

**Policy Title:** Sub-Metering Policy

**Classification:** Water

## Date Adopted by Council

08 February 2017

## Council Minute Number

2017/02/08.22

## Effective Date

February 2017

## Review Date

January 2018

## Responsible Officer

Chief Operating Officer Water & Waste

## Responsible Department

Water & Waste

## Revokes:

Policy Number: POLC-TI-W-001

Policy Name: Sub-Metering Policy

Adopted: 12 May 2010

### INTERNAL USE ONLY

Policy Number: 64    Version: 2

**NOTE: This cover page is not to be included when submitting a report to a Council meeting**

## 1. BACKGROUND AND PRINCIPLES

The Queensland Plumbing & Wastewater Code (“QPW Code”) which was introduced on 1 January 2008 made it mandatory to install *sub-meters* in multi-unit developments and some non-residential premises.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all properties, including non-residential premises, within the Whitsunday Regional Council (*Council*) area to which the QPW Code applies. *Existing developments* are exempt from the conditions of this policy.

## 3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Enable *Council* to directly charge the *owners* of separate lots in new buildings for their actual water consumption;
- Provide a framework for *Council* employees and customers in relation to *sub-metering* of individual *units/lots* for *new developments* and existing developments if the *management* of the *complex* decides to install sub-meters; and
- Raise customer awareness of water consumption and the contribution of individual customers to the overall water consumption.

## 4. POLICY STATEMENT

- 4.1 The QPW code is the primary tool for introduction of sub-meters. Part 4 of the QPW code specifically deals with *water meters* for new premises for specific classification of buildings throughout the Whitsunday Regional Council Region.
- 4.2 The QPW code requires any premises drawing a water supply from *Council* to install *sub-meters* for *meterable premises*.

### Application & Approval process

- 4.3 *Council* uses a standard application and approval process to manage the installation of *sub-meters*. An application to install *sub-meters* form is available on *Council's* website.
- 4.4 The Applicant/*Developer* must submit drawings and hydraulic plans to *Council* for approval.
- 4.5 The plans must show the approximate location of each *sub-meter* enclosure in the complex and the location of any *Automatic Meter Reading* (“*AMR*”) panel or enclosure if provided.
- 4.6 Arrangement drawings must also be provided showing typical layouts for the *sub-meter* enclosures and *AMR* enclosure if provided.

- 4.7 The developer must supply the *sub-meters* and the *meters* must comply with *Council* standards. Upon approval of plans, drawings and *meter* make and type, the developer must fill out and submit the applicable form.
- 4.8 Installation work must not proceed until *Council* approval has been received.

### Meters

- 4.9 Only meters approved by *Council* can be used. All *sub-meters* of the same size must be of the same make and model.

### Installation of meters

- 4.10 The *master meter* will be supplied and installed by *Council* at the expense of the Developer.
- 4.11 The applicant/developer shall be responsible for the installation of *sub-meters* and the supply of all equipment and materials. Equipment, materials and installation must be to the standard *Council* specifications.
- 4.12 Only licensed plumbers are permitted to install *sub-meters*. All work must be carried out in compliance with all relevant Acts, Regulations and By-Laws and *Council's* Standard Specifications including, but not limited to the:
- (a) *Work Health and Safety Act* 2011; and
  - (b) AS3000 – SAA Wiring Rules.
- 4.13 All the sub-meters must be fitted with an anti-tampering device (e.g. seal).

### Ownership & Maintenance

- 4.14 *Council* will be responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of any component of the *master meter* and for the reading and testing of the *master meter*. Once the installation has been certified *Council* will assume ownership of the *sub-meter assemblies* and the AMR system if provided, but the Developer will be responsible for any defects in the materials or equipment for a period of twelve months after the date of certification.
- 4.15 *Council* will be responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement due to normal wear and tear of any component of the *sub-meter* assemblies and also for the reading and testing of the *sub-meters*.
- 4.16 The plumbing between the *sub-meter* assembly and the master meter will be the responsibility of the *body corporate*.

- 4.17 *Council* may at any reasonable time conduct either in-situ testing or take a proportion of sub-meters for laboratory testing at *Council's* expense. The objective of this testing is to ensure that these meters are working within the *Maximum Permissible Error* over different flow rates. *Council* will advise the body corporate in advance of any expected interruptions in supply due to maintenance work and it will be the body corporate responsibility to advise the *occupants*.
- 4.18 Based on the testing results, *Council* may conduct further testing on other samples of meters, test all the sub-meters, replace some or all the sub-meters, or leave the existing sub-meters if found operating within the *Maximum Permissible Error* over different flow rates.
- 4.19 *Council* may also elect to replace sub-meters at any reasonable time at no charge. The management of the complex will be advised prior to the replacement. Current management contact details must be held by the billing system officer at all times for the purpose of ready access for *Council* operations and maintenance staff.
- 4.20 Any damage to the *sub-meter assembly* and or the *AMR* system, by others, other than that of normal wear and tear, shall be a direct charge against the body corporate or the occupier/owner.

### **Billing**

- 4.21 *Council* will bill lot owners for the water supplied through each sub-meter and will bill the management of the complex for any water used in the *common property* in accordance with its current billing policy. This shall be the case where a meter is installed to service all of the *common area*, and where a master meter is installed.
- 4.22 The *common property water consumption* will be the difference between the bulk consumption registered by the master meter and the sum of individual consumption registered by the sub-meters.
- 4.23 If requested by the management of the complex *Council* may consider billing the management of the complex according to a *contribution schedule* which distributes the common property water consumption among occupants according to the contribution schedule provided by the body corporate.
- 4.24 When a sub-meter stops operating or a reading cannot be obtained, then *Council* will bill the individual property occupants based on the average water consumption during a similar corresponding period until the situation is rectified. It is the responsibility of *Council* to replace the stopped sub-meter and to maintain the *AMR* system (if provided) within the complex.
- 4.25 *Council* may charge a service fee for inspecting and checking the performance of sub-meters if requested to do so by individual owners or managers of complexes and where it is found that the sub-meter is reading within the specified accuracy range.

### **Connectivity audit**

- 4.26 Prior to the completion of the installation work the responsible person shall submit to *Council* a notification form (Notice to the Water Service Provider – Installation of *Sub-Meters*) that is available on *Council's* website.

- 4.27 Council or their representative will conduct the *connectivity audit* and make sure that the *sub-meter* and *AMR* installation has been carried out in accordance with Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, AS/NZS 3500.1 and the approved hydraulic design and drawings. During the connectivity audit Council's inspector shall verify that:
- (a) the *sub-meters* are *accessible* for reading and maintenance;
  - (b) the serial number on each *sub-meter* matches the serial number shown on the As-constructed drawing; and
  - (c) each *sub-meter* is correctly installed and only measuring flow to the particular unit/lot/storey being tested. Verification shall be done by physical testing.
- 4.28 If the testing shows that the *sub-meter* has not been correctly installed then the responsible person shall investigate and remove any cross connections and mismatches, prepare new as-built drawings and apply for another audit. The costs of Council involved in each audit will be recovered from the Developer on a cost recovery basis.
- 4.29 During the connectivity audit, the Council inspector shall record the meter reading on each sub-meter. The assessment form to be used by Council Inspector for the connectivity audit is available on Council's website.

#### **As constructed drawings**

- 4.30 As-constructed drawings shall show:
- (a) *sub-meter* serial number and the description of the unit (e.g. unit number) supplied through this sub-meter;
  - (b) the serial number of any equipment attached to the meter;
  - (c) meter size make, model and number of dials; and
  - (d) the location, (e.g. "one meter at the right hand side of the drive way or the elevator door").
- 4.31 The responsible person shall also provide the following information:
- (a) date of completion of the installation of the meters; and
  - (b) the reading on each meter on the date of completion.



### Acceptance of assets

- 4.32 If the connectivity audit is successful and all documentation has been provided and is in order, the *Council* inspector shall sign off the As-constructed drawings, certifying that the work has been successfully completed. A copy of the As-constructed drawings, and the meter reading for each sub-meter shall be sent to designated billing system officer to link each *sub-meter* with its respective unit/lot in *Council's* billing system.
- 4.33 Payment for any water used between the sub-meter reading recorded at or near the time of completion and the issue of the Plumbing Compliance Certificate shall be the responsibility of the Developer. Water used during each connectivity Audit will be charged to the Developer.

### Plumbing compliance permit

- 4.34 Plumbing approval for the development (i.e. Plumbing Compliance Certificate) shall not be issued until the connectivity audit for the development has been completed to the full satisfaction of the *Water Service Provider*.

### Existing Developments

- 4.35 It is optional whether an existing development elects to install sub-meters. Should they elect to do so they shall be responsible for all associated costs and must follow the same requirements as for new premises
- 4.36 After approval, *Council* may at its discretion accept ownership of the sub meters and apply the same procedures as for new developments.

### Technical Guidelines

- 4.37 Council has developed technical guidelines in relation to sub-metering to help ensure that decisions are consistent and in line with the intent of this Policy. The technical guidelines may be amended from time to time. They are intended as a guide only and will not take precedence over any decision made by *Council* in relation to a particular development.

## 5. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

*Water Regulation 2002*

*Water Act 2000*

*Water Supply (Safety & Reliability) Act 2008*

*Building Act 1975*

*Building Regulation 2006*

*Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002*

*Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulations 2003*

*Public Health Act 2005*

*Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005*

## 6. DEFINITIONS

**AMR** means automatic meter reading.

**Accessible** for water meter reading, maintenance and replacement purposes, means accessible within reasonable time (between 8 am-5 pm), at ground level, outside the building where access to the sub-meters is unrestricted at all times, including free from building security, being obscured by vehicle movements, free from overgrown vegetation and all other forms of obstructions and hazards, with the sub-meters being located in a non-locked enclosure requiring a non-key access (PIN code).

**Body corporate** shall mean a corporation or body of persons or even an individual, with a legal existence distinct from the individual person(s) making up the corporate entity. The purpose of the body corporate is to manage common property.

**Common area** in a complex is an area of common property.

**Common property** in a complex is freehold land forming part of the complex land, but not forming part of a lot/unit included in the complex.

**Common property water consumption** shall mean water used in common properties within a complex for irrigation, cleaning, recreation fixtures, etc. The common property water consumption for each meter read cycle will be decided by deducting the sum of consumption registered by sub-meters from the consumption registered by the master meter.

**Complex** includes Community Titles Schemes (CTSs) and multi sole occupancy unit of class 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 building and each storey of a class 5.

**Connectivity audit** shall mean a verification process in which each sub-meter is matched with its respective unit. The aim of this audit is to ensure that each unit in a given complex is supplied through one sub-meter only and to make sure that the respective sub-meter is marked clearly with the number/description of that unit.

**Contribution schedule** shall mean an agreement between the occupants of a complex and the management of that complex. This schedule states the method of distributing water bill for common property water consumption among occupants/owners.

**Council** shall mean Whitsunday Regional Council.

**Developer** shall mean a corporation or body of persons or even an individual, who builds a development in which the houses/units form part of a complex and can be sold to individual owners.

**Existing developments** shall mean any development whereby the development has a Plumbing Compliance Certificate dated prior to 1 January 2008.

**Management** shall mean management of complex which can be a body corporate of a community title scheme or a representative body of a multi sole occupancy unit

**Master meter** shall mean a meter upstream of sub-meters and used to register the bulk

consumption of the complex.

**Maximum Permissible Error** shall mean the Maximum Permissible Error which a meter is allowed to operate within.

**Meterable Premises** - means:

- a. all class 1 buildings; and
- b. each lot within a community title scheme, including the common property, in a water service provider's area; and
- c. the sole-occupancy unit of a class 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 building in a water service provider's area; and
- d. each storey of a class 5 building in a water service provider's area where the building consists of more than one storey and sole-occupancy units are not identified at the time of the building's plumbing compliance assessment.

**New development/s** any complex submitting a request for a Plumbing Compliance Certificate after 1 January 2008.

**Occupant/s** shall mean an occupant of a house, unit, flat or an apartment within a complex

**Owner/s** shall mean an owner of a house, unit, flat or an apartment within a complex.

**QPW Code** shall mean the Queensland Plumbing & Wastewater Code as adopted from time to time.

**Responsible person** shall mean a licensed plumber.

**Sole occupancy unit** shall mean a room or other part of the building for occupation by one or a joint owner, lessee, tenant, or other occupier to the exclusion of any other owner, lessee, tenant, or other occupier. This could be a dwelling, a room or a suite of associated rooms in a building classified under the Building Code of Australia as a class 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 building. A sole occupancy unit also includes any part of the building that is a common area or common property.

**Sub-meter/s** is a term used to describe individual water meters within multi-unit complexes. The term also differentiates from 'master meter' that measures the supply of water to a complex as a whole.

**Sub-meter assembly/ies** means the sub-meter, the upstream and downstream ball valves and the section of pipework and fittings attaching the ball valves to each sub-meter.

**Sub-metering** shall mean the installation of individual water meters to measure water consumption to individual houses, units, flats or apartments that form part of a complex.

**Unit/s** shall mean a house, flat, lot of land or an apartment within a complex.

**Water meter/s** means a device, including equipment related to the device, for measuring the volume of water supplied to premises. An example of equipment related to the device is



a pulse meter or an automatic meter reader and associated technology or similar devices.

**Water Service Provider** means Whitsunday Regional Water & Waste and is the provider of water to the complex from external sources via properties via a pressurized network of pipes.

## 7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Building Code Australia
- National Construction Code of Australia
- Australian and New Zealand Design Standards
- Australian Technical Specifications.
- AS 3565.1:2004 Meters for Water Supply – Cold Water Meters
- AS 3565.1:2004 Meters for Water Supply – Combination Meters
- AS 3565.1:2004 Meters for Water Supply – Water meters with integral dual check valves
- AS 3565.1:2004 Meters for Water Supply – In-service compliance testing
- AS 3565.1:2004 Meters for Water Supply – Water meters with two integral single check valves
- AS/NZS 3500.1
- AS 2419.1-2005 Fire Hydrant Installations – System Design, Installation and Commissioning
- AWWA C707

## 8. DATE REVIEWED

December 2016

## 9. NEXT REVIEW

January 2018