

Media Release

12 June 2025

EOIs open for councils to improve town water quality

The NSW Government is charging ahead with the wildly successful Advanced Operational Support (AOS) initiative, offering assistance to local councils including grants of up to \$150,000 to boost town drinking water quality across regional NSW.

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) are now open until 10 July and we're calling on councils to get involved to improve the safety and reliability of their local town water supply.

The project supports councils to improve the operation of water treatment plants to optimise performance and ensure existing infrastructure is in a stronger position to respond to water quality issues.

That might include installing new equipment to provide 24-hour monitoring of water quality at critical control points, with triggers to enable the automatic shutdown of parts of the network if required, ensuring water piped to customers is always safe.

Hay Shire Council is one of the councils that has recently completed these upgrades to boost the operation of its water treatment plant as part of the broad support it's received under the program over the past 12 months.

The AOS also enables councils to access on-the-ground technical support from NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (NSW DCCEEW) staff, including training for local water operators, and a prioritised roadmap detailing opportunities for immediate and ongoing operational improvement.

Applications will be considered based on a range of criteria including risks to water quality, operations and plant performance.

It comes off the back of the most recent AOS \$3.4 million investment which has supported 18 local councils including many with at-risk water infrastructure across some of the driest regions of the state including drought impacted communities.

The AOS is part of the Town Water Risk Reduction Program which works closely with councils and local water utilities to address issues including water quality, dam safety and training for utility operators.

For more information and to submit an EOI for the next round, [visit our website here](#).

NSW DCCEEW Executive Director of Operations Resilience, Ashraf El-Sherbini, said:

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“Our Advanced Operational Support initiative has already scored big wins for regional towns across the state, and I’m excited to see it open up to even more communities.

“No matter where you live in NSW, nothing is more important than access to quality drinking water, especially as we face a drier and more variable climate which could bring more challenges to utility operators and more water quality risks than ever before.

“This initiative will play a pivotal role, allowing us to work hand-in-glove with even more councils to optimise the performance of their water treatment plants. By investing in smart, cost-efficient upgrades to existing infrastructure, we’re enabling local water utilities to respond to water quality issues faster and more effectively.

“Many regional communities have already reaped the huge benefits of this support, and I urge councils from every corner of NSW to learn more and lodge an EOI before 10 July.”

Hay Shire Mayor Carol Oataway said:

“This has been a very successful initiative that has been instrumental in elevating the reliability and compliance of our water treatment operations.

“Thanks to our partnership with the NSW Government, we’ve not only resolved our most critical risks but achieved broader improvements that will benefit the community over the long-term.

“This collaboration is a strong example of what can be achieved when local and state programs work hand-in-hand.”

ENDS

MEDIA NOTE:

Successful participant councils in previous rounds of Advanced Operational Support include:

- Uralla Shire Council – Uralla
- Walgett Shire Council – Collarenebri
- Gwydir Shire Council – Bingarra
- Oberon Council – Oberon
- Cobar Shire Council – Cobar
- Carrathool Shire Council – Rankins Springs
- Hay Shire Council – Hay
- Hilltops Council - Boorowa
- Central Darling Shire Council – Ivanhoe
- Murrumbidgee Council – Jerilderie

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- Coonamble Shire Council – Coonamble
- Glen Innes Severn Council – Glen Innes
- Balranald Shire Council – Balranald
- Mid-Western Regional Council – Rylstone
- Cabonne Shire Council – Molong
- Moree Plains Shire Council – Boggabilla
- Bourke Shire Council – Bourke
- Armidale Regional Council – Guyra