



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Water and Environmental Regulation**

# Water information reporting (WIR) system

## Glossary

*Looking after all our water needs*

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation  
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# Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Aggregated data</b>	Data that is manipulated or transformed from point or discrete sources into other forms of expression such as maximum, minimum, mean, and total.
<b>AHD</b>	See Australian Height Datum
<b>Alternative system code</b>	See numbering system
<b>Analysis method</b>	The method used to analyse a sample or obtain a measurement. Laboratory analysis methods have a unique code identifier, and will also have an associated laboratory instrument. Field measurements will have an analysis method of "Direct reading".
<b>Aquifer</b>	A geological formation or group of formations capable of receiving, storing and transmitting significant quantities of water.
<b>Archival data</b>	Time-series data that has been subject to quality control checking, assigned a quality code, and stored in the long-term archive.
<b>Area</b>	A particular usage of a WIN site to indicate the area of study in which sampling occurs. Is usually the same as the sampling site, but may be a larger area or transect if necessary. Provides linkages and context to the sampling. The coordinates of an area represent its centroid. See also Site.
<b>Artesian</b>	An artesian aquifer is a confined aquifer containing groundwater under positive pressure. This causes the water level in a well to rise to a point where hydrostatic equilibrium has been reached. This type of well is called an artesian well. Water may even reach the ground surface if the natural pressure is high enough, in which case the well is called a flowing artesian well. Water may rise above the water table but not flow above the ground surface level, in which case the well could be called a sub artesian well.
<b>Australian Height Datum (AHD)</b>	The Australian system of levels that relates to a sea level reference datum.
<b>AWRC</b>	Australian Water Resources Council. Historical body that developed water industry policy. Followed by ARMCANZ. It defined an Australia-wide catchment and site numbering system.
<b>Bore, borehole</b>	A narrow, normally vertical hole lined with a bore casing and screen, drilled in soil or rock to monitor or withdraw groundwater from an aquifer.
<b>Catchment</b>	A topographically defined area draining surface water to a single outlet point

Term	Definition
<b>Continuous data</b>	Data that is recorded in a continuous time-series at regular intervals allowing straight-line interpolations to be drawn between the data points. Usually this is every five, 10 or 15 minutes. <i>cf.</i> Discrete data.
<b>Construction</b>	The installed elements that constitute a bore.
<b>Cease to flow (CTF)</b>	The level or physical location at which a stream stops flowing – the lowest point in the low flow control. Arbitrarily assigned a value of 10, but this may vary according to on-site changes.
<b>Cross-tab(ulated) report</b>	A tabular report that presents data in pivot-table fashion against a set of grouped sample row headers and reading column headers, with sample details in the left-most columns (one sample per row), and reading headers expanding dynamically to the right according to the number of variables measured.
<b>Comma separated values (CSV)</b>	An electronic file format in which columnar values are delimited by commas.
<b>CTF</b>	See Cease To Flow
<b>Data availability summary</b>	A summary of the types of data or information available for sites, including period of record and number of readings. May be presented using various breakdowns such as data categories and variable types.
<b>Data category</b>	A means of classifying data according to distinguishable characteristics of the data such as the types of measurement and the method used to obtain them. Provides mechanisms for summarising data availability and linking between sites, measurements and reports.
<b>Data logger</b>	An electronic device with a specific storage capacity used to gather (usually time-series) information.
<b>Data request</b>	<p>A request for data to be extracted and provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on demand from the WIR data warehouse (automatically generated)</li> <li>• from the pre-computed report server (collated and delivered)</li> <li>• by Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) officers (manually extracted, collated and delivered).</li> </ul>
<b>Data suitability</b>	<p>An assessment of the “fitness for purposes” for a particular dataset. Determines whether the data is representative, i.e. of a suitable quality, quantity, type, temporal scale and spatial scale to address the question being asked. Data suitability can only be assessed by users of the data in light of individual requirements.</p> <p>DWER cannot assess or warrant the suitability WIR data for users’ particular purposes.</p>
<b>Datum</b>	A plane relative to the Earth’s surface against which vertical measurements are referenced. It may be a formally defined standard

Term	Definition
	datum (e.g. AHD), or a local reference mark (e.g. ground level).
<b>Default site reference</b>	See Site reference
<b>Depth reference point (DRP)</b>	Local reference points or marks that are used for the measurement or calculation of vertical distance (height or depth) in relation to a datum plane from an effective start date.
<b>Detection limit</b>	See Limit of reporting
<b>Determinand</b>	<p>An identifier for readings (something that is <i>determined</i>), used in cross-tab reports, and consisting of a combination of variable, units, variable qualifier (optional), and taxonomic name (optional), separated by pipe (' ') symbols, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N (tot)   mg/L</li> <li>• discharge rate (TS)   daily min   m3/s</li> <li>• discharge rate (TS)   daily max   m3/s</li> <li>• specimen count   5 -10 cm   (count)   <i>Achoerodus gouldii</i></li> </ul>
<b>Discharge rate</b>	Volumetric flow rate of water per unit of time, e.g. metres <sup>3</sup> /sec, l/s, m <sup>3</sup> /day. Often referred to as flow or flow rate. Sometimes called simply discharge. Applies to surface and groundwater, and can be free flowing or pumped.
<b>Discharge (Volume)</b>	Total volume of water discharged past a measurement point, and usually expressed in megalitres (ML) or gigalitres (GL). Sometimes called simply discharge.
<b>Discrete data</b>	Data gathered at a singular sampling event and that does not allow straight line interpolation to be drawn on activity of the variable measured between samples. In general, WIN stores discrete data and Hydstra stores time-series data. See also Non continuous data. <i>cf.</i> Continuous data.
<b>Divertible Water Allocation Inventory Database (DWAID)</b>	<i>(pronounced dee-wade)</i> . A DWER database system that contains GIS layers and associated attributes that define surface and groundwater resources and official department aquifers. It is used to support water licensing and allocation management.
<b>DWER</b>	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.
<b>Falling</b>	A water tendency is classified as Falling if the current reading is 0.025m less than the reading exactly 3 hours prior to the current reading.
<b>Filtering</b>	A means of including sites of interest and excluding sites not of interest, as a precursor to: viewing data summary information; further searching and filtering; or site selection. See also searching and selecting

Term	Definition
<b>Flat-file report</b>	A tabular report that provides one result or measurement per row, with Sample details repeating down the worksheet and Reading analysis details displayed in fixed columns to the right. Unlike cross-tab files, the reading headers do not expand dynamically to the right.
<b>Flow, flow rate</b>	For flow/flow rate, see Discharge rate/Discharge (volume). In terms of groundwater, a free flowing well is one where groundwater discharges from the bore at the ground surface without the aid of pumping.
<b>File transfer protocol (FTP)</b>	A protocol (standard) for exchanging data files over the Internet. Reports larger than 10MB and less than 100MB in size are posted to an FTP site from where they can be downloaded by the requestor.
<b>Gauging</b>	A measurement of the flow rate representing a specific height of a river.
<b>Gauging station</b>	See stream gauging station
<b>GDA94</b>	The Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA) (1994) is the latest Australian coordinate system for expressing latitude and longitude, replacing the Australian Geodetic Datum (AGD) (1984). All WIR coordinates are expressed in GDA94 or MGA94. See MGA94.
<b>Geographic Information System (GIS)</b>	A system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyse, manage, and present all types of geographical data.
<b>Ground level (GL)</b>	The natural surface of the ground, a reference point or datum for bore observations and measurements.
<b>Groundwater</b>	Water that occupies the pores and crevices of rock or soil (the saturated zone of the earth) as opposed to surface water that runs off into streams, lakes and rivers. A groundwater site is one where the primary source of what is being measured resides below the land surface.
<b>Groundwater area /subarea</b>	For the purposes of groundwater resource management, the state of Western Australia is divided into groundwater areas proclaimed under the <i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> . These groundwater areas are further subdivided into groundwater subareas. The subareas are not proclaimed, but are administrative boundaries used to manage the abstraction and licensing of groundwater resources. A borehole may exist in only one groundwater area, but possibly several subareas due to overlaps at depth of different subareas. Because of the difficulty of accurately identifying all subareas for a site, only the groundwater area is shown in site reports. Groundwater areas can be seen in the full_site_listing available from the WIR <a href="#">Help and References</a> page.
<b>Groundwater</b>	Groundwater provinces can be seen in the full_site_listing available from the WIR <a href="#">Help and References</a> page.

Term	Definition
<b>province</b>	
<b>Hydrogeologist</b>	A practitioner in the area of geology that deals with the distribution and movement of groundwater in the soil and rocks of the Earth's crust (commonly in aquifers).
<b>Hydrograph</b>	A time-series data set of water level or flow presented in a graphical form. Often referred to as a plot or water level plot.
<b>Hydrographer</b>	A person who is competent in the collection, verification and analysis of hydrometric data.
<b>Hydrometric</b>	Water related (data), either natural (hydrologic cycle) or human controlled. It includes surface flows and quality, meteorological variables and groundwater.
<b>Hydstra</b>	Proprietary software developed by the Kisters company (previously HYDSYS). Specifically designed for managing and reporting hydrometric data. Uses a compressed binary format to store time-series data.
<b>Inlet</b>	The part of a device (borehole, pump, etc.) that allows ingress of water.
<b>In-situ</b>	Measurements or observations made on site.
<b>Interpolate</b>	To construct new data points within the range of a set of known data points by various mathematical techniques. In straight-line or linear interpolation, the values between two data points are obtained by drawing a straight line between them. This is only valid if the separation of the data points is sufficiently small to minimise variability.
<b>Limit of Reporting (LOR)</b>	The lowest limit to which a value can be detected and reported with a known degree of measurement uncertainty. Also referred to as practical quantitation limit (PQL). It is not the detection limit, which is often lower, but the limit at which a value can be reported with a satisfactory level of confidence.
<b>Lithology</b>	Lithology refers to the physical nature of the material comprising a geologic system in terms of material composition, grain size, inter-granular relationships. Lithology is recorded in lithology logs. See also Log.
<b>Log</b>	A series of measurements of a particular type over depth, or depth and time.
<b>Logger</b>	See data logger
<b>Metadata</b>	Descriptive statistical information about the elements of a set of data. Describes and qualifies data; adds meaning and context.
<b>Meteorological</b>	Pertaining to the atmosphere. Specifically in terms of WIR, sites where rainfall and/or climate data is collected.

Term	Definition
<b>MGA94</b>	The Map Grid of Australia 1994 is the system for expressing Universal Transverse Mercator grid coordinates (easting, northing and zone), generated from GDA94 using the GRS80 ellipsoid. See also GDA94.
<b>Non-continuous data</b>	See Discrete data.
<b>Not Monitored /Unreliable</b>	If telemetered data has not been received for more than 3 days. Or notification that monitoring has temporarily ceased at the site has been received.
<b>Numbering system</b>	A defined system of site numbering that is used to create site references having a particular structure or format, and usually encoded with human-readable information. An example is the AWRC numbering system, which was developed by the Australian Water Resources Council in the 1960s. It uses six-, seven- or eight-digit site numbers (depending on site type), with the first three digits representing the drainage basins in which the sites are located. For example, 616011 is the Walyunga Gauging station on the upper Swan River, located in the Swan coastal basin (616). The same site is known as SWN4 under the WRC1 numbering system. Numbering systems are essential for tracking how a site is identified by different data collectors over time.
<b>Plot</b>	See Hydrograph.
<b>Pluviometer (pluvio)</b>	A site equipped to measure continuous rainfall data.
<b>Point-source data</b>	A single measurement taken at a point in time. Usually applies to time-series data, as an output option. <i>cf.</i> Aggregated data.
<b>Portable document format (PDF)</b>	A file format used to represent documents in a manner independent of application software, hardware, and operating systems.
<b>Practical quantitation limit (PQL)</b>	See Limit of reporting
<b>Pre-computed reports</b>	Pre-computed reports are not generated on demand but beforehand at regular fixed intervals by the Hydstra system, and posted to a publishing file server. They are usually site-based and produced either automatically or manually from various data sources.

Term	Definition
<b>Project</b>	<p>A project (sampling program / data capture program) is a means of collecting and grouping data with a common objective. A sampling or monitoring site may belong in many projects, and a project will have many sites. Not all of the data collected at a site will belong to the same project. It may have been collected for many different purposes and with different levels of quality. An enquirer may be interested in all of the data collected at a site (multiple projects), or only that which belongs to a particular project. Projects are identified by a project code that indicates: the general region of sampling; the type of geographical feature; and the abbreviated project name, e.g. SG-E-SWANEST (Swan Goldfields (region) – Estuarine (sampling) – Swan Estuary monitoring).</p> <p>WIR is designed to extract data primarily by site, but it can be extracted by project by applying filtering based on the project code entered into the keyword field; adding the filtered sites to the site cart; extracting data; and filtering the data based on the project code.</p>
<b>Project site reference</b>	See Site reference
<b>Provisional</b>	Provisional data is that which has been provided on a temporary basis (“for the time being”), on condition that it is “raw” and unverified. It is still pending formal quality review and archiving. Telemetered data falls into this category.
<b>Quality code/rating</b>	A rating of quality that is applied to an item of data, usually expressed as a quality code. Discrete data is not currently quality rated; time-series data is.
<b>Rain/climate</b>	A site at which rainfall or climate variables are measured.
<b>Rating</b>	A relationship between two variables defined by a set of x/y coordinates, e.g. the relationship between stage and discharge (x stage height relates to y m <sup>3</sup> /sec).
<b>Reading</b>	<p>A field measurement, observation or result from laboratory analysis, captured from a sample and <i>identified</i> by a variable (mandatory), a variable qualifier (optional), units (mandatory), and a taxonomic name (optional and used for identification of biota), and <i>expressed</i> as a reading value of type number, range, date or text, optionally prefixed with a value qualifier.</p> <p>In cross-tab reports, the four components that in combination identify a reading are called a <i>Determinand</i>.</p>
<b>Reading value</b>	<p>A result from a measurement or observation. Can be one of four data-types:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number, e.g. 34109, 0.02, etc.</li> <li>2. Range, e.g. 5 – 10.</li> </ol>

Term	Definition
	3. Date, e.g. 08/04/2012 (for commencement of pumping) 4. Text, e.g. "Tide – Ebb". Numbers and ranges may be prefixed by value qualifiers (=, <, >, ~).
<b>Report</b>	A report, as far as WIR is concerned, is any extraction of data from the system's publishing warehouse or pre-computed report store, in any format required. It is not limited to the generally accepted concept of system reports, i.e. summary-type information delivered in a specific layout that is ready for printing, but rather is commonly presented as raw or aggregated results in spreadsheet, comma-separated-value text files (CSV), or tabular formats that support filtering, manipulation and statistical analysis.
<b>Request</b>	See data request
<b>Rising</b>	A water tendency is classified as Rising if the current reading is 0.025m more than the reading exactly 3 hours prior to the current reading.
<b>Sample</b>	A representative portion of matrix (sample medium), or a set of measurements or observations, collected at a singular site, date, time and depth by a particular collection regime.
<b>Searching</b>	A means of entering or selecting text-based criteria that are used to locate sites of interest, either by zooming to the location or applying filtering. See also filtering and selecting.
<b>Sediment</b>	Sediment is a naturally occurring material (sand, clay, silt, pebbles and organic material) that is broken down by processes of weathering and erosion and is subsequently transported by the action of wind, water, ice and/or by the force of gravity acting on the particles.
<b>Selecting</b>	A means of adding searched/filtered sites of interest to a "site cart" so that data reports may be run against them. See also filtering and searching.
<b>Site</b>	A location at which or about which information may be collected, usually relating to water. A site can be of any size or shape (point, line/transect, grid, area, etc.), but usually represents a point. Site coordinates represent the geographic centroid of the site to a known geographic precision (accuracy) in meters. Refer to the Explanatory Notes for more details.
<b>Site attributes</b>	Information about a site and its fixed physical characteristics and infrastructure, such as its location, identifiers, construction, status and purpose. In particular, the underlying attributes of a site as presented in GIS layers.
<b>Site cart</b>	A holding area to which candidate sites can be added or removed prior to extracting data.

**Site reference**

The meaningful identifiers used to reference a site, including the site reference, name and short name.

- The *reference* is a code or structured number used to uniquely identify the site within a particular *numbering system*.
- The *site name* is generally an expansion of the code or short name, or a descriptor assigned to the site, and is usually prefixed with the name of the geographical or geological context of the site.
- The *short name* is an abbreviation of the site name, without the geographical or geological context. It is often used in reports and plots.

Every site has one primary or default site reference. For Ground and Stream Gauging / Surface sites it is the AWRC numbering system. For Meteorological sites it is the BOM or MET numbering system, depending on site ownership. E.g.:

Primary site reference	Site name	Short name	Numbering system
<b>61610001</b>	Lake Thomson - T110 (O)	T110 (O)	AWRC

Additionally, sites can have alternative references and descriptors from other numbering systems. E.g.:

Alternative reference	Descriptor	Numbering system
<b>2033-1-SE-0255</b>	LAKE THOMPSON 110 OB	AQWAB
<b>PEE1740101B</b>	LAKE THOMPSON - T110 (O)	GW
<b>T110 (OBS)</b>	LAKE THOMPSON - T110 (O)	MWB
<b>4343</b>		WIN_ID

Note in the above that the WIN Site ID is retained as an historic site reference, to maintain linkages to data. (See also WIN Site ID.)

Each site may be used to gather data for a number of different sampling programs (projects) over time. Each project may nominate a different numbering system to identify the site during data collection and reporting, e.g.:

Project code	Primary site ref	Default project numbering system	Site reference used in the project
SG-G-LFMETHTEST	61610001	AWRC	61610001
<1996AQWADATA	61610001	AQWAB	2033-1-SE-0255
KP-R-DW3	61610001	TEXT_REF	T110 (O)
SG-G-GMSG	61610001	AWRC	61610001

<b>Staff gauge</b>	A marked plate situated vertically in a water body to provide a direct measure of the water level.
<b>Stage</b>	A measure of level or height, often with reference to a particular vertical datum. Usually applied to water level.
<b>Standard level elevation (SLE)</b>	Identifies the levels related to a local datum, not a geographic datum such as AHD. SLE is an historical datum based upon the need to avoid negative values and is rarely used today.
<b>Steady</b>	A water tendency is classified as Steady if the current reading is within 0.025m of the reading exactly 3 hours prior to the current reading.
<b>Stratigraphy</b>	Stratigraphy is the geometrical and age relations between the various lenses, beds and formations in geologic systems of sedimentary origin. Stratigraphy describes the age, conditions of deposition, character and distribution of rock strata. Stratigraphy is recorded in Summary logs, which provided interpretation of the lithological logs in terms of the geological time scale.
<b>Stream gauging station</b>	A site on a river equipped to measure water levels, quality and flow rates.
<b>Summary log</b>	A log that provides a summary or interpretation of the geological strata of a borehole over depth in terms of the geological timescale. See also Stratigraphy.
<b>Surface (other)</b>	Any site other than stream gauging stations that relates primarily to surface water systems, usually where surface water sampling is carried out.
<b>Surface water area / subarea</b>	Surface water management areas for Western Australia were derived in consultation with DWER regional offices, geometry is based on hydrographic subcatchments. Regional DWER officers identified areas of similar management requirements to define boundaries. Management areas will be used for licensing and administrative

	<p>purposes. The surface water management area data was developed in order to give a clear understanding of surface water availability and to provide management tools to make good water allocation and natural resources management decisions.</p> <p>Surface water areas/subareas can be seen in the full_site_listing available from the WIR <a href="#">Help and References</a> page.</p>
<b>Telemetry</b>	The automatic measurement and transmission of data by wire, radio, satellite or other means from remote sources. DWER telemetered sites use Internet protocol (IP) loggers to send data either hourly via satellite, or every 10 minutes via the 3G network, to a central data server.
<b>Time-series data</b>	Data that is recorded in a continuous series at regular time intervals, such as five, 10 or 15 minutes. In general, Hydstra stores time-series data and WIN stores discrete data. See also Continuous data.
<b>Unit</b>	A definite magnitude of a physical quantity, defined and adopted by convention or by law, that is used as a standard for measurement of the same physical quantity.
<b>Value qualifier</b>	A symbol that prefixes and qualifies a reading value. There are four symbols: "=", "<", ">" or "~", meaning equals, less than, greater than, and approximate respectively. A number such as <0.01 is below the limit of reporting. A number such as >180 indicates that the true value is above what can be measured, either because of limitations with the measuring device, or conditions at the site. The "=" qualifier is implicit and usually not reported.
<b>Variable</b>	The name or identifier for a constituent or property that is measured or estimated in a sample or field measurement.
<b>Variable type</b>	A means of classifying variables into groups having similar chemical structure, end use, biological order, physical characteristics and/or measurement technique.
<b>Variable qualifier</b>	This is a property that moderates or qualifies a variable, such as specimen length ranges. An example would be the variable of "Species Count" being qualified by different length ranges (0–5 cm, 5–10 cm, 10–15 cm, etc.). Reading qualifiers allow different attributes of the same variable to be reported without multiplying the number of variables. Although currently called reading qualifiers, they are more accurately understood as variable qualifiers.
<b>Verification and Validation</b>	<p>Quality assurance terms that mean different things in different systems.</p> <p>Hydstra system:          Verification refers to the overall process of using hydrographic expertise to produce an accurate and well documented hydrologic data product. It includes data validation and error correction.          Validation is the comparison with check values or previous data in order to prove the validity of measurements.</p> <p>WIN System:</p>

	<p>Verification refers to the process of verifying that data have been collected and captured correctly and completely, as specified by the project requirements. Usually carried out by an expert data manager. Validation is a process that checks and rates the <i>validity</i> of verified data. It examines verified data to ensure it is a true and valid representation of the property being measured. It is usually carried out by an expert data user or project manager. WIN data is verified but not validated and quality rated.</p>
<b>Volume</b>	See Discharge (volume).
<b>Water level</b>	The vertical distance to the surface level of water, as measured or calculated from a defined reference point or datum.
<b>Water quality</b>	Any non-water-level measurement or observation that relates to water quality, including chemical and physical characteristics from various sample matrices at the site. May also include biological indicators (e.g. taxa identification and counts).
<b>Water tendency</b>	Water tendency is a dynamic. It refers to the variation in water level from three hours earlier. Water tendency can be rising, falling or steady. See <b>Rising</b> , <b>Falling</b> and <b>Steady</b> .
<b>Wildcard</b>	A character that is inserted into a string, and that represents one or more unknown characters in database searches, e.g. for Oracle databases, a search string of "Peel%" would retrieve all words beginning with "Peel". (The "%" means any character and any number of characters following "Peel".)
<b>WIN</b>	Water INformation database: stores sampling program (project) and basic site information and discrete water-related measurements. WIN is approaching end-of-life and will be migrated to Hydstra and decommissioned in a phased program commencing in July 2017.
<b>WIN Site ID</b>	A numeric database key generated by the WIN system and that uniquely identifies a site. It contains no codified information, in contrast with site references, which usually have meaningful codes. The WIN Site ID is being phased out as the WIN system is progressively migrated to Hydstra. It will remain as an historical site reference, and is replaced by the primary or default Site Reference.
<b>WIR</b>	The Water Information Reporting system.