



Water Storage Manager Water Quality Annual Report

2025/26

Safe Drinking Water Act 2003



Version	Description	Date	Author	Approved
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1.0	FINAL VERSION	30/09/2026	Abigail Slusarczyk Environmental Officer	Scott Cornish Managing Director

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Foreword

Southern Rural Water (SRW), as a water storage manager, is required under Section 26 of the *Safe Drinking Water Act 2003* (the Act) to provide the Secretary to the Department of Health (DH) with a report each financial year. This report covers SRW's commitment to the safe drinking water framework, any issues in the current year relating to the quality of untreated water which is managed by SRW and details that are required by the Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2025 (the Regulations).

This 2025/2026 annual report covers the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 and was developed in accordance with the *Guidance Note – Water Quality Annual Report* released by the DH in July 2026, Section 26(1) and (2) of the Act and with Regulations 21 and 22 of the Regulations.

Overview

Our business

SRW is responsible for the harvest, storage, and delivery of water to customers in accordance with provisions of the Bulk Entitlement Orders in seven major storages. These include:

- Lake Glenmaggie, Lake Narracan and Blue Rock Lake, which are located in Gippsland; and
- Melton, Merrimu, Pykes Creek and Rosslynne Reservoirs which are located to the west of Melbourne.

SRW also manages the recreational facilities at most of these storages. There is no primary or secondary contact water-based recreation permitted at Merrimu and Rosslynne Reservoirs.

SRW stores untreated water which is used for:

- Irrigation and rural purposes;
- Urban water supply to Gippsland Water (GW) and Greater Western Water (GWW); and
- Industry, including power generation in the Latrobe Valley.

Under the Act, SRW is a water storage manager that supplies water to a water supplier. This report therefore focuses on SRW's role in providing untreated water to GW and GWW.

Lake Glenmaggie and Blue Rock Lake supply raw water to GW while Merrimu, Pykes Creek and Rosslynne Reservoirs supply raw water to GWW. For the purposes of this report, 'raw water' means untreated water harvested in SRW's storages and released to urban water suppliers.

The Board of SRW approved in May 2005 the raw water policy that outlines SRW's commitment to water quality management in its reservoirs. The policy was reviewed and updated in 2016, 2020, 2023 and 2025 to align with the Regulations.

The policy states that we shall:

- Implement, maintain and continually review safe drinking water Risk Management Plans (RMPs) for each of SRW's storages that provide raw water to water suppliers, and implement actions to mitigate the risks identified within those plans;
- Engage regularly with stakeholders from the catchment and water suppliers to promote a coordinated approach to managing risks to drinking water;
- Notify stakeholders of any identified or suspected issues with raw water quality in a timely manner;
- Maintain effective contingency and incident response procedures; and
- Provide training and support for all SRW staff involved in the supply and management of raw water, including identification of water quality incidents, notification protocols and sampling regimes and requirements.

SRW is committed to working in partnership with stakeholders and relevant agencies to ensure that its decision-making and actions effectively support the supply of safe drinking water by water suppliers, as defined in the Act.

Our water supply systems

SRW operates four water supply systems that involve the supply of raw water to water suppliers. Details of these four systems are included in Table 1.

Each supply system, from catchment to the offtake to water supplier, is detailed in its related RMP. Maps of each SRW specific system have been reproduced in the appendices of this annual report. All systems have associated proclaimed catchments as listed in Table 1 and detailed in maps located in the appendices.

Table 1: SRW water supply systems

System	Proclaimed Catchments (under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994)	Storage	Supply points/ Offtake	Treatment	Water Supply Manager
Werribee System	Lake Merrimu (Goodmans Creek) Lake Merrimu (Lerderderg River) Lake Merrimu	Merrimu Reservoir	Offtake @ tower (valve house)	No	GWW
Werribee System	Pykes Creek Reservoir and Werribee River	Pykes Creek Reservoir	Offtake @ tower (valve house)	No	GWW
Rosslynne System	Rosslynne Reservoir (Jackson's Creek)	Rosslynne Reservoir	Offtake @ tower (valve house)	No	GWW
Thomson/Macalister System	Glenmaggie	Lake Glenmaggie	Offtake to: Maffra, Stratford and Boisdale @ 15-20 km downstream of storage on Macalister River	No	GW
Blue Rock System	Tanjil River	Blue Rock Lake	Offtake to: Willow Grove @ tower Moe @ 15km downstream on Tanjil River	No	GW

There were no major changes to SRW's water supply arrangements during the 2025/26 reporting period.

Source water protection

SRW has developed its Safe Drinking Water RMPs, one each for the Eastern and Western storages, that cover its drinking water storages. These plans include safe drinking water risk management for each storage in accordance with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations. Each risk management plan contains a detailed description of the system of supply, identification, and assessments of the risks to the quality of the water, and a description of the steps currently taken and those that could be taken to manage those risks.

The RMPs are regularly reviewed and updated. SRW's RMPs were audited in March 2023 as per the requirements of the Act for an auditable period of January 2021 – December 2022.

SRW, GWW and GW maintain and adhere to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the collection and sharing of water quality data, and other information pertinent to the protection of drinking water. The information sharing involves, among other things, the sharing of Safe Drinking Water Annual Reports and the results of water quality monitoring as requested by either party. Water quality monitoring undertaken by SRW, GWW and GW in 2025/26 included:

GW and GWW undertaking routine monitoring of:

- Physical/chemical parameters and metals within the storages at their offtake level; and
- Sub-surface water samples for BGA biovolume analysis at their offtake.

SRW undertaking:

- Visual inspections and surface water quality monitoring for BGA biovolume and species analysis according to SRW's BGA Incident Management Plan and BGA Reporting Procedure;
- Ad-hoc monitoring of physical/chemical parameters in the event of an incident within the storage or in the water supply catchment; and
- Routine checks of security measures (e.g. fencing and gates).

In line with the 'catchment to tap' approach to water quality risk management, SRW recognises that actions within the greater catchment can have a direct impact on its storages. SRW works with local councils, Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) and other agencies to influence and facilitate appropriate management to protect the quantity and quality of water captured in our storages.

Key works

Examples of the works undertaken by SRW in 2025/26 to protect source waters include (but are not limited to):

- Carbon reforestation project which has provided 14 ha of plantings at the headwater of Lake Glenmaggie.
- Carbon reforestation investigations and community engagement at Blue Rock Lake.
- Working with the Gippsland Integrated Water Management Forum, GW and local council to progress erosion control works at Willow Grove (Blue Rock Lake) caused by stormwater overflow.
- Engaging water consultant SMEC to produce a Strategic Pest and Weed Management Plan for pest animal and weed control, focusing on marginal lands around drinking water storages.
- Ongoing support for and implementation of Domestic Wastewater Management Plan's (DWMP) in relevant municipalities (Moorabool, Macedon Ranges, Baw Baw and Wellington).
- SRW's role as a referral authority under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, including assessment of applications against the *Planning Permit Applications in Special Water Supply Catchment Areas (February 2024)*.
- SRW participated in discussions with EPA Victoria regarding the transition of the *Code of Practice – Guideline for Onsite Wastewater Management 2024*.

Drinking water Treatment Process

SRW does not treat the water prior to its receipt by GW and GWW.

Issues

Not applicable

Emergency incident and Event Management

Incidents under section 22 of the Act

During the 2025/26 monitoring period, there were no events reportable under Section 22 of the Act.

Other incidents

Under DEECA's Blue-Green Algae Emergency Response Plan (2026), SRW is obliged to notify agencies such as urban water suppliers, DH, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and DEECA of blue-green algae (BGA) blooms in storages and water bodies where SRW are defined as the Local Waterway Manager. In addition, DH must be notified under section 22 of the Act if contamination, such as a BGA bloom or a high turbidity event, occurs in a water body providing drinking water supply, where that event or bloom is likely to pose a health risk or cause widespread complaint.

SRW do not treat and supply drinking water directly to the public in Victoria. Therefore, SRW does not determine whether BGA levels pose a public health risk to drinking water supplies. Additionally, surface water sampling for BGA may return different results to the water quality sampling at depth taken by urban water suppliers. This means that the water supplier (as defined under the Act) may be the most appropriate entity to notify DH of BGA incidents under section 22.

SRW provides GW, GWW, DEECA and DH with the results of its BGA monitoring program and communicates the presence of a bloom in its drinking water storages as required.

There were three reportable blooms in drinking water storages over 2025/26 as follows:

In Lake Glenmaggie: three level 1 (a) local blooms:

- From 27th October 2025 to 8th November 2025.
- From 1st December 2025 to 13th December 2025.
- From 5th January 2026 to 12th January 2026.

Prior to 22nd January 2026, level 1 (a) blooms for drinking water were triggered at 0.2mm³/L total biovolume. Post 22nd January 2026, level 1 trigger level for drinking water is revised to toxic species biovolume of $\geq 0.6 \text{ mm}^3/\text{L}$ or a total biovolume of $\geq 10 \text{ mm}^3/\text{L}$, in line with DEECA (2026) BGA Emergency Response Plan.

In all instances, GW was able to manage the BGA effectively through treatment process.

Issues

There were no significant issues pertaining to raw water quality during 2025/26.

Risk Management Plan Audits

SRW did not have a RMP audit completed during the 2025/26 reporting period.

Undertakings

SRW did not have any undertakings under section 30 of the Act with DH during the reporting period.

Exemptions

SRW was not granted any exemptions under section 8 of the Act during the 2025/26 reporting period.

Further Information

Further information regarding SRW's previous annual reports, responsibilities for BGA reporting, routine monitoring that is undertaken, current alerts and social media notifications, together with general information can all be found at SRW website www.srw.com.au. This information is updated as required.

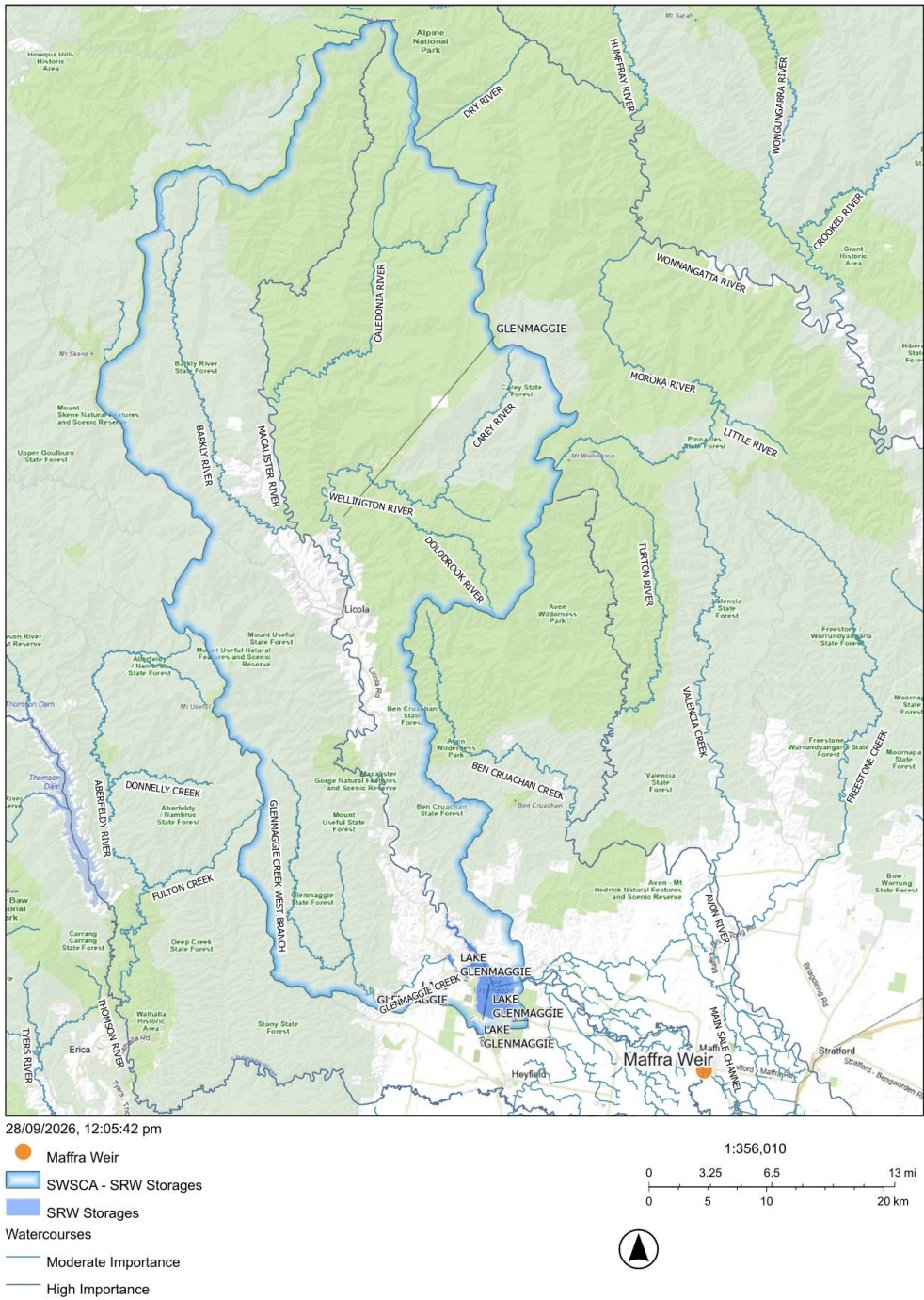
Members of the public can also access current bloom information by calling our dedicated BGA information line on 1300 781 806.

In addition, SRW can be contacted during business hour by email srw@srw.com.au or by telephone (03) 5139 3100.

Appendices

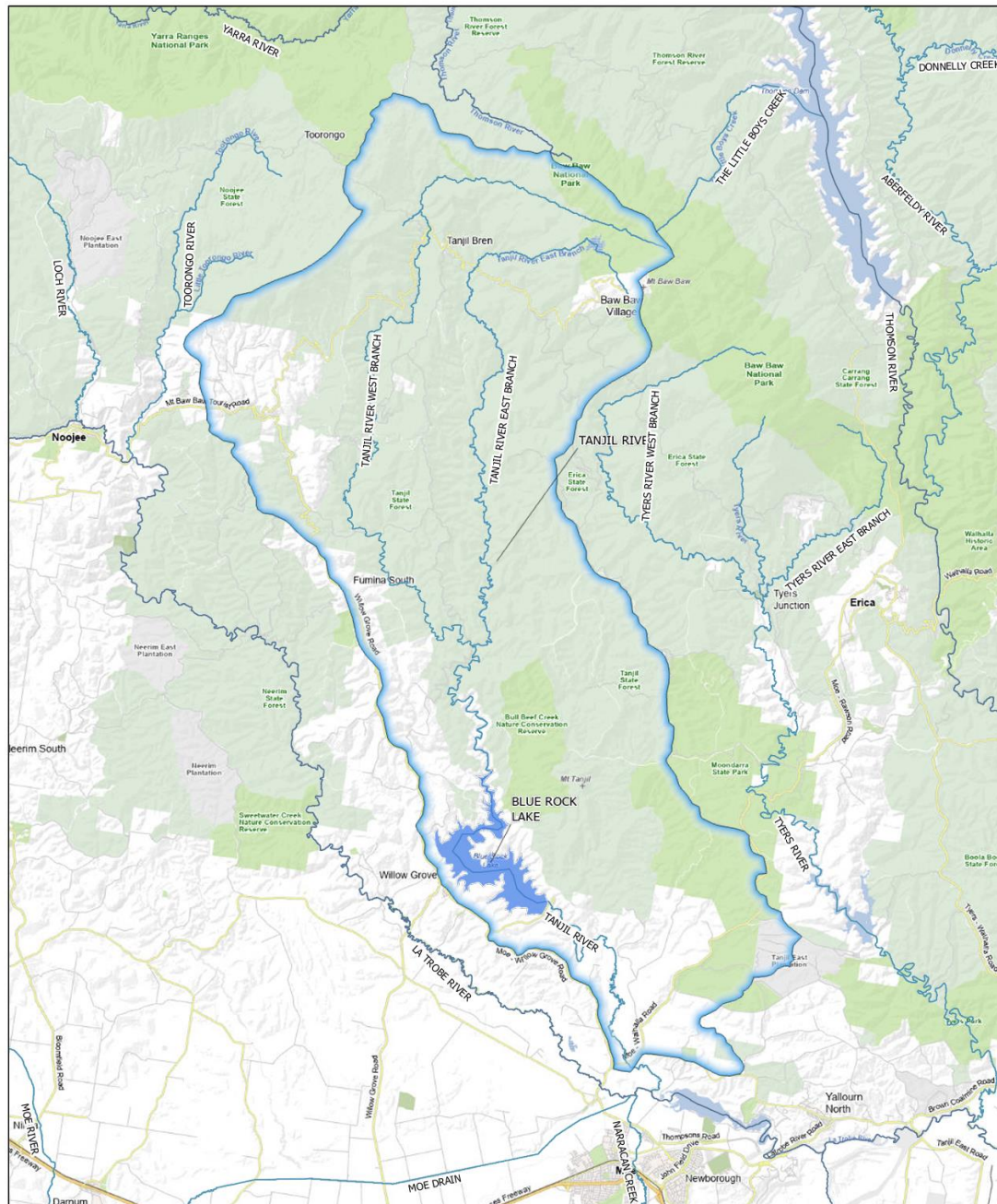
Lake Glenmaggie Proclaimed Catchment

Glenmaggie Supply System Served



Blue Rock Lake and Tanjil River Proclaimed Catchment

Blue Rock Supply System Serviced



28/09/2026, 12:15:02 pm

SWSCA - SRW Storages

SRW Storages

Watercourses

Moderate Importance

High Importance

1:196,010

0 1.75 3.5 7 mi
0 2.75 5.5 11 km



Rosslynne Reservoir, Merrimu Reservoir, Pykes Creek Reservoir Proclaimed Catchments

Rosslynne, Merrimu & Pykes Supply Systems Served

