in the form required by the POEO General Regulation (cl.98B).

- The plan must be kept at the premises to which the EPL relates.

- The plan must be tested by the licensee at least every 12 months and after a pollution incident, in accordance with the POEO (General) Regulation.

- If a pollution incident occurs in the course of an activity so that material harm to the environment is caused or threatened, the person carrying on the activity must immediately implement any pollution incident response management plan in relation to the activity.

In accordance with the Act, Hunter Water has prepared 17 EPL specific PIRMPs detailing the procedures to be followed in the event of pollution incidents in each area of operation. PIRMPs have been produced for the following wastewater or water systems highlighted in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Waste Water Treatment Works and Water Treatment Plants Owned by Hunter Water and their associated Environmental Protection Licence numbers.

Waste Water Treatment Works	Licence Number
Branxton WWTW	1680
Clarence Town WWTW	13250
Dungog WTP	2863
Dungog WWTW	4197
Karuah WWTW	10230
Kearsley WWTW	3232
Kurri Kurri WWTW	1767
Paxton WWTW	3755
Tanilba Bay WWTW	4435
Balickera Canal	5346
Raymond Terrace WWTW	217
Farley WWTW	733
Boulder Bay WWTW	358
Lake Macquarie Sewerage system	1771
Cessnock WWTW	227
Morpeth WWTW	10693
Newcastle Sewerage System	1683

This Plan summarises information from Hunter Water's numerous specific PIRMPs to meet requirements for a publicly available plan containing the information required under Section 153C (a) of the POEO Act and Clause 98C (1) (h) and (i) of the POEO Regulation.

1.3 Emergency Management Context

Hunter Water provides a lifeline community function i.e. the provision of potable water and wastewater services on which health, safety, comfort and economic activity depends upon. Hunter Water therefore plays an important role during local and regional emergencies as well as within the context of NSW state emergency management arrangements.

The four recognised elements of emergency management are as follows:

- **P**revent or mitigate hazards from impacting the community or environment

- **P**repare for emergencies

- **R**espond to emergencies

- **R**ecover from emergencies

Comprehensive emergency management concerns strategies for risk assessment, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Examples of how HWC's various business activities and controls relate to each of the key emergency management elements of Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Emergency Management elements and examples

Emergency Management Element	Examples
Prevention/ Mitigation	Asset management framework Robust design codes and practices Reliability and redundancy design and strategy Water main replacement programs Sewer Main rehabilitation programs System control interlocks Preventative maintenance strategies and activities
Preparation	Employee Training Emergency management exercises Vulnerability and risk assessment processes Networks established with emergency service organisations and NSW Government agencies Operating policies and procedures
Response	24 hour Operational Control Centre Highly trained staff Containment Emergency management plans, guidelines, procedures and networks Contingency plans – emergency generators, bypass and tankering
Recovery	Emergency management plans, guidelines procedures and networks Highly trained staff Contingency plans Post Incident debriefs Review effectiveness of PIRMP

2   INCIDENT REPORTING

2.1   Incident Reporting

For any operational faults or incidents involving Hunter Water's assets contact the 24 hour emergency fault hotline:

1300 657 000

2.1 Actions to be undertaken in the Event of an Incident

If an incident has occurred involving a Hunter Water asset and / or activity and the situation is potentially life threatening **call 000** in the first instance.

Any persons wishing to report an incident involving a Hunter Water asset and / or activity must call the 24 hour emergency fault hotline on: 1300 657 000.

Using the information detailed to the operator, a Hunter Water Control Centre Operator will:

- Assess the situation and potential consequences
- Prioritise the response based on intelligence gathered
- Contact / dispatch designated operational staff to attend the incident or advise of a course of action based on the prioritisation assessment
- Advise of any specific hazards which may be present at the location of the incident
- Hunter Water will escalate the incident accordingly and notify relevant stakeholders (detailed in Section 4) based on information it receives from its field resources
- Hunter Water adheres to NSW Emergency Management Arrangements meaning that key emergency service organisations such as NSW Police, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Rural Fire Service or the SES may be the controlling authority of a particular incident depending on the nature of the incident

3 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

3.1 Incident Management

Hunter Water owns and operates various classes of assets across its area of operations including:

- Dams
- Water treatment plants
- Wastewater treatment plants
- Water pump stations
- Wastewater pump stations
- Water supply network (reservoirs, pipelines, valves, hydrants)
- Wastewater network (pipelines, manholes)
- Trunk stormwater systems

3.2 Examples of Incident Involving Hunter Water Assets

Examples of incidents involving Hunter Water assets include:

- Damage to third party property caused by system failures
- System disruption caused by asset failure or service provider outages (e.g. power and telecommunications outages)
- Wastewater system overflow

- Chemical spill or leak
- Damage to, or inability to access Hunter Water infrastructure caused by natural hazards, proximity hazards or malevolent hazards

3.3   Types of Incidents and Emergency Management Plans

Hunter Water has various types of plans and procedures in place to effectively manage incidents:

- Health and safety policies and procedures
- Corporate emergency management plans
- Corporate business continuity plans
- Corporate communications plans
- Dam safety emergency plans
- Operational contingency plans
- Site based emergency evacuation plans
- HAZCHEM emergency plans
- Bush fire management plans
- Operating policies and procedures
- Pollution incident response procedures

3.4   Incident Categorisation and Escalation

Once an incident is reported, Hunter Water will assess the situation and prioritise the response using information it receives from its field resources and operations staff. Hunter Water will also categorise and escalate the incident as required, delivering a proportionate response ranging from dispatch of field resources for routine and minor incidents, through to whole of business response (with integrated agency support where required) for major or emergency incidents.

4   COMMUNICATION DURING INCIDENTS

4.1   Communication with Stakeholders during Incidents

Hunter Water has corporate communications plans and established points of contact with its key stakeholders and notifies relevant stakeholders of incidents as required.
Once an incident has been categorised, Hunter Water uses its systems and procedures to identify and notify all relevant stakeholders and to update identified stakeholders with any changing circumstances. Hunter Water has the following specialist resources to draw upon to assist with stakeholder communications during incidents:

- Government and media relations officers
- External communications officers

- Incident management teams
- Crisis management specialists

4.2 Communications with Customers during Incidents

Hunter Water often receives information relating to system faults e.g. sewer manhole overflows, water leaks and breaks from members of the public via the 1300 657 000 emergency fault phone line. Hunter Water utilises several methods of communication to inform customers of incidents including:

- Hunter Water Website Incident Alerts: http://www.hunterwater.com.au/
- Radio and Media broadcasts
- Door Knocking: use of field based staff (usually first to respond to incidents) to communicate with customers who are or who may be impacted by an incident
- Warning signage
- Letter box drops
- Use of specialist Customer Services staff to communicate with customers following major incidents
- Social media
- Phone calls

4.3 Communications with Relevant Authorities and Stakeholders

Hunter Water has established relationships with key emergency service organisations and NSW Government agencies (Table 3).

In the event of a pollution incident, all relevant authorities must be immediately notified unless there is substantial evidence that they are already aware of the details of the incident. The authorities may advise that they will not be required to attend, however the appropriate level of information must be provided to them so an informed decision on their response can be made. The location of the incident will determine which Council is to be contacted. Other relevant authorities and or stakeholders may also need notification (Table *4*).

Table 3: Emergency services and relevant authority contact details

Authority	Contact details
Emergency services	Telephone: 000
Fire and Rescue NSW	Emergency telephone: 000 Head office and general enquiries: (02) 9265 2999
Environment Protection Authority (EPA)	Telephone: 131 555
Ministry of Health (Hunter New England Health)	Telephone: (02) 4924 6477
WorkCover Authority	Telephone: 13 10 50
Maitland City Council	Telephone: (02) 4931 9700
Lake Macquarie City Council	Telephone: (02) 4921 0333
Dungog Shire Council	Telephone: (02) 4995 7777
Cessnock City Council	Telephone: (02) 4993 4100
Port Stephens Council	Telephone: (02) 4980 255
Newcastle City Council	Telephone: (02) 4974 2000
Singleton Council	Telephone: (02) 6578 7290

Table 4: Other authority and key stakeholder contact details

Authority	Contact details	Actions to undertake
Food Safety Authority (Department of Primary Industries)	Telephone: (Primary) 0407 078 269 Telephone: (Secondary) 0407 947 730	Contact in the event of potential harm to oyster farms (Port Stephens)
National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) (Hunter Wetlands Centre)	Telephone: (02) 4946 4100	Contact in the event of potential harm to National Parks, State Forests and State Conservation Areas
Road and Maritime Service	Roads: 13 22 13 Maritime: 13 12 56	Contact only in the event of potential harm to roads or waterways

Depending on the nature of the incident, the following authorities may also require notification of incidents:

- NSW Police
- NSW Energy and Utility Services Functional Area Coordinator (EUSFAC)
- NSW State Emergency Service (SES)
- NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)

5 HAZARDS TO HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Potential Hazards at Hunter Water Assets

There are a number of potential hazards to human health and the environment associated with Hunter Water's operations. Potential hazards include biological, chemical, explosive and toxic materials.

Hunter Water uses various chemicals to treat water and wastewater throughout its systems. Appropriate warning signage is provided at each asset where hazardous materials are stored and / or used. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for any chemical used or stored at Hunter Water assets also exist.

Each Hunter Water facility where hazardous materials are stored or utilised has site specific emergency response procedures relating to the facility and types of products used.
Specific information relating to potential hazards at any of Hunter Water's assets may be obtained by contacting Hunter Water via its online enquiry process:

https://www.hunterwater.com.au/About-Us/Contact-Us/Online-Enquiry.aspx

5.2 Situations which could cause Hazards to Human Health and the Environment

There are a number of situations and threats which could potentially increase the likelihood of hazards impacting upon human health and the environment including:

- Vandalism and theft
- Arson
- Terrorism
- Natural disasters
- Power failure
- Telecommunications outages
- Wet weather
- Prolonged dry weather
- Fire
- System or equipment failure
- Operating error
- Civil Works on infrastructure

5.3 Safeguards to prevent Hazards Impacting Human Health and the Environment

Hunter Water utilises many safeguards to protect people and assets and to minimise the likelihood of hazards impacting upon human health and / or the environment as follows:

- Employee training
- Emergency management training and evacuation drills
- Asset protection measures including; security fencing, intruder alarms, CCTV equipment, fire alarms and fire breaks
- Safety protection measures including, policies, safe work methodology, procedures and risk assessment processes
- Physical protection measures such as chemical storage bunds, field safety equipment and emergency storage facilities
- System Control alarms to notify operators when a fault in the system has occurred
- Equipment maintenance
- Asset monitoring and maintenance

6 SUMMARY

Event or Enquiry	Actions to Undertake
Life Threatening Situations	Telephone: 000
To report faults or emergencies involving Hunter Water's infrastructure e.g. pipe leaks, pipe breaks, sewer overflows, vandalism incidents, theft, unauthorised access etc.	Telephone: 1300 657 000
To receive current information relating to incidents or service disruptions	Hunter Water's website: https://www.hunterwater.com.au/ https://www.hunterwater.com.au/Water-and-Sewer/Water-Supply/Current-Water-Outages.aspx Twitter: @hunterwater or listen to local radio broadcasts
General Hunter Water enquiries	Call 1300 657 657
Enquiries relating to hazards at any Hunter Water facility	http://www.hunterwater.com.au/