



# WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION FOR TENANTS



Water quality management at Sydney Airport is vital as we are almost entirely surrounded by waterways, including Botany Bay to the south, Sydney Airport Wetlands to the east, Alexandra Canal to the north and the Cooks River to the west.

## WHY IS PROTECTING WATER QUALITY AT SYDNEY AIRPORT IMPORTANT?

Certain activities undertaken at the airport have the potential to have an adverse impact on the quality of water at Sydney Airport and in the surrounding waterways.

These include:

- Spills from aircraft servicing, maintenance and refuelling;
- Stormwater runoff from areas where construction and/or maintenance activities occur;
- Aircraft, vehicle and equipment washing;
- Poor storage of bulk liquids and hazardous materials;
- Poor management of liquid and solid wastes; and
- Fire and emergency training exercises.

Poor management practices for these activities can lead to stormwater runoff containing excess hydrocarbons (fuels, oils, etc.), surfactants (detergents, etc.), sediments, nutrients and solid wastes, among other pollutants. This results in the deterioration of water quality entering the

surrounding waterways, particularly during wet weather events.

Sydney Airport is also located within the Botany Basin and has a water table elevation generally between two and three metres below the surface level. With such a high water table, Sydney Airport is susceptible to ground water contamination from even the smallest incidents.

## SYDNEY AIRPORT TARGETS AND OBJECTIVES

Sydney Airport has set key targets and objectives regarding surface water and groundwater management in the Sydney Airport Environment Strategy 2013-2018.

They are to:

- Minimise the impact of airport operations on water quality in water bodies in or adjacent to Sydney Airport;
- Prevent soil and groundwater contamination occurring from airport activities; and
- Manage known and suspected contaminated sites in accordance with regulatory requirements.



## LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The Airport (Environment Protection) Regulations 1997 establish the requirements for acceptable water quality.

They state:

- Operators at the airport must take all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent the generation of pollution (Reg. 4.01);
- Reg. 2.02 defines water pollution as something that causes or is reasonably likely to cause the physical, chemical or biological condition of waters to be adversely affected; and
- Schedule 2 Water Pollution – Accepted Limits establishes limits for the level of a variety of contaminants in stormwater.

## WHAT IS SYDNEY AIRPORT DOING TO MANAGE WATER QUALITY?

In order to help achieve the targets, objectives and legislative requirements set for water quality at the airport, Sydney Airport has implemented several water quality improvement and management measures.

These include:

- Gross pollutant traps on the airport boundaries;
- Spill kits in aircraft parking bays;
- A designated spill response vehicle, operating 24 hours a day;
- Flame traps in terminal apron areas;
- Shut-off valves at the Cooks River and Alexandra Canal discharge points;
- Measures to prevent contamination of groundwater; and
- Identification and management of activities with the potential to impact on water quality.

These devices assist in removing gross pollutants, sediment, oil and grease from storm water runoff and improve water quality in Botany Bay, Cooks River, the Alexandra Canal and Sydney Airport Wetlands.

However, water quality remains the responsibility of all airport operators, as these measures alone will not ensure the quality of water across Sydney Airport.

## ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Operations that may potentially impact on the quality of surface water and groundwater at the airport must be appropriately managed and undertaken in a responsible manner.

You can minimise the risk associated with these operations by:

- Ensuring all hazardous substances are correctly stored (contained, banded and covered);
- Undertaking activities such as washing equipment, vehicles and aircraft in purpose built facilities or contained areas where all wastewater is captured and disposed of in a licensed liquid waste facility or the sewer;
- Ensuring adequate spill and emergency response equipment is available on site to respond to any incident which may occur and ensuring all staff are trained in Sydney Airport emergency spill response procedures;
- Ensuring all wastes, both liquid and solid, are properly contained and disposed of through an appropriately licensed waste contractor; and
- Ensuring any soil contamination is reported immediately to Sydney Airport's Environment department, and containment and remediation actions are taken to minimise the risk to groundwater quality.



## **SYDNEY AIRPORT'S ONGOING WATER QUALITY MONITORING**

In addition to the water quality improvement and management measures, Sydney Airport has also implemented a Water Quality Monitoring Plan. This involves monitoring both surface water and groundwater quality

at various locations across the airport. This monitoring aims to ensure compliance with our targets, objectives and legislative requirements. It also assists in identifying areas across the airport which may pose a potential risk to water quality and areas requiring improvement.

### Further information

For more information please contact Sydney Airport's Environment department on (02) 9667 9111, email [environment@syd.com.au](mailto:environment@syd.com.au) or visit our website [www.sydneyairport.com.au](http://www.sydneyairport.com.au).

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