Queensland

# Water Plan (Gold Coast) 2026

## Subordinate Legislation 2026 No. 165

made under the

*Water Act 2000*

## Contents


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| **Part 1** | **Preliminary** | |
| 1 | Short title | 4 |
| 2 | Purposes of plan | 4 |
| 3 | Definitions | 4 |
| 4 | Meaning of surface water | 5 |
| **Part 2** | **Plan area, water to which plan applies and other matters** | |
| 5 | Water to which plan applies—Act, s 43 | 5 |
| 6 | Plan area | 5 |
| 7 | Subcatchments | 5 |
| 8 | Water supply scheme | 5 |
| 9 | Water management area—Act, sch 4 | 6 |
| 10 | Underground water management areas | 6 |
| 11 | Trading zones—Act, s 43 | 6 |
| 12 | Nodes | 6 |
| 13 | Information about areas | 7 |
| **Part 3** | **Water plan outcomes** | |
| 14 | Purpose of part | 7 |
| 15 | General water plan outcome | 7 |
| 16 | Water plan outcomes—economic | 8 |
| 17 | Water plan outcomes—social | 9 |
| 18 | Water plan outcomes—cultural | 9 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 19 | Water plan outcomes—environmental | 9 |
| **Part 4** | **Objectives and performance indicators** | |
| 20 | Environmental flow objectives and performance indicators—Act, s 43 | 11 |
| 21 | Water allocation security objectives and performance indicators for surface water—Act, s 43 | 11 |
| 22 | Calculation of performance indicators | 12 |
| **Part 5** | **Strategies for achieving water plan outcomes for surface water** | |
| 23 | Definition for part | 13 |
| 24 | Decisions must be consistent with particular objectives | 13 |
| 25 | Assessing consistency with particular objectives | 13 |
| **Part 6** | **Limitations on taking or interfering with water** | |
| 26 | Limitations on taking or interfering with underground water in underground water management area—Act, s 101 | 14 |
| **Part 7** | **Unallocated water** | |
| 27 | Unallocated water reserved under this plan—Act, s 43 | 15 |
| 28 | Purpose for which unallocated water held as reserve may be granted—Act, s 43 | 16 |
| 29 | Processes for releasing unallocated water—Act, s 43 | 16 |
| **Part 8** | **Water licences** | |
| **Division 1** | **Applications for water licences that must not be accepted** | |
| 30 | Chief executive must not accept particular applications—Act, s 43 | 16 |
| 31 | Particular applications to interfere with flow of surface water other than by diversion | 17 |
| **Division 2** | **Applications inconsistent with this plan** | |
| 32 | Particular applications for dealings inconsistent with this plan | 17 |
| **Division 3** | **Granting particular water licences** | |
| 33 | Water licences stated in water entitlement notice—Act, s 116 | 18 |
| **Division 4** | **Applications for seasonal water assignments** | |
| 34 | Deciding applications for seasonal water assignments—Act, s 43 | 19 |
| **Division 5** | **Content and conditions of water licences to take surface water** | |
| 35 | Definitions for division | 19 |
| 36 | Content and conditions of water licences to take surface water | 19 |
| 37 | Purpose to be stated on water licences to take surface water | 20 |
| 38 | Nominal entitlement for new water licences to take surface water | 21 |
| 39 | Nominal entitlement for existing water licences to take surface water | 21 |
| 40 | Maximum rate for taking surface water for new water licences | 23 |



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

41 Maximum rate for taking surface water for existing water licences 23
42 Conditions for water licences amended by the chief executive . . 25
**Part 9 Water allocations**
43 Water allocation groups—Act, sch 4 . . . . . 25
44 Amending particular water allocations—Act, s 150 . . . . . 25
45 Amending other water allocations to state particular information—Act, s 150 . . . . . 26
**Part 10 Miscellaneous**
46 Water management protocol—Act, s 43 . . . . . 26
47 Amendments to plan that may be made without consultation—Act, s 43 . . . . . 27
48 Definition of position . . . . . 28
**Part 11 Repeal and transitional provisions**
**Division 1 Repeal**
49 Repeal . . . . . 28
**Division 2 Transitional provisions**
50 Definition for division . . . . . 28
51 Applications for water licences made before commencement . . 28
52 Applications for dealings with water licences made before commencement . . . . . 29
**Schedule 1 Plan area and nodes** . . . . . 30
**Schedule 2 Subcatchments** . . . . . 33
**Schedule 3 Water supply scheme** . . . . . 35
**Schedule 4 Water management area** . . . . . 37
**Schedule 5 Underground water management areas** . . . . . 39
**Schedule 6 Environmental flow objectives and performance indicators** 40
1 Mean annual flow . . . . . 40
2 Days in low flow periods . . . . . 41
3 Days in estuarine salinity periods . . . . . 42
4 Days in riparian vegetation flow periods . . . . . 43
5 Days in river-forming flow periods . . . . . 44
**Schedule 7 Water allocations that must be amended** . . . . . 46
**Schedule 8 Dictionary** . . . . . 48



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Part 1 Preliminary

## 1 Short title

This plan may be cited as the *Water Plan (Gold Coast) 2026*.

## 2 Purposes of plan

The purposes of this plan are to—

(a) define the availability of water to which this plan applies; and

(b) provide a framework for sustainably managing water to which this plan applies; and

(c) identify priorities and mechanisms for dealing with the future water requirements in the plan area; and

(d) regulate the taking of, and interference with, surface water, and the taking of underground water, to which this plan applies; and

(e) provide a framework for managing water allocations for water to which this plan applies; and

(f) provide access to water resources to support the Traditional Owners of the plan area in achieving their social and cultural aspirations; and

(g) provide a framework for reversing, to the extent practicable, the degradation of natural ecosystems caused by the taking of, or interference with, water to which this plan applies.

## 3 Definitions

The dictionary in schedule 8 defines particular words used in this plan.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

### 4 Meaning of *surface water*

***Surface water*** is water in a watercourse, lake or spring.

# Part 2 Plan area, water to which plan applies and other matters

### 5 Water to which plan applies—Act, s 43

For section 43(1)(a) of the Act, this plan applies to the following water—

(a) surface water in the plan area;

(b) underground water in each underground water management area.

### 6 Plan area

This plan applies to the area shown as the ***plan area*** on the map in schedule 1, part 1.

### 7 Subcatchments

(1) The plan area is divided into ***subcatchments***.

(2) Each subcatchment is identified, by a number, on the map in schedule 2, part 1 and is named in schedule 2, part 2.

(3) A subcatchment may be referred to in this plan by its number or by its name.

### 8 Water supply scheme

(1) The part of the plan area shown as the Nerang water supply scheme on the map in schedule 3, part 1, and described in schedule 3, part 2, is a water supply scheme for this plan.

(2) A reference in this plan to the Nerang water supply scheme is a reference to the water supply scheme mentioned in subsection (1).



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

## 9 Water management area—Act, sch 4

(1) For schedule 4 of the Act, definition *water management area*, paragraph (b), the part of the plan area shown as the Lower Nerang water management area on the map in schedule 4, part 1, and described in schedule 4, part 2, is a water management area.

(2) A reference in this plan to the Lower Nerang water management area is a reference to the water management area mentioned in subsection (1).

## 10 Underground water management areas

(1) Each part of the plan area shown as an underground water management area on the map in schedule 5 is an ***underground water management area*** for this plan.

(2) A reference in this plan to an underground water management area by name is a reference to the underground water management area given that name on the map in schedule 5.

## 11 Trading zones—Act, s 43

For section 43(1)(e)(i) of the Act, the following parts of the plan area are trading zones for water allocations for water to which this plan applies—

(a) the Nerang water supply scheme;

(b) the Lower Nerang water management area.

## 12 Nodes

(1) A ***node*** is a location in the plan area set by a model computer program.

(2) The modelled location of each node is identified, by a letter, on the map in schedule 1, part 2 and is described in schedule 1, part 3.

(3) A node may be referred to in this plan by its letter.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

### 13 Information about areas

The location and extent of each of the following is held in digital electronic form on the department's website—

(a) the plan area;

(b) a subcatchment;

(c) the Nerang water supply scheme;

(d) the Lower Nerang water management area;

(e) an underground water management area.

# Part 3 Water plan outcomes

### 14 Purpose of part

This part states, for section 43(1)(b) of the Act, the water plan outcomes for this plan.

### 15 General water plan outcome

A water plan outcome for this plan is that water to which this plan applies is to be allocated and managed in a way that—

(a) recognises the natural state of watercourses, lakes, springs and aquifers has changed because of the taking of, or interference with, water; and

(b) seeks to achieve a balance between—

(i) the economic water plan outcomes stated in section 16; and

(ii) the social water plan outcomes stated in section 17; and

(iii) the cultural water plan outcomes stated in section 18; and

(iv) the environmental water plan outcomes stated in section 19; and



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(c) improves and promotes understanding of—

(i) the requirements for underground water to support ecosystems dependent on underground water; and

(ii) the flow-related requirements of ecosystems in the plan area; and

(iii) the water required for social, spiritual, cultural and environmental uses of water by the Traditional Owners of the plan area; and

(iv) the water required to deliver social and economic benefits to communities in the plan area; and

(v) the impact of climate change on water availability.

## 16 Water plan outcomes—economic

The economic water plan outcomes for this plan are—

(a) to provide for the continued effect of water entitlements and other authorisations to take or interfere with water to which this plan applies; and

(b) to protect the share of water to which this plan applies that may be taken under a water allocation; and

(c) to maintain the availability of water for industries dependent on water resources for the plan area; and

(d) to make water available to support growth in industries dependent on the water resources for the plan area, including, for example—

(i) agriculture; and

(ii) tourism; and

(e) to maintain and improve trading frameworks to support the effective and efficient operation of the market in water allocations; and

(f) to improve and support the efficient use of water.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

## 17 Water plan outcomes—social

The social water plan outcomes for this plan are—

(a) to make water available for future town water supply to towns and communities that rely on the water resources of the plan area; and

(b) to maintain and, to the extent possible, improve—

(i) the availability of water for town water supply to towns and communities that rely on the water resources of the plan area; and

(ii) the flows of water that support water-related aesthetic, community, and recreational values; and

(c) to provide water to which this plan applies for stock purposes and domestic purposes in the plan area; and

(d) to make water available to support the social values and aspirations of the Traditional Owners of the plan area.

## 18 Water plan outcomes—cultural

The cultural water plan outcomes for this plan are—

(a) to make water to which this plan applies available to support the cultural aspirations of the Traditional Owners of the plan area; and

(b) to maintain flows of water that support the water-related cultural, spiritual, social, and environmental values of the Traditional Owners of the plan area; and

(c) to maintain or provide flows of water to support sites of cultural significance in the plan area; and

(d) to maintain or provide flows of water to support species of cultural significance in the plan area.

## 19 Water plan outcomes—environmental

(1) The environmental outcomes for this plan area are—



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(a) to maintain and, to the extent possible, improve flows of water to which this plan applies that support—

(i) native plants and animals, and their freshwater habitats; and

(ii) riparian systems and their functions; and

(iii) river-forming processes; and

(iv) the health and persistence of waterholes; and

(v) riffle habitats; and

(b) to maintain and, to the extent possible, improve flows of water that support 1 part of a river system to be connected to another—

(i) throughout the watercourse network; and

(ii) within riparian zones, floodplains and associated freshwater habitats, and estuaries; and

(c) to minimise adverse environmental impacts caused by the operation of infrastructure in the plan area; and

*Examples of adverse environmental impacts—*

degradation of water quality, bank slumping, fish stranding

(d) to maintain and, to the extent possible, improve flows of water to the estuaries in the plan area to—

(i) provide freshwater flow from the plan area to the marine waters of southern Moreton Bay and The Broadwater; and

(ii) maintain brackish water estuarine habitat; and

(iii) benefit native estuarine plants and animals; and

(e) for the underground water management areas—to maintain the availability and quality of underground water to support ecosystems dependent on the underground water.

*Examples of ecosystems for paragraph (e)—*

- wetlands
- terrestrial vegetation communities



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

- continually flowing streams
- ecosystems of which springs form a part

(2) In this section—

***waterhole*** means a part of a watercourse that contains water after the watercourse ceases to flow, other than a part of a watercourse that is within the storage area of a dam on the watercourse.

# Part 4 Objectives and performance indicators

## 20 Environmental flow objectives and performance indicators—Act, s 43

(1) For section 43(1)(d) of the Act, the environmental flow objectives for surface water to which this plan applies are stated in schedule 6.

(2) The performance indicators for the environmental flow objectives for surface water are stated in schedule 6.

## 21 Water allocation security objectives and performance indicators for surface water—Act, s 43

(1) For section 43(1)(e)(ii) of the Act, the water allocation security objectives for surface water to which this plan applies are that—

(a) for supplemented water—

(i) the performance ratio for each high priority group is not less than 100% of what the performance ratio for the group is on the commencement; and

(ii) the performance ratio for each high A priority group is not less than 100% of what the performance ratio for the group is on the commencement; and



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(b) for unsupplemented water—the performance ratio, for the group of water allocations that state they are in the 'class 5A' water allocation group, is not less than 90% of what the performance ratio for the group is on the commencement.

(2) The performance indicators for the water allocation security objectives mentioned in subsection (1) are the performance ratios for each group of water allocations mentioned in subsection (1)(a) and (b).

(3) In this section—

***average annual volume***, of surface water, means the volume of the water expressed as a long-term modelled average over the simulation period for the water.

***high A priority group*** means all water allocations to take surface water from the Nerang water supply scheme that state they are in the 'high A priority group'.

***high priority group*** means all water allocations to take surface water from the Nerang water supply scheme that state they are in the 'high priority group'.

***performance ratio***, for a group of water allocations, means the average annual volume of water that may be taken by holders of all water allocations in the group in the simulation period expressed as a percentage of the total of the nominal volume for all water allocations in the group.

## 22 Calculation of performance indicators

A performance indicator mentioned in section 20 or 21 must be calculated on the assumption that unallocated water reserved under this plan is taken.

*Note—*

See section 27 for unallocated water reserved under this plan.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Part 5 Strategies for achieving water plan outcomes for surface water

## 23 Definition for part

In this part—

***decision*** means a decision made by the chief executive under chapter 2 of the Act about—

(a) a water allocation, or resource operations licence, for water to which this plan applies; or

(b) an operations manual required under a resource operations licence mentioned in paragraph (a).

## 24 Decisions must be consistent with particular objectives

A decision must be consistent with—

(a) the environmental flow objectives stated in section 20(1); and

(b) the water allocation security objectives stated in section 21(1).

## 25 Assessing consistency with particular objectives

(1) To assess the consistency of a decision with the environmental flow objectives and the water allocation security objectives, the model computer program's simulation for the simulation period must be used.

(2) If it is not practicable to use the model computer program's simulation, another kind of assessment approved by the chief executive may be used.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Part 6 Limitations on taking or interfering with water

## 26 Limitations on taking or interfering with underground water in underground water management area—Act, s 101

(1) For section 101(1) of the Act, a person must not, under section 101(1)(c) of the Act, take or interfere with underground water in an underground water management area unless the water is taken or interfered with for—

(a) stock purposes or domestic purposes; or

(b) agricultural purposes if the area to be irrigated is less than 10 hectares; or

(c) town water supply purposes in the plan area; or

(d) a coordinated project; or

(e) if the underground water is taken or interfered with using existing underground water works—a lawful purpose for which underground water was, immediately before the commencement, being taken or interfered with using the works.

(2) In this section—

***coordinated project*** see the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*, schedule 2.

***existing underground water works***—

(a) means works that—

(i) are used, or are capable of being used, to take or interfere with underground water to which this plan applies; and

(ii) were in existence before the commencement; and

(iii) are not altered after the commencement; and



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(iv) have not been constructed or altered in contravention of the Tamborine Mountain and Springbrook areas moratorium notice; and

(b) includes a replacement water bore that replaces works mentioned in paragraph (a).

***replacement water bore*** see the *Water Regulation 2016*, schedule 19.

***Tamborine Mountain and Springbrook areas moratorium notice*** means the moratorium notice dated 6 March 2020, called 'Moratorium notice Water Act 2000 section 30 Tamborine Mountain and Springbrook areas'.

# Part 7 Unallocated water

## 27 Unallocated water reserved under this plan—Act, s 43

(1) For section 43(1)(c) of the Act, the total volume of unallocated water reserved under this plan is 18,800ML.

(2) For subsection (1)—

(a) 18,250ML of unallocated water reserved under this plan may be held as a strategic reserve for the Nerang water supply scheme; and

(b) 550ML of unallocated water reserved under this plan may be held as either—

(i) a general reserve; or

(ii) a strategic reserve for another part of the plan area.

(3) A volume of surface water held as a reserve under subsection (2) must not be exceeded by the combined average annual volume of surface water for all water entitlements granted in accordance with unallocated water release processes related to the reserve.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

### 28 Purpose for which unallocated water held as reserve may be granted—Act, s 43

For section 43(2)(e) of the Act—

(a) unallocated water held as a general reserve may be granted for any purpose; and

(b) unallocated water held as a strategic reserve may be granted to the bulk water supply authority for a town water supply purpose.

### 29 Processes for releasing unallocated water—Act, s 43

(1) For section 43(2)(f) of the Act, this section states the process for releasing unallocated water held as a strategic reserve under this plan.

(2) The processes for releasing unallocated water stated in the water management protocol for this plan apply for releasing the unallocated water.

*Note—*

For the process for releasing unallocated water held as a general reserve, see the *Water Regulation 2016*, part 2, division 2, subdivision 2 and section 40 of the Act.

# Part 8 Water licences

## Division 1 Applications for water licences that must not be accepted

### 30 Chief executive must not accept particular applications—Act, s 43

For section 43(2)(j) of the Act, the chief executive must not accept an application for a water licence made under section 107 of the Act unless—

(a) the chief executive is permitted to accept the application under this division; or



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(b) the application is for a water licence that will state the purpose of 'relift'; or

(c) the application is for a water licence to interfere with the flow of surface water by diversion.

### 31 Particular applications to interfere with flow of surface water other than by diversion

(1) This section applies in relation to an application for a water licence to interfere with the flow of surface water to which this plan applies other than by diversion.

(2) The chief executive may accept the application if—

(a) the applicant is a local government or the bulk water supply authority; and

(b) the purpose of the proposed interference is to enable the applicant to lawfully construct or maintain infrastructure to improve security for town water supplies in the plan area.

(3) The chief executive may also accept the application if the proposed interference—

(a) has been continuous from immediately before the commencement; and

(b) is not authorised under a water licence to interfere with the flow of surface water to which this plan applies.

## Division 2 Applications inconsistent with this plan

### 32 Particular applications for dealings inconsistent with this plan

(1) The granting of an application made under section 121 of the Act for a dealing with a water licence in relation to surface water to which this plan applies is inconsistent with this plan



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

if the application is an application for a dealing mentioned in section 130(1)(a) of the Act.

*Note—*

See section 129 of the Act for the actions the chief executive must take if the granting of an application for a dealing with a water licence is inconsistent with a water plan.

(2) However, subsection (1) does not apply to any of the following applications—

(a) an application the chief executive may decide to grant under section 34;

(b) an application for a dealing with a water licence permitted under the water management protocol for this plan.

(3) Also, subsection (1) does not apply to an application made by a local government or the bulk water supply authority to increase the rate of the taking of surface water to which this plan applies for the purpose of enabling the applicant to lawfully supply town water to towns and communities dependent on the water resources for the plan area.

*Note—*

See section 130 of the Act for how an application mentioned in subsection (2) or (3) must be assessed.

## Division 3 Granting particular water licences

### 33 Water licences stated in water entitlement notice—Act, s 116

For section 116(1) of the Act, the chief executive must decide to grant a water licence to take, or interfere with the flow of, water to which this plan applies if a water entitlement notice for this plan provides for the granting of the licence.

*Note—*

See also section 116(2) of the Act for when the chief executive may grant a water licence without the need for an application to be made under section 107 of the Act.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

## Division 4 Applications for seasonal water assignments

### 34 Deciding applications for seasonal water assignments—Act, s 43

For section 43(2)(i) of the Act, the chief executive may decide to grant an application for a seasonal water assignment of a water licence if the seasonal water assignment of the licence is permitted under the water management protocol for this plan.

## Division 5 Content and conditions of water licences to take surface water

### 35 Definitions for division

In this division—

***existing water licence*** means a water licence to take surface water to which this plan applies that was in force immediately before the commencement.

***new water licence*** means a water licence to take surface water to which this plan applies that is granted after the commencement.

### 36 Content and conditions of water licences to take surface water

(1) A water licence to take surface water to which this plan applies must state—

(a) the purpose for which water may be taken under the licence, as required under section 37; and

(b) the nominal entitlement for the licence worked out under section 38 or 39; and

(c) the maximum rate at which the water may be taken under the licence worked out under section 40 or 41; and



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(d) the conditions, if any, for the licence.

(2) However—

(a) subsection (1)(b) and (c) does not apply to a licence that states a purpose of 'relift'; and

(b) subsection (1)(c) does not apply to a licence that states a purpose of 'town water supply'.

## 37 Purpose to be stated on water licences to take surface water

(1) Subject to subsection (2), the purpose for which water may be taken under a water licence to take surface water to which this plan applies, that is to be stated on the licence, must be—

(a) 'stock'; or

(b) 'domestic'; or

(c) 'town water supply'; or

(d) 'relift'; or

(e) 'any'.

(2) If the water licence is an existing water licence, the purpose for which water may be taken under the licence, that is to be stated on the licence after the commencement, must be—

(a) if, immediately before the commencement, the only purpose stated on the licence was 'stock', 'domestic supply' or 'stock and domestic supply'—either or both of the following purposes—

(i) 'stock';

(ii) 'domestic'; or

(b) if, immediately before the commencement, the only purpose stated on the licence was 'relift'—'relift'; or

(c) otherwise—'any'.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

## 38 Nominal entitlement for new water licences to take surface water

The nominal entitlement for a new water licence must be—

(a) the volume of water worked out in accordance with the unallocated water release process; and

(b) expressed in the licence in megalitres.

## 39 Nominal entitlement for existing water licences to take surface water

(1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), the nominal entitlement for an existing water licence must be—

(a) if, immediately before the commencement, the licence stated, whether as a condition or otherwise, the total volume of water that may be taken under the licence in a water year—the stated volume; or

(b) if paragraph (a) does not apply and, immediately before the commencement, the only purpose for which water may be taken under the licence was 'stock', 'domestic supply' or 'stock and domestic supply'—1ML; or

(c) if paragraphs (a) and (b) do not apply and, immediately before the commencement, the licence stated an area, in hectares, that may be irrigated by water taken under the licence—the volume of water calculated by multiplying the stated area by 5; or

(d) if paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) do not apply and the maximum rate at which surface water may be taken under the licence is worked out under section 41(2) to (5)—the volume of water calculated by multiplying the maximum rate by 30.

(2) Subsection (3) applies in relation to an existing water licence if—

(a) the nominal entitlement for the licence can not be worked out under subsection (1); or

(b) both of the following apply—



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(i) subsection (1)(a) does not apply in relation to the licence;

(ii) the chief executive is satisfied that the nominal entitlement for the licence, worked out under subsection (1)(b), (c) or (d), is not sufficient for the purpose for which water may be taken under the licence.

(3) The nominal entitlement for the existing water licence must be the volume of water decided by the chief executive, after considering the matters stated in subsection (4).

(4) For subsection (3), the matters are—

(a) if, under section 37, a purpose for which water may be taken under the existing water licence is required to be stated on the licence—the purpose; and

(b) the volume of water required for each purpose mentioned in paragraph (a); and

(c) the efficiency of the water use associated with water that may be taken under the existing water licence; and

(d) the conditions under which water may be taken under the existing water licence, including, for example, flow conditions; and

(e) the water-taking capacity, under normal operating conditions, of relevant works that relate to an activity authorised under the existing water licence; and

(f) the local availability of water.

(5) The nominal entitlement for the existing water licence must be expressed in the licence in megalitres.

(6) In this section—

***relevant works*** means works—

(a) used, or capable of being used, to take water to which this plan applies; and

(b) that were in existence immediately before the commencement.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

## 40 Maximum rate for taking surface water for new water licences

The maximum rate at which surface water may be taken under a new water licence must be—

(a) the rate worked out in accordance with the unallocated water release process stated in the water management protocol for this plan; and

(b) expressed in the licence in megalitres per day, rounded up to the nearest first decimal point.

## 41 Maximum rate for taking surface water for existing water licences

(1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), the maximum rate at which surface water may be taken under an existing water licence must be the volume of water calculated by dividing the nominal entitlement for the licence by 30 if—

(a) the purpose required for the licence under section 37(2) is ‘stock’, ‘domestic’ or ‘any’; and

(b) the nominal entitlement for the licence is worked out under section 39(1)(a), (b) or (c).

(2) If the maximum rate at which surface water may be taken under the existing water licence can not be worked out under subsection (1), the maximum rate at which surface water may be taken under the licence must be the rate decided by the chief executive after considering the matters stated in subsection (3).

(3) For subsection (2), the matters are—

(a) if the existing water licence states, whether as a condition or otherwise, a maximum rate for taking water—the stated rate; or

(b) if paragraph (a) does not apply and a development permit for works for taking water under the existing water licence states, whether as a condition or otherwise, a pump size mentioned in the *Water Regulation 2016*, schedule 7, column 1 (each a ***standard***



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

***pump size***)—the rate stated in the *Water Regulation 2016*, schedule 7, column 3 for the standard pump size; or

(c) if paragraphs (a) and (b) do not apply and a development permit for works for taking water under the existing water licence states, whether as a condition or otherwise, a pump size other than the standard pump size—the rates stated in the *Water Regulation 2016*, schedule 7, column 3 for similar pump sizes; or

(d) if paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) do not apply and the existing water licence states other conditions applying to the taking of water under the licence, including, for example, flow conditions—the other conditions; or

(e) if paragraphs (a), (b), (c), and (d) do not apply and a development permit for works for taking water under the existing water licence states, whether as a condition or otherwise, a pump size—the water-taking capacity of a pump of the stated size under normal operating conditions; or

(f) if paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) do not apply and other infrastructure is associated with the taking of water under the existing water licence—the other infrastructure; or

(g) if paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) do not apply—any other matter the chief executive considers relevant.

(4) For subsection (3)(b), (c) or (e), if there are 2 or more development permits for works for taking water under the licence, or if a development permit states 2 or more pump sizes, the chief executive must only apply subsection (3)(b), (c) or (e) to the largest pump size stated in any of the permits.

(5) The maximum rate at which water to which this plan applies may be taken under the existing licence must be expressed in the licence in megalitres per day, rounded up to the nearest first decimal point.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

### 42 Conditions for water licences amended by the chief executive

(1) This section applies if the chief executive decides to amend an existing water licence under section 133 of the Act for consistency with this plan.

(2) When making a decision about the conditions that will apply to the licence, the chief executive must have regard to the content and conditions of the licence, as in force immediately before the commencement.

# Part 9 Water allocations

### 43 Water allocation groups—Act, sch 4

For schedule 4 of the Act, definition *water allocation group*, a water allocation to take unsupplemented surface water in the Nerang water management area belongs to the class 5A water allocation group.

### 44 Amending particular water allocations—Act, s 150

(1) This section applies to a water allocation mentioned in schedule 7.

(2) For section 150(1)(a) of the Act, the water allocation must be amended to ensure—

(a) if column 2 in schedule 7 states a maximum rate of take for the water allocation—the maximum rate is the stated rate; and

(b) if column 2 in schedule 7 states a water allocation group for the water allocation—the water allocation group is the stated water allocation group.

(3) To remove any doubt, it is declared that if an existing element of the water allocation is inconsistent with an amendment required under subsection (2), the existing element must be



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

also amended or removed, but only to the extent necessary to avoid the inconsistency.

### 45 Amending other water allocations to state particular information—Act, s 150

(1) This section applies to a water allocation for unsupplemented water, other than a water allocation mentioned in schedule 7, if the water allocation does not state—

(a) the maximum rate, expressed in megalitres, for the water allocation; or

(b) the water allocation group for the water allocation.

(2) For section 150(1)(a) of the Act, the water allocation for unsupplemented water must be amended to ensure the water allocation states—

(a) if subsection (1)(a) applies—the maximum rate, expressed in megalitres, for the water allocation; or

(b) if subsection (1)(b) applies—the water allocation group for the water allocation.

(3) For subsection (2)(a), if the water allocation states a maximum rate, expressed in litres per second (the ***stated rate***), the maximum rate must be calculated by multiplying the stated rate by 0.0864.

## Part 10 Miscellaneous

### 46 Water management protocol—Act, s 43

(1) For section 43(2)(1) of the Act, a water management protocol must be prepared for the plan area.

(2) The water management protocol must state the following matters for the plan area—

(a) the volumes of unallocated water reserved for stated purposes or stated locations;



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(b) the process for releasing unallocated water held as a strategic reserve;

(c) the criteria and process for deciding applications for a seasonal water assignment;

(d) for water allocations managed under a resource operations licence—the water allocation dealing rules.

## 47 Amendments to plan that may be made without consultation—Act, s 43

For section 43(2)(m) of the Act, the following amendments may be made to this plan without public consultation—

(a) an amendment or addition of an environmental flow objective or a water allocation security objective, or a performance indicator for an objective, if the amendment or addition achieves an equivalent or improved environmental flow and water allocation security outcome;

(b) an amendment or addition of a node;

(c) an amendment or addition of a priority group mentioned in section 21;

(d) an amendment to adjust the boundaries of the following areas if more accurate information about the geographic or hydrological characteristics of the areas becomes available—

(i) the plan area;

(ii) the Nerang water supply scheme;

(iii) an underground water management area;

(iv) a subcatchment;

(e) an amendment to change the period within which a measure for achieving a stated water plan outcome is to be achieved;

(f) an amendment to remove a provision of this plan that no longer has effect.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

### 48 Definition of position

(1) In this plan, position is defined by reference to GDA2020.

(2) In this section—

***GDA2020*** means the Reference Frame under the *National Measurement (Recognized-Value Standard of Measurement of Position) Determination 2026* (Cwlth) as in force on 9 March 2026.

# Part 11 Repeal and transitional provisions

## Division 1 Repeal

### 49 Repeal

The Water Plan (Gold Coast) 2006, SL No. 321 is repealed.

## Division 2 Transitional provisions

### 50 Definition for division

In this division—

***repealed plan*** means the repealed *Water Plan (Gold Coast) 2006*.

### 51 Applications for water licences made before commencement

(1) This section applies to an application for a water licence to take or interfere with water to which the repealed plan applied if the application was made, but not decided, before the commencement.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

(2) If the chief executive would not, under section 30, be able to accept the application had it been made after the commencement, the application is of no effect and is taken not to have been made.

(3) If subsection (2) does not apply, the application must be decided under this plan.

## 52 Applications for dealings with water licences made before commencement

(1) This section applies to an application for a dealing with a water licence to take or interfere with water to which the repealed plan applied if the application was made, but not decided, before the commencement.

(2) If the granting of the application would be inconsistent with this plan had the application been made after the commencement, the application is inconsistent with this plan.

*Note—*

See section 129 of the Act for the actions the chief executive must take if granting an application for a dealing with a water licence would be inconsistent with a water plan.

(3) If subsection (2) does not apply, the application must be decided under this plan.

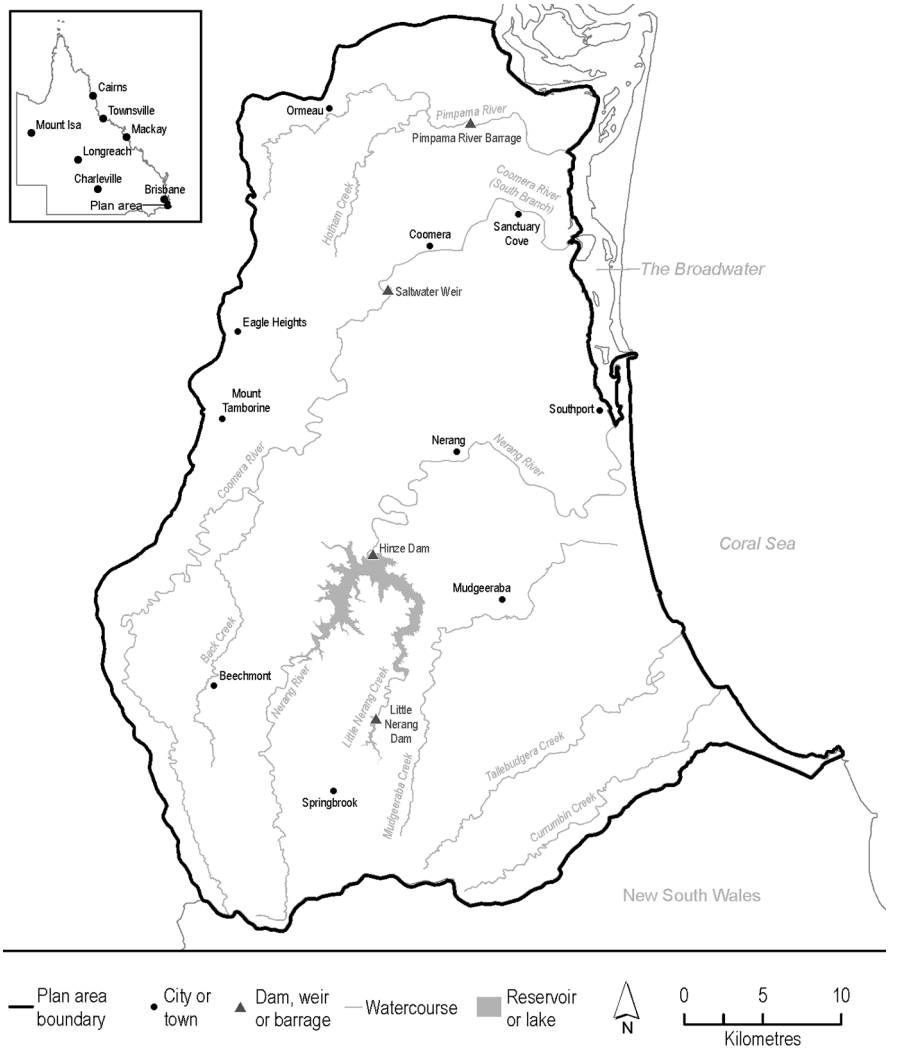


Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Schedule 1 Plan area and nodes

sections 6 and 12(2)

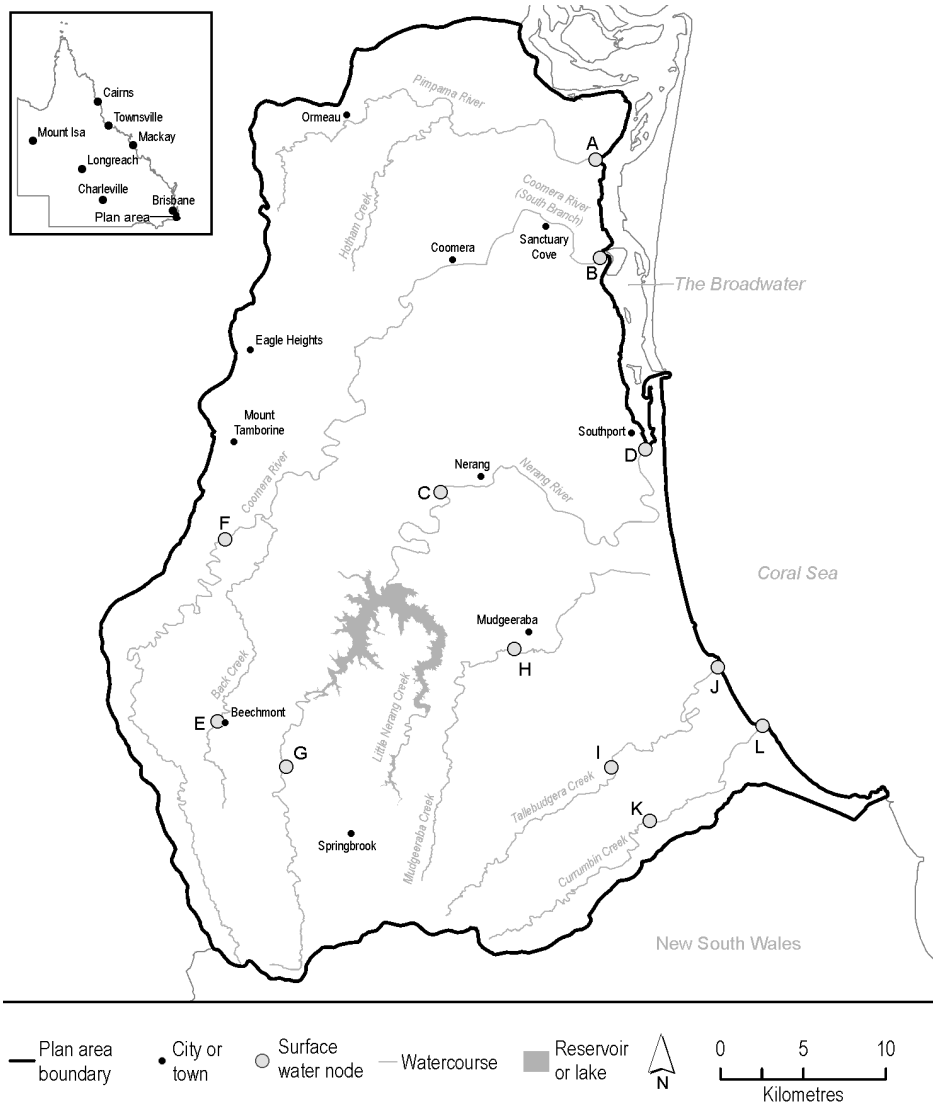
## Part 1 Plan area






Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Part 2 Nodes






Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Part 3 Locations of nodes

| Column 1 | Column 2 |
|---|---|
| **Node** | **Modelled locations** |
| A | Pimpama River at end of system (27.8194° south, 153.3941° east) |
| B | Coomera River (South Branch) at end of system (27.8727° south, 153.3965° east) |
| C | Nerang River at Glenhurst gauging station 146002B (27.9999° south, 153.3100° east) |
| D | Nerang River at end of system (27.9768° south, 153.4212° east) |
| E | Back Creek at Beechmont gauging station 146014A (28.1247° south, 153.1888° east) |
| F | Coomera River at Army Camp gauging station 146010A (28.0258° south, 153.1928° east) |
| G | Nerang River at Numinbah gauging station 146015A (28.1492° south, 153.2261° east) |
| H | Mudgeeraba Creek at Springbrook Road gauging station 146020A (28.0853° south, 153.3500° east) |
| I | Tallebudgera Creek at Tallebudgera Creek Road gauging station 146095A (28.1497° south, 153.4025° east) |
| J | Tallebudgera Creek at end of system (28.0950° south, 153.4603° east) |
| K | Currumbin Creek at Nichols Bridge gauging station 146012A (28.1787° south, 153.4237° east) |
| L | Currumbin Creek at end of system (28.1269° south, 153.4846° east) |

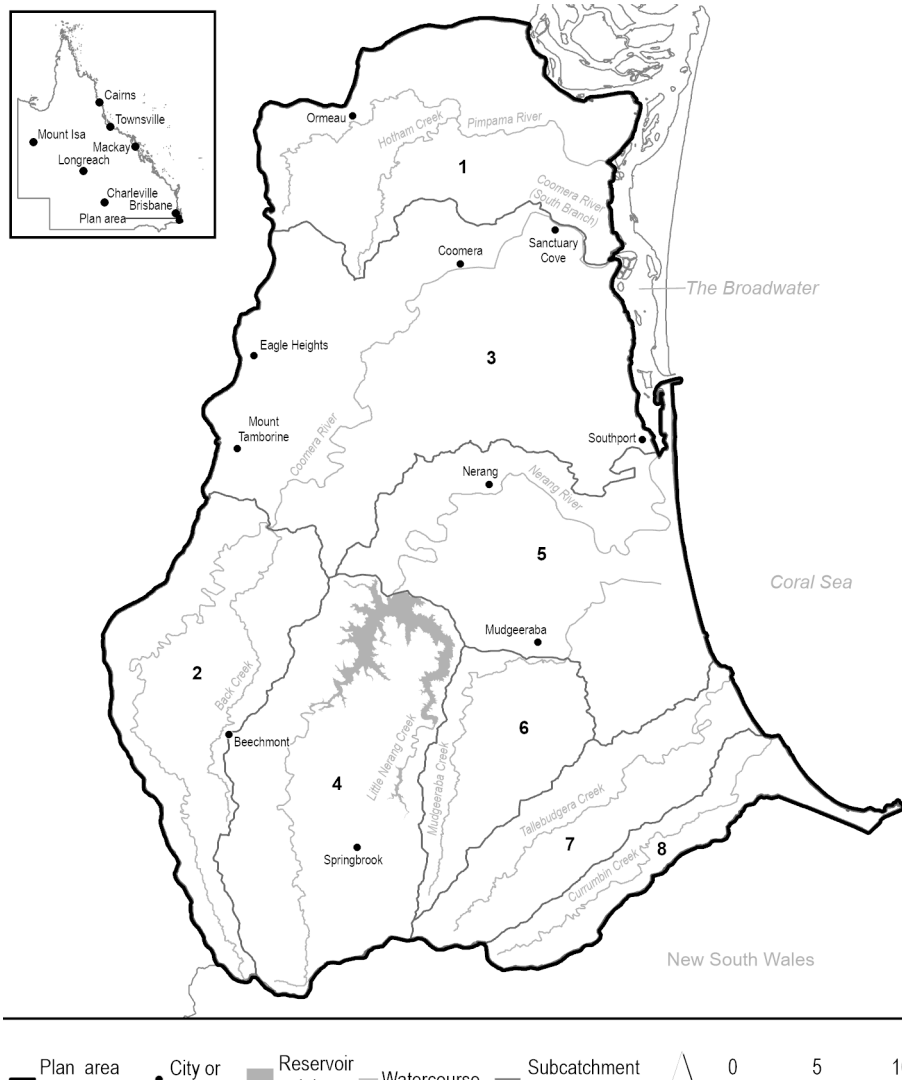


Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Schedule 2 Subcatchments

section 7(2)

## Part 1 Area of subcatchments






Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Part 2 Names of subcatchments

| Column 1 | Column 2 |
|---|---|
| **Subcatchment number** | **Subcatchment name** |
| 1 | Pimpama River |
| 2 | Upper Coomera River |
| 3 | Lower Coomera River |
| 4 | Upper Nerang River |
| 5 | Lower Nerang River |
| 6 | Mudgeeraba Creek |
| 7 | Tallebudgera Creek |
| 8 | Currumbin Creek |

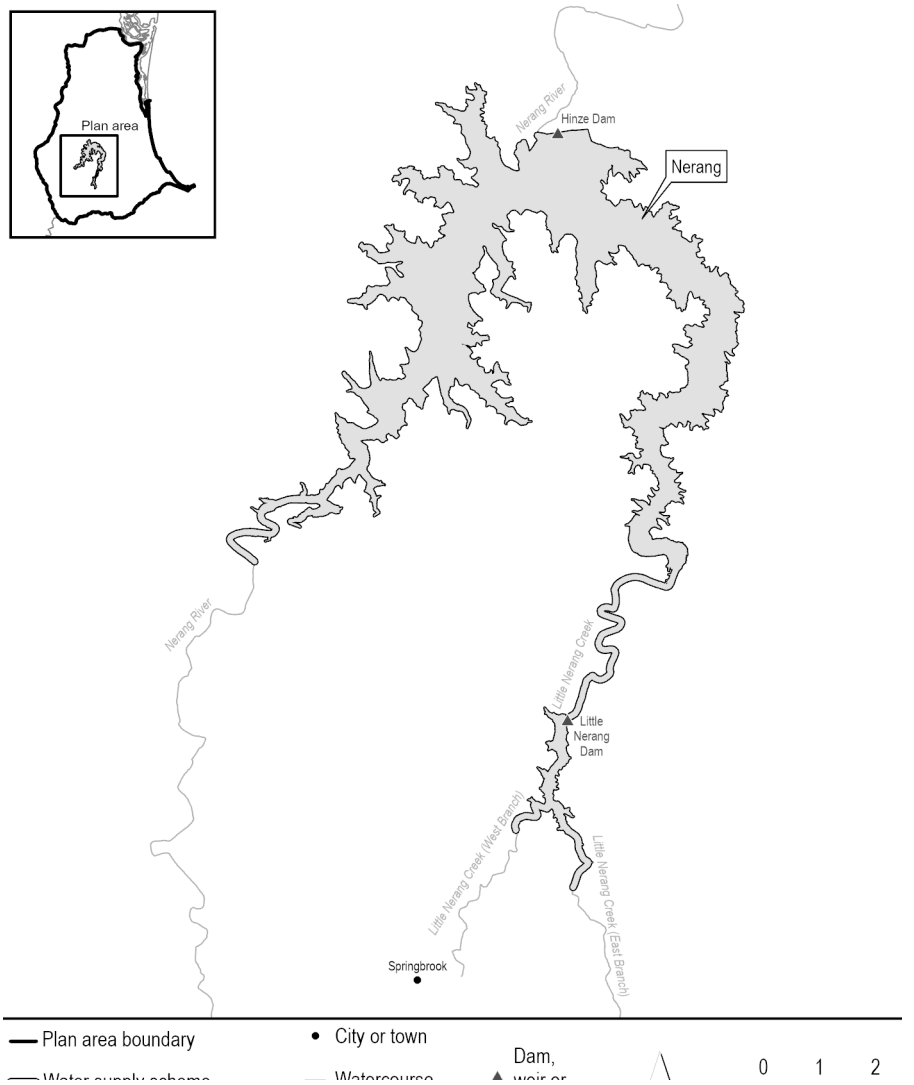


Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Schedule 3 Water supply scheme

section 8

## Part 1 Nerang water supply scheme






Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Part 2 Description of Nerang water supply scheme

| Column 1 | Column 2 |
|---|---|
| **Water supply scheme** | **Description of water supply scheme** |
| Nerang | The storage area of Hinze Dam between—<br>(a) the dam wall of Hinze Dam (28.0501° south, 153.2806° east); and<br>(b) the imaginary line that crosses the storage area on the Nerang River at 28.1184° south, 153.2354° east.<br>Little Nerang Creek, including the storage areas of both Hinze Dam and Little Nerang Dam, between—<br>(a) the creek's confluence with Nerang River (28.0529° south, 153.2839° east); and<br>(b) the creek's confluence with Little Nerang Creek (East Branch) and Little Nerang Creek (West Branch) (28.1572° south, 153.2828° east).<br>The storage area of Little Nerang Dam between—<br>(a) the confluence of Little Nerang Creek with Little Nerang Creek (East Branch) and Little Nerang Creek (West Branch) (28.1572° south, 153.2828° east); and<br>(b) each of the following—<br>(i) the imaginary line that crosses the storage area on Little Nerang Creek (East Branch) at 28.1706° south, 153.2863° east;<br>(ii) the imaginary line that crosses the storage area on Little Nerang Creek (West Branch) at 28.1614° south, 153.2772° east. |

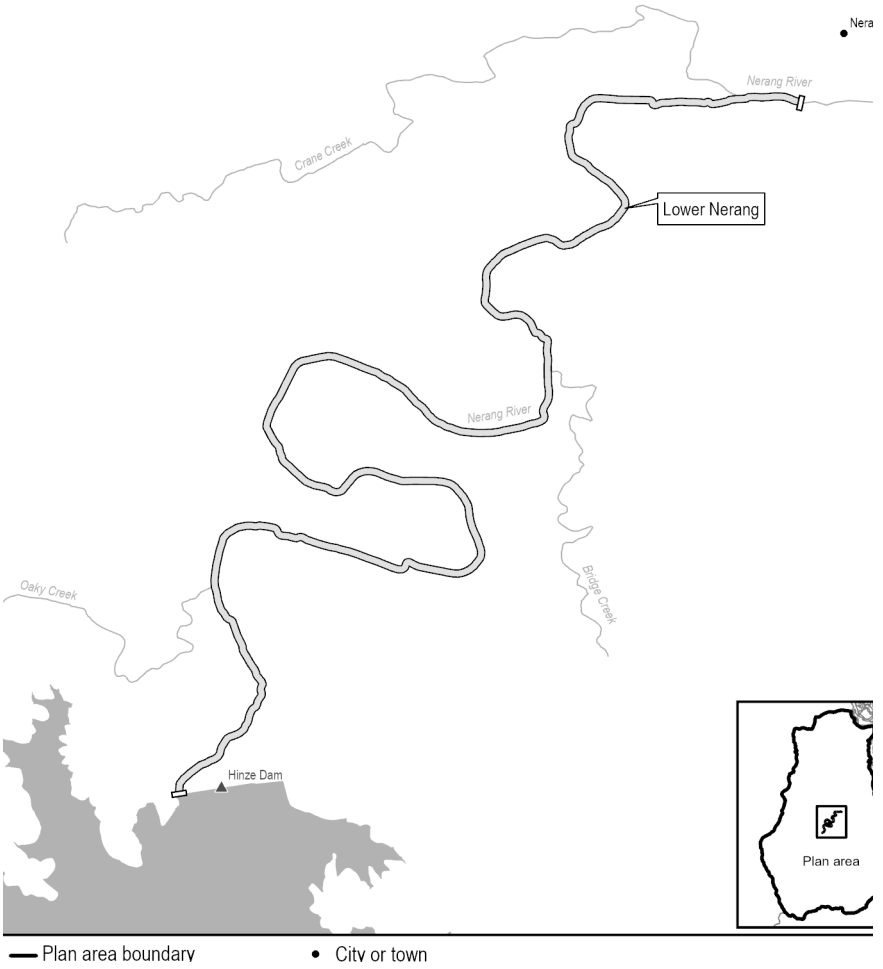


Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Schedule 4 Water management area

section 9

## Part 1 Lower Nerang water management area






Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Part 2 Description of Lower Nerang water management area

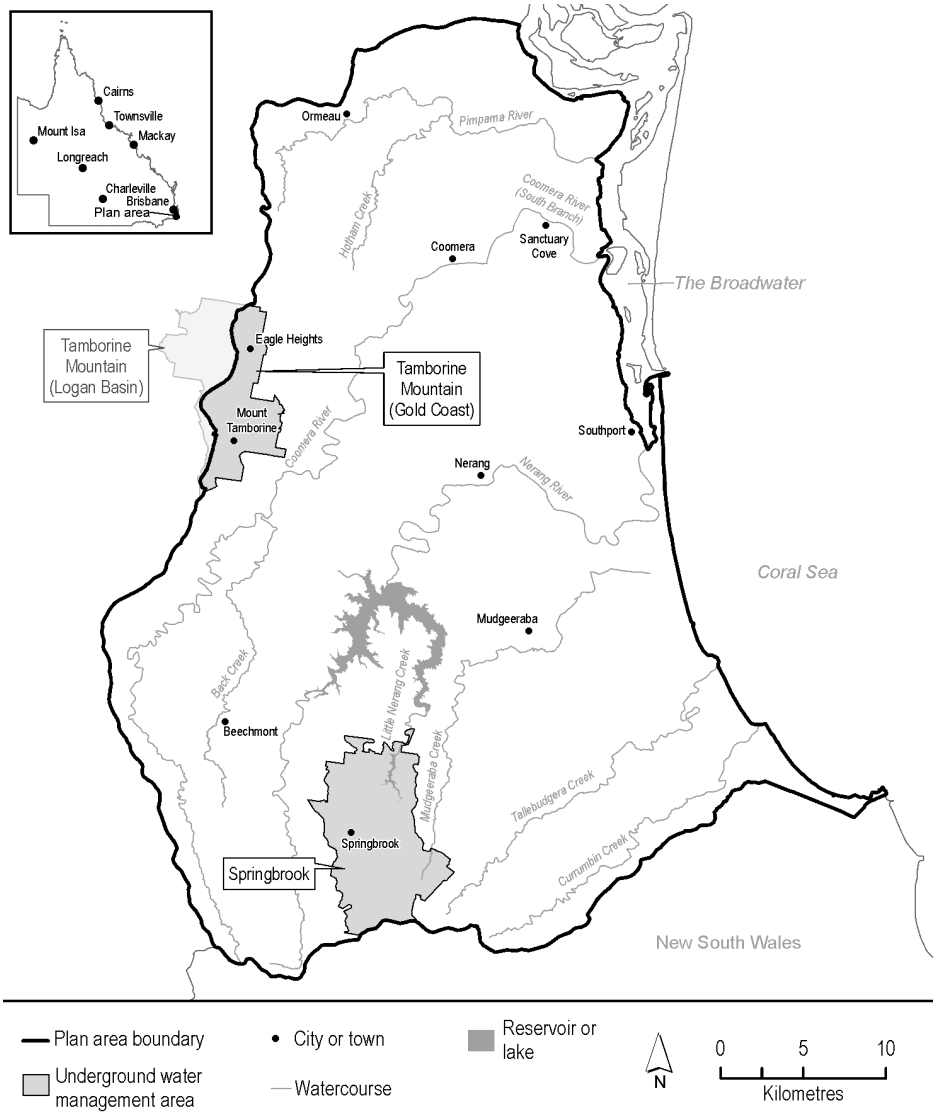
| Column 1 | Column 2 |
|---|---|
| **Water management area** | **Description of water management area** |
| Lower Nerang | The Nerang River between—<br>(a) the dam wall of Hinze Dam (28.0501° south, 153.2806° east); and<br>(b) the imaginary line that crosses the river at 27.9969° south, 153.3285° east. |



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Schedule 5 Underground water management areas

section 10






Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Schedule 6 Environmental flow objectives and performance indicators

section 20

## 1 Mean annual flow

(1) An environmental flow objective for surface water to which this plan applies is that, at each node stated in column 1 of table 1, the performance indicator mentioned in subsection (2) must be at least the percentage, of the pre-development flow, that is stated in column 2 of the table opposite the node.

(2) The performance indicator is the mean annual flow.

(3) In this section—

***mean annual flow***, at a node, means the total volume of flow of water at the node in the simulation period divided by the number of years in the simulation period.

***pre-development flow***, for a node, means the mean annual flow at the node, during the simulation period, simulated as if—

(a) there were no dams or other water infrastructure in the plan area; and

(b) no water had been taken under authorisations in the plan area.

**Table 1**

| Column 1 | Column 2 |
|---|---|
| **Node** | **Percentage** |
| A | 99 |
| B | 95.5 |
| C | 33 |
| D | 63.2 |



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

| Column 1 | Column 2 |
|---|---|
| **Node** | **Percentage** |
| E | 92 |
| F | 96 |
| G | 97 |
| H | 98 |
| I | 96.8 |
| J | 97.8 |
| K | 98 |
| L | 98 |

## 2 Days in low flow periods

(1) An environmental flow objective for surface water to which this plan applies is that, at each node stated in column 1 of table 2, the performance indicator mentioned in subsection (2) must be no more than the percentage, of the total number of days in the simulation period, that is stated in column 3 of the table opposite the node.

(2) The performance indicator is the total number of days in low flow periods.

(3) In this section—

***daily low flow volume***, for a node, means the volume that is stated in column 2 of table 2 opposite the node.

***low flow period***, for a node, means a continuous period—

(a) that is more than 30 days; and

(b) that is during the simulation period; and

(c) during which daily water flows at the node are no more than the daily low flow volume for the node.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

**Table 2**

| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
|---|---|---|
| **Node** | **Daily low flow volume (ML/day)** | **Percentage** |
| C | 4 | 12 |
| E | 2 | 43 |
| F | 4 | 22.5 |
| G | 4 | 21 |
| H | 5 | 42 |
| I | 5 | 31 |
| K | 4 | 21 |

## 3 Days in estuarine salinity periods

(1) An environmental flow objective for surface water to which this plan applies is that, at each node stated in column 1 of table 3, the performance indicator mentioned in subsection (2) must be no more than the percentage, of the total number of days in the simulation period, that is stated in column 4 of the table opposite the node.

(2) The performance indicator is the total number of days in estuarine salinity periods.

(3) In this section—

***estuarine salinity period***, for a node, means a continuous period of 90 days—

(a) that is during the simulation period; and

(b) during which daily water flows at the node are no more than the daily flow volume stated in column 3 of table 3 opposite the node.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

**Table 3**

| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 | Column 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Node** | **Period (days)** | **Daily flow volume (ML/day)** | **Percentage** |
| B | 90 | 450 | 66.1 |

## 4 Days in riparian vegetation flow periods

(1) An environmental flow objective for surface water to which this plan applies is that, at each node stated in column 1 of table 4, the performance indicator mentioned in subsection (2) must be no more than the percentage, of the total number of days in the simulation period, that is stated in column 3 of the table opposite the node.

(2) The performance indicator is the total number of days in riparian vegetation flow periods.

(3) In this section—

***riparian vegetation flow period***, for a node, is a continuous period—

(a) of more than 1 year; and

(b) that is during the simulation period; and

(c) during which daily water flows at the node are no more than the daily flow volume stated in column 2 of table 4 opposite the node.

**Table 4**

| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
|---|---|---|
| **Node** | **Daily flow volume (ML/day)** | **Percentage** |
| C | 2,799 | 83 |
| E | 216 | 75.1 |
| F | 1,322 | 58.1 |



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
|---|---|---|
| Node | Daily flow volume (ML/day) | Percentage |
| G | 3,312 | 73.8 |
| H | 331 | 33.9 |
| I | 3,741 | 79.3 |
| K | 1,375 | 64.4 |

## 5 Days in river-forming flow periods

(1) An environmental flow objective for surface water to which this plan applies is that, at each node stated in column 1 of table 5, the performance indicator mentioned in subsection (2) must be at least the percentage, of the total number of days in the simulation period, that is stated in column 3 of the table opposite the node.

(2) The performance indicator is the total number of days in river-forming flow periods.

(3) In this section—

***river-forming flow period***, for a node, is a continuous period—

(a) that is during the simulation period; and

(b) during which daily flows at the node are more than the daily flow volume stated in column 2 of table 5 opposite the node.

**Table 5**

| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
|---|---|---|
| Node | Daily flow volume (ML/day) | Percentage |
| E | 605 | 0.2 |
| F | 4,838 | 0.29 |



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
|---|---|---|
| **Node** | **Daily flow volume (ML/day)** | **Percentage** |
| G | 5,568 | 0.2 |
| H | 3,446 | 0.17 |
| I | 3,741 | 0.38 |
| K | 1,711 | 0.44 |



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Schedule 7 Water allocations that must be amended

section 44

| Column 1<br>Water allocation | Column 2<br>Detail or condition |
|---|---|
| 1 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.1ML/d |
| 2 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 2.2ML/d |
| 3 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.4ML/d |
| 4 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.3ML/d |
| 5 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.2ML/d |
| 6 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.7ML/d |
| 7 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 2.2ML/d |
| 8 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 1.2ML/d |
| 9 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.4ML/d |
| 10 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 1.1ML/d |
| 11 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 1.2ML/d |



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

| Column 1<br>Water allocation | Column 2<br>Detail or condition |
|---|---|
| 12 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.7ML/d |
| 13 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.7ML/d |
| 14 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 1.2ML/d |
| 15 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.7ML/d |
| 16 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 2.2ML/d |
| 17 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 4.4ML/d |
| 18 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.4ML/d |
| 19 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.7ML/d |
| 20 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 6.5ML/d |
| 21 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 1.2ML/d |
| 22 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 2.2ML/d |
| 26 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 2.2ML/d |
| 27 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 0.4ML/d |
| 30 on AP14181 | **Water allocation group**: class 5A<br>**Maximum rate of take**: 2.2ML/d |



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

# Schedule 8 Dictionary

section 3

***authorisation*** means—

(a) a water allocation, water licence, water permit, seasonal water assignment notice or other authority to take water given under the Act or the repealed Act, other than a water permit for stock purposes or domestic purposes; or

(b) a water licence or resource operations licence to interfere with water given under the Act or the repealed Act.

***average annual volume***, of surface water, means the volume of the water expressed as a long-term modelled average over the simulation period for the water.

***dam wall***, in relation to a dam, means works that include a barrier, whether permanent or temporary, that does, could or would impound water.

***decision***, for part 5, see section 23.

***eWater Source computer program*** means the eWater Source computer program used by the department to simulate daily stream flows, flow management, storages, releases, in-stream infrastructure, water diversions, water demands and other hydrological events in the plan area.

***existing water licence***, for part 8, division 5, see section 35.

***model computer program*** means—

(a) the eWater Source computer program; or

(b) a successor of the eWater Source computer program, by whatever name called; or

(c) the statistical analysis and reporting programs associated with a computer program mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b).



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

***new water licence***, for part 8, division 5, see section 35.

***node*** see section 12(1).

***nominal entitlement***, for a water licence, see the *Water Regulation 2016*, section 28(1).

***plan area*** see section 6.

***simulation period*** means the period from 1 January 1890 to 31 December 2017.

***storage area***, in relation to a dam, means the storage area created by the dam wall of the dam.

***subcatchments*** see section 7(1).

***supplemented water*** see the *Water Regulation 2016*, schedule 19.

***surface water*** see section 4.

***Traditional Owners***, of an area, means the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have, under Aboriginal tradition or Island custom, a connection with land and waters in the area.

***unallocated water release process*** means a process for releasing unallocated water that is—

(a) prescribed by regulation under sections 39(b) and 40(2) of the Act; or

(b) stated in this plan under section 43(2)(f) of the Act.

*Note—*

See section 29 for a process mentioned in paragraph (b).

***underground water management area*** see section 10(1).

***unsupplemented water*** means water that is not supplemented water.



Authorised by the Parliamentary Counsel

## ENDNOTES

1 Made by the Governor in Council on 26 November 2026.

2 Notified on the Queensland legislation website on 27 November 2026.

3 The administering agency is the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers.

© State of Queensland 2026