

Freedom of Information/EIR Provide the Information

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Centre City Tower, 7 Hill Street, Birmingham B5 4UA  
21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3HF

By email

14 June 2018

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 - Request For Information

Reference: FOI 20180658

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information concerning water management.

Ofwat confirms it does hold some of the information and much of this information is publicly available.

Ofwat has answered your questions with the information below each question.

1. What is your perception about water management

As “water management” is an international term Ofwat has assumed you are referring to water resource management plans.

It is important to understand that prior to 1989 water supply authorities were publicly owned. In 1989 the industry was privatised. Private companies were invited to bid for licenses’ to operate regionally. This created natural monopolies and under the terms of the license each company is regulated by The Water Services Regulation Authority (later renamed Ofwat)

Please see <https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/regulated-companies/ofwat-industry-overview/legislation/>

Ofwats role is to ensure that the privatised companies set challenging targets and deliver on their promises to customers and that financial and reward structures are appropriate.

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The principal environmental regulator is the [Environment Agency](#) (renamed from the National Rivers Authority formed under the [Water Resources Act 1991](#) in England and [Natural Resources Wales](#) in Wales).

The principal regulator for drinking water quality is the [Drinking Water Inspectorate](#).

The water companies' trade body is called [WaterUK](#) and the principal research establishment that they all contributed to is called [UKWIR](#).

Under the [Water Act 2014](#) Ofwat now has a duty to further the resilience objective.

In the UK the principal documents are the Water Resource Management Plans which the companies are obliged to provide to the environment agency every five years. Each plan must have a planning horizon of at least 25 years and some can be as much as 80-100 years. The companies issue an annual statement to the EA and are required to revise their plan if there are any substantial changes in the year.

Under section 37 of the [Water Industry Act](#) each of the appointees is legally obliged to secure sufficient water to meet current and future demands. Ofwat has a duty to ensure that the companies meet their legal and license obligations.

2. How long has the government or your office (Ofwat) been involved in water management issues

Since privatisation in 1989

3. Is there a water management policy document or documents that regulate water management

Yes, as well as the Water Resources Act 1991 see the following examples

<https://www.water.org.uk/policy/water-resources/water-company-plans>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-resources-planning-managing-supply-and-demand>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69359/pb13653-water-resources-review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69359/pb13653-water-resources-review.pdf)

<http://www.wrse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Defra-Guiding-Principles-for-Water-Resource-Planning.pdf>

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4. How is water management regulated by the government (your office)  
We are statutory consultees on the water resource management plans that the companies submit directly to the environment agency.
5. Can you tell me who are those that constitute the stakeholders in water management that government (your office) is involved with  
The range of stakeholders is too wide to simply list. For example we may take interest in a particular scheme such as a reservoir for which there will be local stakeholder groups. As well as the other regulators and DEFRA the principal stakeholders are the Consumer Council for Water and each of the companies has their own customer challenge group.
6. How is government (your office) involved in reaching out to the stakeholders or in water management issues; *Business/ water marketers; user communities/consumers; technologist/industries and researchers*
7. What is government doing to ensure safe and sustainable water management practices in institutions and communities
8. Are there water management practices that the government is against
9. What models or measures can you suggest for effective stakeholders collaboration in water management
10. Can you tell me what works/how successful the engagement are/failures

For the above questions 6-10:

Please see Ofwat's website <https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/about-us/>. This gives insight in how we work across the sectors.

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<https://ico.org.uk/>

or

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow

Yours sincerely,

Christine Manise

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