

Amendments to the Access Licence Dealing Principles Order 2004 to improve dealing opportunities for Aboriginal peoples

The *Access Licence Dealing Principles Order 2004* (the Order) has been amended to allow:

- holders of Aboriginal community development access licences to undertake assignment of water allocation trades if specific water sharing plan access licence dealing rules allow, and
- enable holders of specific purpose access licences available to Aboriginal peoples to nominate different water supply works and extraction points so they can take water from or have water delivered to different locations within a water source.

Specific purpose access licences for Aboriginal peoples

Specific purpose access licences are a type of water access licence that can only be used for the specific purpose for which the licence was granted. These licences are issued in accordance with rules in the Water Management (General) Regulation 2025 or water sharing plans and must be cancelled if the original purpose no longer exists.

Opportunities for trade with these licences are generally limited to maintain the purpose for which the access licences were granted.

More information about these licences and how to apply is available at water.nsw.gov.au/licensing-and-approvals > [Specific purpose access licence](#).

Aboriginal peoples can apply for specific purpose Aboriginal cultural water access licences in all water sources in NSW up to a limit of 10 megalitres per access licence. These licences can be used for cultural purposes and the water cannot be used primarily for financial gain.

More information on Aboriginal cultural water access licences is available at water.nsw.gov.au > [Our work](#) > [Projects and programs](#) > [Aboriginal Water Programs](#) > [Cultural water access for Aboriginal peoples](#).

In some coastal water sources, Aboriginal peoples can apply for specific purpose Aboriginal community development access licences. These licences can be used for commercial enterprises owned by Aboriginal peoples and the water may be used for any commercial purpose including to irrigate crops, grow fruits, vegetables and flowers or irrigate pasture for a dairy farm.

Water sharing plans limit the granting of these licences to up to 500 ML in a water source and include rules for when water can be taken, which is generally in high flows in unregulated rivers.

Historical uptake of specific purpose access licences for Aboriginal peoples has been limited, so changes have been made to the Order to improve trade opportunities and remove administrative barriers that may be stopping these access licences from being applied for.

Specific purpose Aboriginal cultural water and Aboriginal community development access licences are free of charge until mid-2029.

Water allocation dealings

The Order has been amended to allow holders of specific purpose Aboriginal community development access licences to trade their water allocation under section 71T of the *Water Management Act 2000* to other access licences holders if permitted by the access licence dealing rules of the relevant water sharing plan.

Nomination of works dealings

The Order has been amended to allow the holder of a specific purpose Aboriginal cultural water, Aboriginal commercial, Aboriginal community development or Aboriginal environmental access licence to change the water supply work or extraction point that is nominated by the access licence. This means that holders can change the location of where water can be taken or where water can be delivered.

The relevant water sharing plan may include access licence dealing rules for whether the change of water supply work can occur between management zones or water sources.