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## More compliance staff than ever patrolling the State's water supplies

NSW Water Commissioner, David Harriss, today announced that the NSW Office of Water had hired 11 new staff to monitor and enforce compliance with NSW water laws to ensure sustainable supplies for all users.

"The NSW Government has strong water management legislation that makes it a crime to take water without a licence or breach licence conditions," Mr Harriss said.

"The NSW Office of Water has a dedicated Compliance Branch to monitor and enforce compliance with NSW water laws and the recent recruiting of 11 new staff means that people who do the wrong thing are more likely to get caught."

Mr Harriss said that the new staff had already started work and were located in the regional offices at Tamworth, Dubbo, Leeton and Deniliquin.

"The positioning of these new staff provides a more strategic approach to monitoring, detecting and investigating non-compliance across New South Wales."

"They will be working on a range of tasks, including auditing compliance with licence conditions and investigating reports of alleged non-compliance."

Mr Harriss said that while the vast majority of water users acted responsibly, water theft was a serious issue because it reduces the value of entitlements of other legitimate water users, can do irreversible damage to the environment, impacts upon the production of the State's food and other vital industries, as well as potentially threatening town water supplies.

"Modern technology enables the NSW Office of Water to effectively patrol such a large area by using satellite imagery, real-time water meter data, mobile operating systems and risk-based categorisation of water sources."

"The new officers will work closely with other NSW Government departments, local councils, irrigation corporations and of course the public, who can make confidential reports of alleged non-compliance to the Office of Water via their 1800 phone line or email address."

"These new staff have already been out in the field in recent weeks - visiting 41 properties, resulting in several infringements being identified."

"The message is clear to the minority of people who do the wrong thing, the chances of getting caught are real and the penalty far outweighs any benefit that might be achieved," Mr Harriss said.

If you suspect someone in your community of taking water illegally, interfering with a waterway or aquifer, or breaching their licence conditions, make a confidential report to the NSW Office of Water via phone: **1800 633 362** or email:

[watercompliance@water.nsw.gov.au](mailto:watercompliance@water.nsw.gov.au)

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