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Treasurer and Minister for Industrial Relations

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Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Regional Water

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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW BUDGET 2018: \$23 MILLION FOR WATER REFORM

The NSW Government is backing its pledge to build a world-class regional water management and compliance regime with a 2018/19 Budget commitment of more than \$23 million over the next two years.

Minister for Regional Water, Niall Blair said water is one of our most valuable natural assets and Ken Matthews' independent review last year was 'a wake-up call' for water management in this state.

"As a Government, we've wasted no time in responding to the recommendations of Mr Matthews' report to ensure an equitable and transparent approach to the management of our water for current users and for future generations," Mr Blair said.

"We released the NSW Water Reform Action Plan last year and created a new team solely focused on the management of land and water resources."

The NSW Government has also established the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) with a new Chief Regulatory Officer and a full executive team in place and operational since the end of April this year.

Treasurer, Dominic Perrottet said the \$23 million investment would support the NRAR with significant resources to increase compliance and enforcement capabilities and deliver more boots-on-the-ground.

"Water is a vital resource and we have committed to improving our management and monitoring in NSW," Mr Perrottet said.

"The funding in the upcoming NSW budget will make sure we have the resources and people in place to better manage water use and compliance."

Part of the improved compliance regime will see the development of a robust metering framework to ensure there is nowhere to hide for those looking to make unlawful, inequitable or non-compliant use of water resources.

Mr Blair said the Government is also backing pilot technologies that will be developed with the aim to address and enhance NSW's capacity to carry out compliance activities, as well as improving the protection of environmental water through our river systems.

“We know we had a lot of work to do to rebuild public trust and restore confidence in water management across this state. This Budget investment means we can continue to deliver on our commitments and provide a fair and equitable system for all,” Mr Blair said.

The NSW State Budget will be handed down on Tuesday 19 June.

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