Public consultation

Public consultation – Draft ERA standards for certain prescribed ERAs

This template can be used to provide feedback on the draft environmentally relevant activity (ERA) standards (including eligibility criteria and standard conditions) for certain prescribed ERAs**[[1]](#footnote-1)**.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Reviewer[[2]](#footnote-2)** *(optional)***:** | Queensland Water Directorate (***qldwater***) integrating responses from urban sewerage service providers across the State. | |
| **ERA number** | **Reference** | **Comments** |
| ERA 63(2) | General | The “Code of environmental compliance for certain aspects of sewage treatment activities (ERA 63)” (CoC) included a column of advice next to each standard condition to assist with the interpretation of the standard condition. The draft ERA 63 Standard does not include this advice column and as a result the meaning of the standard conditions is different and in some cases unacceptable. For example, in the Code of environmental compliance, standard condition 10 is accompanied by advice that states: “overflows may occur in wet weather when the design capacity of the sewerage system is exceeded”. As the draft ERA 63 Standard does not include this advice, standard condition 10 is likely to be interpreted much more narrowly such that all wet weather overflows would be considered a breach of the condition. |
|  | Standard conditions 4, 5, 6, 7, 10 and 11 | Should be amended in accordance with the position agreed between ***qldwater*** and DEHP in the attached correspondence, namely:  o   Letter from ***qldwater*** to DEHP dated 28 June 2013, and  o   Letter from DEHP to ***qldwater*** dated 22 August 2013. |
|  | New eligibility criteria | The new eligibility criterion, “The activity (SPS) will not cause a significant residual impact on a prescribed environmental matter”, indicates that the standard conditions will be appropriate if there is no residual impact. This does not appear to make sense according to the earlier statement that, “Eligibility criteria set out the circumstances in which a standard or variation application for an environmental authority can be made”. The language of the eligibility criteria and how they will be used should be clarified. |
|  | Condition 11 | Now states that reporting to the hotline needs to occur within 3 hours of becoming aware of a (certain) sewage release. This is not an issue but is new and might require the first responders to an incident to conduct the reporting rather than the supervisors or environmental officers (especially after hours) and it might affect the quality of the initial reporting because staff will mostly still be focussed on the actual release rectification and clean up rather than on the question how it happened and what the impact is. |
|  | General | The standard lacks the advice, which was included in the CoC, which makes interpretation of some of the conditions more difficult and possibly subjective. This might make it harder for water service providers to comply. |
|  | General | The urban water sector has developed a Code of Practice (CoP) in consultation with the Department and has been seeking to replace current conditions with the Code for some time to clarify best practice for SPS and networks. The industry’s position is that the CoP will be more practical and provide greater environmental benefits than the Standard Conditions. |

Submissions and comments can be sent by email to: [ISRS.Consultation@ehp.qld.gov.au](mailto:ISRS.Consultation@ehp.qld.gov.au) or by mail to:

Industry Sector Regulation and Support  
Department of Environment and Heritage Protection  
Level 8, 400 George Street  
GPO Box 2454  
Brisbane Qld 4001

1. Sewage pump stations ERA 63(2), Cattle feedlotting ERA 2(1a), Sheep feedlotting ERA 2(2a), Pig keeping ERA 3(1), Poultry farming ERA 4(1), Paint manufacturing ERA 7(1), Soap manufacturing ERA 7(3a), Tyre retreading ERA 13(2), Extracting 5000t to 100000t of materials ERA16(2a), Screening 5000t to 100000t of materials ERA 16(3a), Screening 100000t to 1 million t of materials ERA 16(3b), Screening more than 1 million t of materials ERA 16(3c), Bottling and canning ERA 23, Meat processing excluding rendering ERA 25(1a), Meat processing including rendering ERA 25(2a), Manufacturing dairy products ERA 26, Metal foundry ERA 29(2), Surface coating ERA 38(2), Tyre recycling ERA 59, Sewage treatment ERA 63(1a)(i) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For queries about privacy matters email [privacy@ehp.qld.gov.au](mailto:privacy@ehp.qld.gov.au) or telephone: (07) 3330 6270 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)