



Method Statement: Quality Assurance

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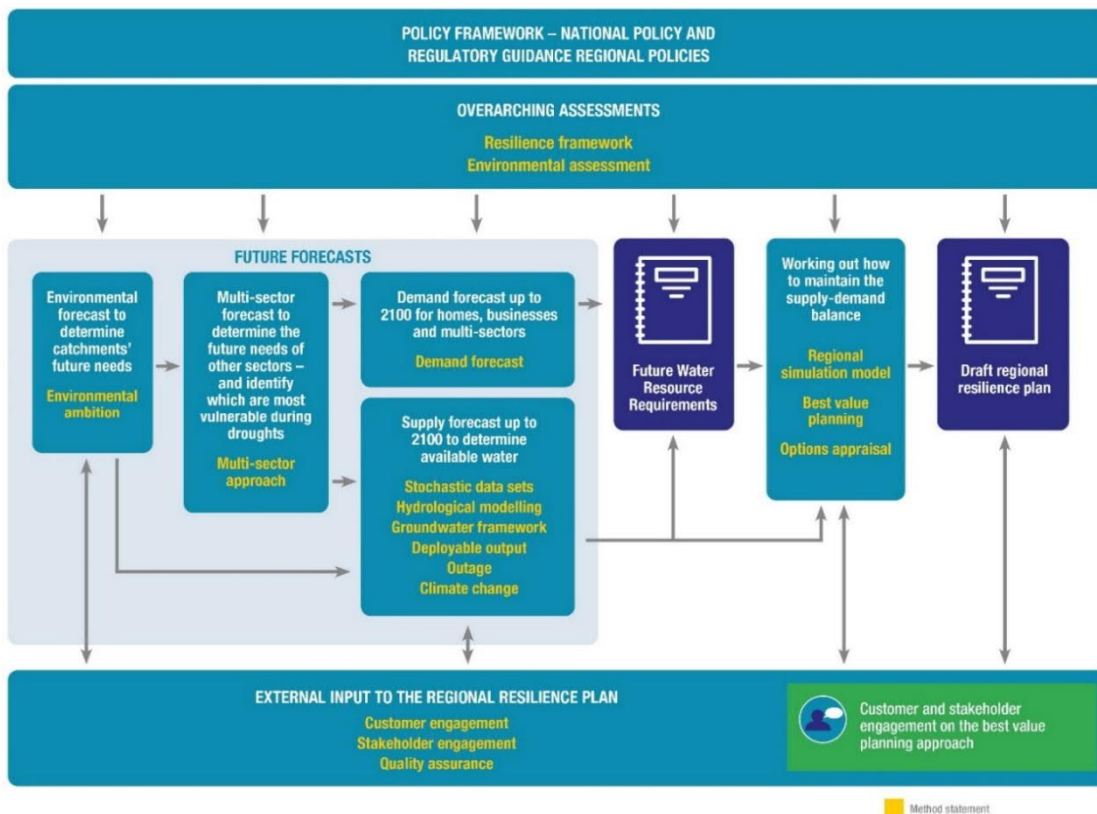
Executive summary

Water Resources South East (WRSE) is developing a multi-sector, regional resilience plan to secure water supplies for the South East until 2100.

We have prepared Method Statements setting out the processes and procedures we will follow when preparing all the technical elements for our regional resilience plan. We consulted on these early in the plan preparation process to ensure that our methods are transparent and, as far as possible, reflect the views and requirements of customers and stakeholders.

Figure ES1 illustrates how our Method Statements will contribute to the preparation process for the regional resilience plan.

Figure ES1: Overview of the Method Statements and their role in the development of the WRSE regional resilience plan



This Method Statement summarises the different assurance which has been undertaken on the regional plan as part of WRSE's Quality Assurance (QA) programme.

The WRSE QA programme aims to demonstrate that a robust process has been followed throughout the development of the regional plan, and evidence that the outputs of the regional planning process are of sufficient quality and proportional to the inputs. This provides assurance to our member companies, regulators and stakeholders that appropriate methodologies have been utilised to develop the regional plan.

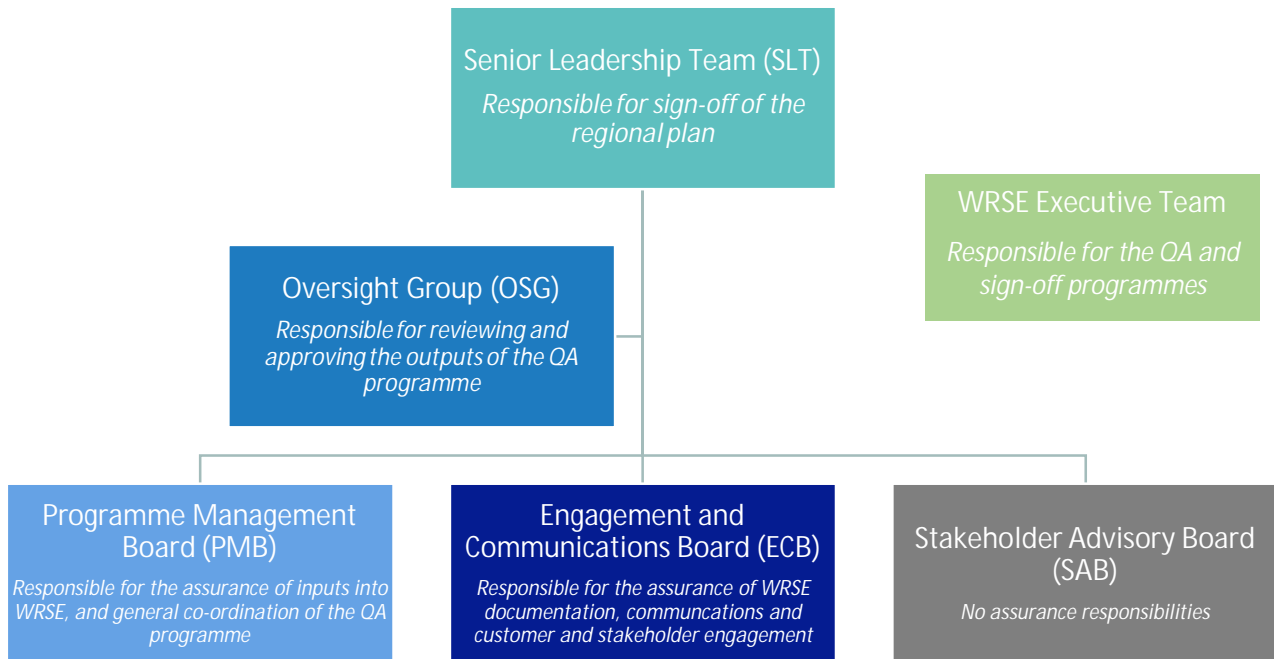
1. Introduction

- 1.1 WRSE has developed a quality assurance (QA) programme to dovetail in with the assurance systems of data providers and assure all data and processes behind major decisions and recommendations which are presented to the WRSE Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for endorsement at each stage in the development of the regional plan.
- 1.2 The aim of the WRSE QA programme is to demonstrate that a robust process has been followed throughout the development of the regional plan, and evidence that the outputs of the regional planning process are of sufficient quality and proportional to the inputs. This provides assurance to our member water companies, regulators and stakeholders that appropriate methods have been used in the development of the regional plan.
- 1.3 In addition to following our assured methodologies, WRSE have reviewed appropriate guidance and regulatory requirements to ensure our regional plan is compliant, and appropriate for our member companies to reflect in their statutory draft Water Resource Management Plans (WRMPs).
- 1.4 One of the defining features of the WRSE regional plan is the new and innovative approaches to regional planning. Our best value planning process takes the regional plan from a least cost portfolio selection to a plan that delivers best value for customers, society and the environment. As such, many elements of our methodologies and approaches cannot be audited against established and predefined criteria.
- 1.5 As well as traditional assurance audits undertaken by external auditors, we have also engaged with peer reviewers and established expert panels to test and challenge our complex and innovative approaches and methodologies. Our expert panels and peer reviewers include international and national experts in their relevant fields.
- 1.6 This Method Statement sets out the overarching approach to QA. It is intended to be read in conjunction with the draft regional plan documentation (due to be consulted on in November 2022) and is complimented by WRSE's suite of technical Method Statements, available in the [Document Library](#) on the WRSE website.
- 1.7 It is intended this Method Statement will be reviewed and updated ahead of the publication of the final regional plan in 2023.

WRSE Governance

- 1.8 The different levels of governance for WRSE have different assurance responsibilities. This is outlined at a high level in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: WRSE Governance Structure and Assurance Responsibilities

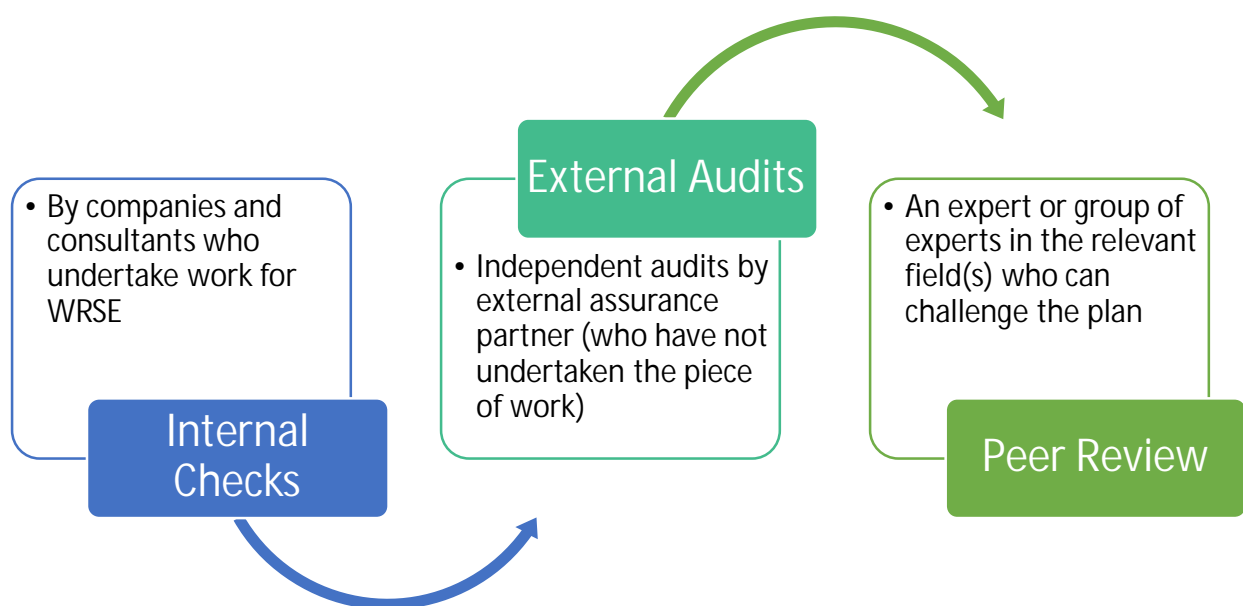


2. Quality Assurance Approach

Introduction

2.1 WRSE's QA programme has three key aspects, outlined in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Overarching approach to QA



- 2.2 Internal Checks: All companies and consultants undertaking work for WRSE, or contributing data to WRSE, will undergo their own internal checks and assurance before submitting to WRSE. Where WRSE has commissioned work, then this will be checked by the supplier using their own QA procedures, and also by the WRSE member water companies.
- 2.3 External Audits: Jacobs were appointed as WRSE's external auditors in 2019 following a competitive tender process. The scope for the external audits programme has been split into four key focus areas, summarised in Table 1 below.
- 2.4 Peer Review: Expert panels and peer reviews have been or will be undertaken on key elements of the regional plan to ensure robust independent challenge is provided.
- 2.5 Although not listed as part of the QA programme, WRSE will seek legal advice on aspects of the regional plan where required.

Table 1: External audit focus areas

Focus area	Aims	Outcomes	Timeframe
Technical Method Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assurance that our technical methods comply with National Framework and statutory WRMP guidance, where relevant. Assurance that our technical methods are fit for the purpose of generating the regional plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WRSE draft technical Method Statements are audited prior to publication Technical Method Statements are updated following audit results and stakeholder comments (by December 2020) External assurance report written and presented to WRSE SLT 	By January 2022
Technical Workstream Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assurance that we are compliant with Method Statements or deviations to the Method Statements are noted and checked. Assurance that the flow of data is correct, and that data quality is correctly assessed. Assurance that data inputs are consistent with outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WRSE work packages are audited to establish compliance with Method Statements. Quality rating data is audited, and flow of data through the WRSE systems is audited. External assurance report written and presented to WRSE SLT. 	By November 2022
Draft Regional Plan Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assurance that we are compliant with Method Statements. Assurance that the draft regional plan inputs and outputs are consistent and correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft regional plan is assured, together with the process by which it has been produced. External assurance reports written and presented to WRSE SLT prior to the sign-off of the draft regional plan. 	By November 2022
Final Regional Plan Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assurance that we are compliant with Method Statements. Assurance that the final regional plan inputs and outputs are consistent and correct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final regional plan is assured, together with the process by which it has been produced. External assurance reports written and presented to WRSE SLT prior to the sign-off of the final regional plan. 	By September 2023

WRSE Workstreams

- 2.6 A summary of the different assurance undertaken or planned on the different WRSE workstreams is in Table 2 below. The table also highlights where consultations have been undertaken, and how this has fed back into the development of the regional plan.

Table 2: WRSE workstreams, key documentation and assurance undertaken or planned

WRSE Workstream	Documentation	Internal Checks	External Audits	Expert Panel / Peer Review	Consultation
Resilience Framework	Resilience Framework Resilience Method Statement Resilience Phase 2 Report	Suppliers: - Mott MacDonald	Jacobs: Assurance of Method Statements Assurance of resilience metrics	Expert Panel for resilience (Alastair Chisholm, Ben Piper). Further consultation with Fred Boltz.	Consultation on the Resilience Framework Method Statements Consultation
Regional Simulation Model	Regional System Simulator Scoping Report Regional Simulation Model Method Statement Regional Simulator Report Deployable Output Method Statement DO Approach Summary Technical Note Groundwater Method Statement Groundwater Algorithms Report Hydrological Modelling Method Statement Stochastic Datasets Method Statement Stochastic Rainfall Data Summary Climate Change Method Statement Regional Climate Datasets and Tools Reports	Suppliers: - Atkins - HR Wallingford	Jacobs: Assurance of Method Statements Assurance of Supply Forecast: - Groundwater and Hydrology (inc. Climate Change and Stochastics) - Outage - Regional System Simulator (inc. Deployable Output)	***Peer review of the Regional System Simulator proposed for the final Regional Plan. Water companies and their consultants reviewed and assured the simulation models covering their systems.	Method Statements Consultation
Policies, Preferences & Plans	Customer Engagement Method Statement Stakeholder Engagement Method Statement Policies Report Future Water Requirements Report Best Value Planning Report ***Customer Engagement Summary Document	Suppliers: - Create51 - ***Eftec	Jacobs: Assurance of Method Statements	***Peer review of the customer engagement work proposed for the final Regional Plan.	Method Statements Consultation Consultation on Best Value Planning Criteria Consultation on Policies Report Consultation on the Future Water Requirements Report

WRSE Workstream	Documentation	Internal Checks	External Audits	Expert Panel / Peer Review	Consultation
Regional Resilience Plan	Demand Forecast Method Statement Dynamic Demand Report NHH Demand Forecast Outage Method Statement Options Appraisal Method Statement Options Appraisal Approach Alignment Documents Optimism Bias Technical Note Catchment Options Summary Report Options Appraisal Summary Report Environmental Assessment Method Statement SEA Scoping Report dRP Environmental Report (SEA, HRA, NC, BNG, WFD) Multi-Sector Approach Method Statement Best Value Plan Method Statement Investment Model Review Environmental Ambition Method Statement Environmental Ambition Technical Note Problem Characterisation Report	Suppliers: - Edge - Artesia - Mott MacDonald - Atkins	Jacobs: Assurance of Method Statements Assurance of Demand Forecast Assurance of Options: - Demand Management Options - Supply Options - WRSE Developed Options Assurance of Environmental Assessments: - Environmental Metrics - Environmental Assessments Approach Assurance of investment model and data: - Data Landing Platform - Investment model data flows and calculations - Best Value Planning approach Ovarro: Review of NHH Demand Forecast Methods	***Peer Review of investment model ***Peer Review of headroom approach proposed for the final Regional Plan. ***Peer Review of Growth Forecast and Regional PCC proposed for the final Regional Plan. Water companies reviewed and checked all relevant forecasts. Non-PWS forecasts were shared with the multi-sector group for review.	Method Statements Consultation
Governance	Quality Assurance Method Statement (this document)	Suppliers: - Jacobs			
Emerging Regional Plan (eRP)	eRP Non-Tech Summary and Technical Annexes (0-4)	Suppliers: - Create51 - Adams Hendry			eRP consultation
Draft Regional Plan (dRP)	dRP Non-Tech Summary and Technical Annexes	Suppliers: - Create51 - Adams Hendry			***dRP consultation

WRSE Workstream	Documentation	Internal Checks	External Audits	Expert Panel / Peer Review	Consultation
Revised Draft Regional Plan (rdRP) / Final Regional Plan (fRP)	***rdRP/fRP Non-Tech Summary and Technical Annexes	Suppliers: - ***Create51 - ***Adams Hendry			***rdRP/fRP consultation

3. Roles, Responsibilities & Next Steps

Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1 The WRSE Quality Assurance workstream is being managed by the WRSE Programme Manager, who is also responsible for the maintenance of this Quality Assurance Method Statement. Reviews of the Method Statement will be undertaken, and appropriate updates made as required.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of all data providers (WRSE, companies, stakeholders and third parties) to ensure that the data that has been provided to WRSE is correct, assured and fit for purpose. It is the responsibility of WRSE to use the data from companies and third parties correctly.
- 3.3 WRSE Programme Management Board (PMB) members are responsible for confirming that internal checks of the data being provided to WRSE have been undertaken.
- 3.4 All data uploaded to WRSE platforms are within templates which have a QA table outlining who has uploaded the data and when, and who approved the data for upload, together with the QA process undertaken. This data is all stored in the Data Landing Platform (DLP).
- 3.5 Jacobs have been appointed as WRSE's external auditor and are responsible for implementing the external assurance programme. Individual workstream leads are responsible for liaising with Jacobs and providing the information required for the audits, as well as implementing any changes following recommendations identified through the audit process.
- 3.6 Workstream leads are also responsible for liaising and managing expert panels and peer reviewers.
- 3.7 WRSE have not independently appointed external legal counsel. To date, any legal queries have been resolved through support from the WRSE water companies' legal teams, whilst ensuring there are no conflicts of interest.
- 3.8 Whilst the regional plan is non-statutory, the statutory draft WRMPs will need to reflect the regional plan, meaning the WRSE processes must aim to be compliant with the relevant guidance and regulatory requirements for WRMPs. Member companies are responsible for the assurance of any outputs from the regional planning process which are incorporated into their dWRMPs. In accordance with the Water Resource Planning Guidelines (WRPG), any differences in company dWRMPs compared to WRSE's draft regional plan will need to be clearly documented in the dWRMP documentation, with valid rationale for the deviation.

- 3.9 WRSE are responsible for providing an assurance statement to the companies for review and sign-off at SLT.

Next Steps

- 3.10 This method statement has not been consulted on to date, but it is intended that it will form part of the available suite of documents to support the draft regional plan consultation in November 2022.
- 3.11 WRSE will review and amend this method statement as required, and aim to re-publish alongside the final regional plan in 2023.