

Melbourne Water Retail Agencies (MRWA)

Land Development Auditing Arrangements Update

In response to the latest COVID guidelines, the MRWA has implemented aligned interim auditing arrangements so that land development works can continue in line with the current coronavirus construction sector restrictions.

Below are our auditing arrangements, issued on and effective as of the week commencing 5th October 2020.

Limits to physical attendance, prioritising testing and increased remote auditing

With the overarching intention of coronavirus restrictions being to limit movement between workplaces, this has challenged our current approach to auditing due to the breadth of sites visited by each auditing member throughout our service areas. Physical site auditing is required to be undertaken at a reduced capacity to ensure adherence to these restrictions.

As a result, our auditing teams will continue to have reduced capacity to be on-site and will be prioritising attending key inspection activities to minimise impact to the delivery of development works.

We will continue to conduct remote audits where practicable, at the discretion of the auditor. We may require physical attendance for certain tests and/or essential inspections. We understand this may result in some challenges in obtaining an ideal mutually arranged booking time, however we remain committed to ensuring these audits are undertaken. We recommend arranging bookings well ahead of time to allow for the coordination of these activities.

We ask for your support to continue to make remote audits a success. You may be required to provide evidence of successful completion of test and/or inspection requirements via alternative means such as written reports and/or photographic evidence. Incomplete or poorly documented audits won't be accepted.

Booking tests & inspections

While we have increased our use of remote auditing, we still reserve the right to carry out certain auditing functions via physical inspection. We may require COVID Safe Plan information from parties wishing to book in testing and essential inspections with our auditing team.

These interim requirements are outlined below:

- The developer's nominated consultants and/or contractors are to continue contacting the nominated MRWA water authority compliance officer to arrange a suitable time for a proposed test and/or essential inspection. We encourage this task to be undertaken as early as practicable;
- The developer's nominated consultants may be required to provide additional information to the nominated MRWA water authority as part of arranging a booking, such as:
 - a copy or confirmation of the High Risk COVID Safe Plan for either the development or the accredited company;
 - identification of whether the proposed inspection is occurring on occupied premises; or
 - evidence / confirmation that the MRWA water authority compliance officer has been considered towards the High Risk COVID Safe Plan related workforce limits in place for the development site.
- The MRWA water authority compliance officer will advise whether the audit is to be performed physically or remotely; and
- The developer's nominated consultant is to have undertaken any necessary pre-inspection site visits and to then submit the relevant forms (within the applicable system) for the test / inspection as per standard practice.

Please note a mutually agreeable time will not be confirmed by the water authority for a test and/or inspection until all requested information about High Risk COVID Safe Plans is provided.

End of Defects Liability Period (EDLP) Inspections

We continue to ask where possible to defer EDLP inspections whilst the construction is under restricted sector guidelines. However, we understand the ongoing deferral of EDLP inspections may cause frustration and further complications for your works.

Where EDLP inspections cannot be deferred during the current restricted arrangements for construction activity, the MRWA water authorities will facilitate the undertaking of these inspections via the above interim audit booking process. These inspections will seek to be undertaken remotely where practicable, however we may at our discretion require physical attendance. We are proactively contacting those who previously expressed desire to book requests to advise of these arrangements.

Upon the relevant sites construction sector reaching the "Open with a COVID Safe Plan" restrictions threshold, EDLP inspections for that site will no longer be requested to be deferred, however physical attendance by MRWA water authorities at such inspections may continue to be limited.

We strongly advise that you consider and implement suitable controls as required for physically attending EDLP inspections into or around occupied or under construction premises, irrespective of the current level of coronavirus restrictions required for the construction industry. Dispensation may be granted at the discretion of the water authority to omit these assets from the EDLP inspection.

We are here to help

We trust this notice provides more clarity and consistency regarding undertaking inspections with the MRWA. Please be reassured that despite these changes to our work practices in response to the

coronavirus (COVID-19), we are committed to providing our services to the Land Development industry, just in a slightly different way.

We appreciate your ongoing understanding and patience and remind all parties to remain respectful to each other as we manage these difficult circumstances.

If you have any questions regarding these interim auditing arrangements, please contact the following authority representatives:

South East Water	Luciano Giannone	luciano.giannone@sew.com.au 9552 3251
Yarra Valley Water	Daniel Fitzpatrick	daniel.fitzpatrick@yvw.com.au 9872 1510
City West Water	James Wheelahan	james.wheelahan@citywestwater.com.au 0418 291 573