

Default Guideline Values (DGVs) for Aquatic Ecosystems of the Mersey Catchment

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Introduction

Water quality management, determination of water quality guideline values, and the setting of water quality objectives is guided by the *Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality 2018 (ANZG 2018)* and the *National Water Quality Management Strategy 1994 (NWQMS)*.

The *State Policy on Water Quality Management 1997 (SPWQM)* establishes a framework that is compatible and consistent with these national guidelines.

The default guideline values (DGVs) for aquatic ecosystems presented herein have been derived for the Mersey Catchment in accordance with the *NWQMS*.

Protected Environmental Values (PEVs) – Community Values

As part of the implementation of the State Policy, protected environmental values for inland waters were determined through extensive stakeholder consultation and identification of community values and uses. The PEVs for inland waters were set for 22 areas on the basis of catchment boundary or municipal boundary. These are available via the [EPA website](#).

The current PEVs for inland waters for the protection of aquatic ecosystems provide options for both pristine and modified systems:

A: Protection of Aquatic Ecosystems

- (i) Pristine or nearly pristine ecosystems

(Having regard for the management objectives for nature recreation areas, conservation areas and game reserves outlined in Schedule 4 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1970*.)

OR

- (ii) Modified (not pristine) ecosystems
 - (i) from which edible fish, shellfish and crustacea are harvested

OR

- (ii) from which edible fish, shellfish and/or crustacea are not harvested

B. Recreational Water Quality & Aesthetics

- (i) Primary contact water quality (specify sites)
- (ii) Secondary contact water quality
- (iii) Aesthetic water quality

C. Raw Water for Drinking Water Supply

- (i) Subject to coarse screening plus disinfection

D. Agricultural Water Uses

- (i) Irrigation
- (ii) Stock watering

E. Industrial Water Supply

That is, as a minimum, water quality management strategies should seek to provide water of a physical and chemical nature to support a pristine/modified aquatic ecosystem from which edible fish, crustacea and shellfish may be harvested; that is suitable as a raw water for drinking water supply subject to coarse screening plus disinfection; that is acceptable for irrigation and stock watering purposes; which will allow people to safely engage in primary contact recreation activities such as swimming at specific sites (refer to Appendix B) and secondary contact recreation activities such as paddling or fishing in aesthetically pleasing waters; and which is suitable for industrial water supply, e.g., use by aquaculture (shellfish farms) in marine farming zones.

For a detailed explanation on the PEVs as they relate to land tenure and a spatial presentation of the land tenure refer to the [Environmental Management Goals for Tasmanian Surface Waters Mersey River Catchment March, 2001](#) and PEVs map for the [upper](#), [mid](#) and [lower catchment](#), respectively.

Default Guideline Values

Guideline values apply to key indicators and are numerical concentrations or descriptive statements recommended for the support and maintenance of the designated water use or value, i.e. the Protected Environmental Value (PEV).

Tasmania refers to the following national level guideline values for the relevant key indicators.

- [Water Quality management Framework](#)
- [Toxicant DGVs in freshwater and marine water](#)
- [Water quality for primary industries](#)
- [Australian guidelines for water recycling](#)
- [Australian Drinking Water guidelines](#)
- [Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational water](#)
- [Cultural and spiritual values of waterways](#)
- [Food Standards](#)

The primary focus within Tasmania has been the derivation of guideline values for Aquatic Ecosystems based on Tasmanian data for key indicators of interest. This is as the protection of aquatic ecosystems is a PEV common to all water types. In addition, the trigger values for aquatic ecosystems from the ANZECC 2000 water quality guidelines were based on a very limited quantity of Tasmanian data.

Ecosystem Condition

The ANZG 2018 provides a framework for developing water quality guideline values based on the water type, health of aquatic ecosystems or ecosystem condition. Ecosystem condition can be viewed as a continuum ranging from natural to highly disturbed or artificial. The ANZG 2018 identifies three broad categories of ecosystem: High Ecological Value (HEV), Slightly to Moderately Disturbed (SMD) and Highly Disturbed (HD). To better characterise Tasmanian ecosystems the SMD category has been further divided into Slightly Modified Ecological Value (SMEV) and Moderately Disturbed (MD) (Figure 1).

For the decision process and selection criteria for identifying ecosystem condition refer to the EPA document, [Technical Guidance for Water Quality Objectives \(WQOs\) Setting for Tasmania](#).

Ecosystem condition continuum

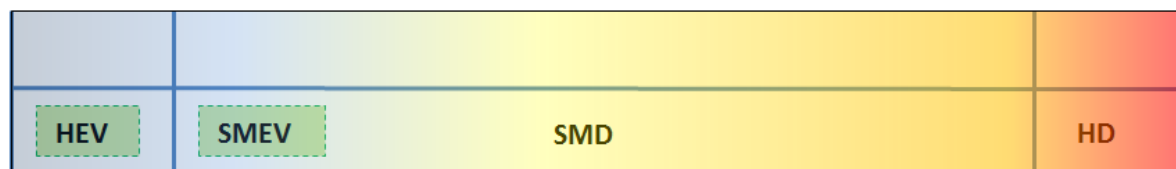


Figure 1. Ecosystem condition continuum showing HEV and SMEV reference categories.

Regionalisation of inland waters by Surface Water Catchment

The state water quality DGVs for aquatic ecosystems are based on data from across the entire state. To refine this a hydrological regionalisation approach as been adopted that is based on river flow information (Hughes, 1987). This has been further refined by regionalisation based on surface water catchment. The hydrologically distinct groupings (Figure 2). Links to regional documents are provided in and the associated surface water catchments are listed in Table I.

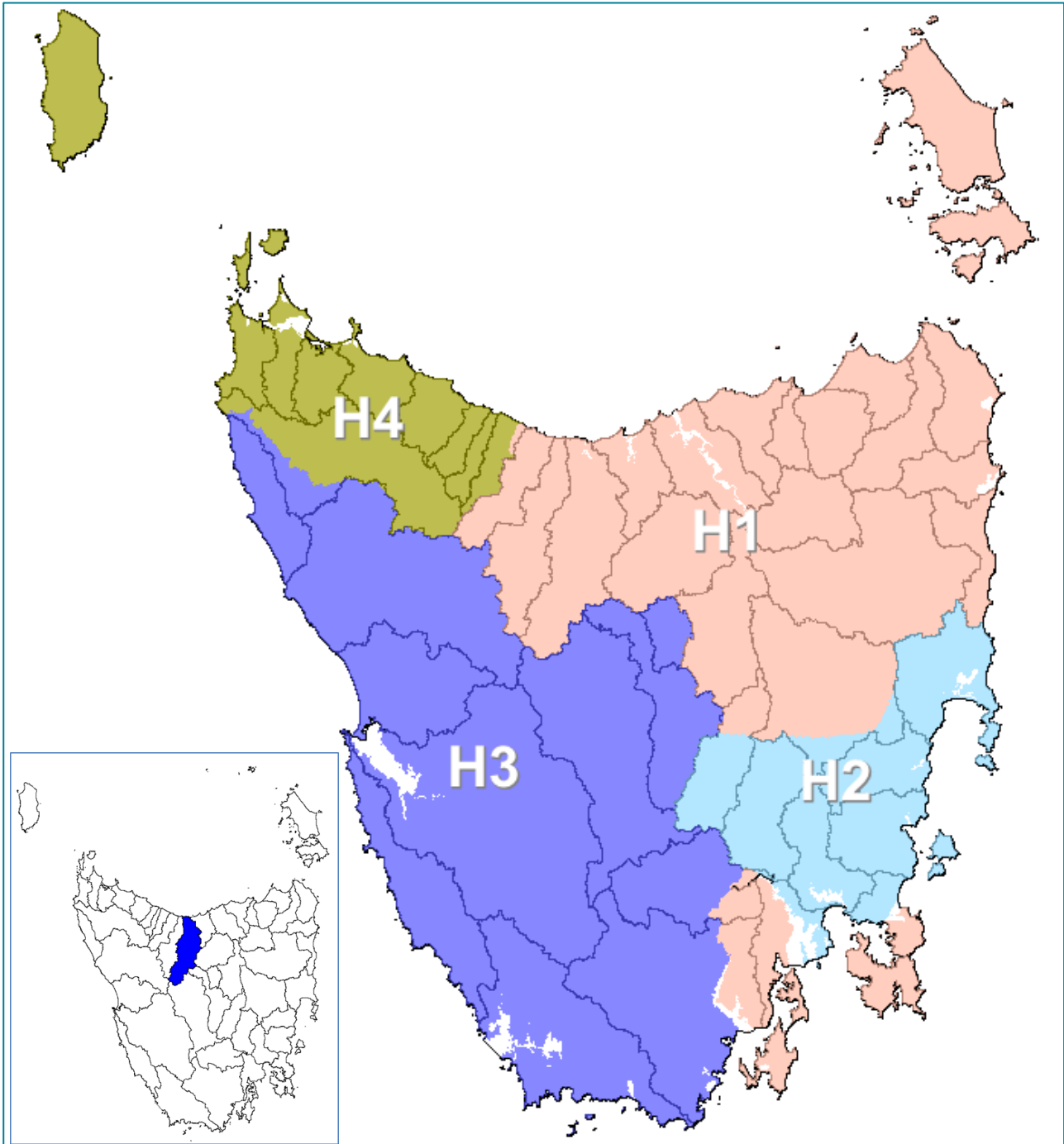


Figure 2. Hydrological regions (Hughes, 1987) and topographic catchments (Mersey highlighted on inset).

Table 1. Hydrological region and associated catchments

Hydrological Region	Catchment
<u>Hydrological Region 1 (H1)</u>	The Leven, Mersey, Meander, Rubicon, Tamar Estuary, Brumbys-Lake, South Esk, North Esk, Pipers, Little Forester, Great Forester-Brid, Ringarooma, Boobyalla-Tomahawk, George, Great Musselroe-Ansons, and Scamander-Douglas catchments are entirely within the H1 hydrological region. The Macquarie, Tasman, Huon, Clyde, Lower Derwent and Derwent Estuary-Bruny catchments are deemed to be partly within the H1 and partly within the H3 or H2 Hydrological regions.
<u>Hydrological Region 2 (H2)</u>	The Swan-Apsley, Little Swanport, Prosser, Pitt water-Coal and Jordan catchments are entirely within the hydrological region. The Tasman, Derwent Estuary – Bruny, Clyde and Macquarie catchments are deemed to be partly within the H2 and partly within the H1 Hydrological region. The Lower Derwent catchment is predominantly within the H3 region, but also has river sections that have been deemed to belong to the H1 and H2 hydrological regions. The river sections of the Lower Derwent catchment belonging to the H2 hydrological region are between Upper Dromedary and Bridgewater.
<u>Hydrological Region 3 (H3)</u>	The Ouse, Great Lake, Upper Derwent, Gordon-Franklin, Port Davey, Wanderer-Giblin, King-Henty and Pieman catchments are entirely within the hydrological region. The Huon and Lower Derwent catchments are predominately within H3 but also partly within the H1 hydrological region. While the Arthur catchment is only partly within H3 and predominantly within the H4 hydrological region.
<u>Hydrological Region 4 (H4)</u>	The Blythe, Emu, Cam, Inglis-Flowerdale, Black-Detention, Duck, Montagu, Welcome and King Island catchments are entirely within the hydrological region. The Arthur catchment is deemed to be predominantly within the H4 and only partly within the H3 hydrological region.

Deriving DGVs for aquatic ecosystems of the Mersey Catchment

For the development of water quality DGVs one site was available within the Mersey Catchment. No sites were available within the HEV ecosystem category and for this reason the sites within the H1 hydrological region were used. Within the H1 hydrological region a total of 21 locations were used. The available site was in the SMD ecosystem category (Table 2). For the development of biological DGVs eleven sites were available within the Mersey Catchment. Of these, six sites were within the HEV ecosystem category and five sites were within the SMD ecosystem category (Table 2).

Table 2. Sites used to develop water quality and biological DGVs within the Mersey Catchment

Site	HEV WQ	HEV BIOL	SMD WQ	SMD BIOL
Mersey River upstream of Lake Rowallan		✓		
Redwater Creek off Sheffield Road		✓		
Lobster Rivulet at Parsons Road		✓		
Little Fisher River upstream of lowest road crossing		✓		
Arm River at Arm River Weir		✓		
Fish River at Mersey Forest Road		✓		
Mersey River at Union Bridge			✓	✓
Mersey River at C138 Road				✓
Mersey River at Dogs Head Hill				✓
Sassafras Creek at Howes Road				✓
Fish River upstream of Fisher Power Station				✓

The parameters or indicators measured at a site are dependent on the water type and the question being asked by the monitoring program. For inland water the indicators that were widely monitored (spatially and temporally) were selected for the derivation of DGVs for aquatic ecosystems (Table 3.).

Table 3. Indicators for which DGVs were derived for inland waters

Water Type	Indicator
Inland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physico-chemical: Dissolved Oxygen, Conductivity pH, Turbidity and, Water Temperature. • Nutrients: TAN (NH₃ and NH₄⁺), Nitrate, Nitrite, Total Nitrogen, Dissolved Reactive Phosphorus, Total Phosphorus and, Total Suspended Solids (TSS). • Biological: AUSRIVSA Band, OE50, OE50Signal, Signal Index, Taxon Diversity, EPT Diversity, and Macroinvertebrate Composition, Fish O/E, Fish O/P, Proportion native fish abundance, proportion native fish species, proportion native biomass, Chlorophyll a, algal cover and riparian shading*

Where possible water quality data collected at times of no flow or during times of flood (over bank full) have been excluded in the derivation of the water quality DGVs. On this basis it can be taken that the WQ DGVs represent base flow conditions, i.e. flow conditions that occur 98 percent of the time within waterways. For the decision process and selection criteria for identifying flow conditions refer to the EPA document, [Technical Guidance for Water Quality Objectives \(WQOs\) Setting for Tasmania](#).

The minimum sample number required to determine percentile values with at least 95% confidence for WQ DGVs are as follows: 6 samples for 50th percentile; 14 samples for 20th and 80th percentiles; 29 samples for 10th and 90th percentiles; and 35 samples for 5th and 95th percentiles. In instances where there is insufficient data for a given key indicator the national WQ DGVs can be used.

For biological indicators a minimum of six combined season AUSRIVAS outputs have been used to generate percentile values to provide a level of statistical robustness for biological DGVs. For details on biological indicators for inland waters refer to the EPA document, [Technical Guidance for Water Quality Objectives \(WQOs\) Setting for Tasmania](#)

The tables overleaf of physico-chemical indicators report the DGVs for aquatic ecosystems of the Mersey Catchment (shaded values) for HEV and SMD ecosystem categories on an annual and seasonal basis. Additional percentile values have been included for comparative purposes. The DGVs are summarised in Appendix A.

HEV DGVs for aquatic ecosystems of the Mersey Catchment

The HEV water quality DGVs (Tables 4 to 8 shaded values) have been derived from 21 HEV sites across the HI region.

Table 4 Full year

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	7.8	8.4	9.2	10.3	11.4	11.9	12.6	474
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	79.2	84.3	89.4	96.8	103.0	106.0	108.9	335
Field Cond @ TRef25 µS/cm [^]	30.0	40.0	49.0	76.5	135.6	198.5	241.4	868
pH field - sensor TC [^]	6.0	6.2	6.4	7.0	7.4	7.6	7.8	734
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.7	3.5	5.4	7.6	610
Temperature (Celsius) [^]	4.8	5.6	6.8	10.3	14.4	16.6	18.4	845
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.009	0.014	0.017	0.020	302
Nitrate as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.005	0.036	0.119	0.190	0.228	312
Nitrite as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.005	0.006	302
Total Nitrogen as N mg/l [^]	0.090	0.115	0.155	0.260	0.450	0.600	0.737	321
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.006	300
Total Phosphorus as P mg/l [^]	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.009	0.015	0.020	0.023	324
Total Suspended Solids (1.5µm) mg/l [*]	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	15
Total Suspended Solids (0.45µm) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	3.000	7.000	10.150	358

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

Table 5 Summer

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	7.2	7.8	8.2	9.2	9.8	10.3	10.7	127
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	71.6	81.0	86.5	95.0	101.6	105.9	109.9	91
Field Cond @ TRef25 µS/cm [^]	41.0	47.0	56.0	88.3	153.0	206.0	238.5	221
pH field - sensor TC [^]	6.1	6.3	6.5	7.1	7.5	7.7	7.9	191
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.4	0.5	0.6	1.6	3.0	3.6	6.2	153
Temperature (Celsius) [^]	11.0	11.8	12.6	14.9	17.7	20.1	21.8	211
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.003	0.005	0.006	0.010	0.017	0.020	0.025	80
Nitrate as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.019	0.091	0.173	0.217	82
Nitrite as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.005	0.007	80
Total Nitrogen as N mg/l [^]	0.089	0.123	0.179	0.280	0.463	0.624	0.773	84
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.005	0.005	0.006	79
Total Phosphorus as P mg/l [^]	0.003	0.003	0.004	0.010	0.017	0.020	0.023	83
Total Suspended Solids (1.5µm) mg/l [*]	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	4
Total Suspended Solids (0.45µm) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	3.000	7.000	8.000	101

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

Table 6 Autumn

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	7.4	8.4	9.2	10.1	11.3	11.7	11.9	132
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	70.7	81.6	86.5	95.3	103.0	105.9	108.4	96
Field Cond @ TRef25 μ S/cm [^]	30.0	40.0	50.0	81.0	161.0	206.5	258.3	246
pH field - sensor TC [^]	6.0	6.2	6.5	7.0	7.5	7.6	7.9	204
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.6	3.0	3.9	5.1	174
Temperature (Celsius) [^]	5.8	7.2	8.5	10.8	13.6	15.3	17.0	235
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.003	0.004	0.006	0.009	0.014	0.016	0.019	89
Nitrate as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.030	0.094	0.138	0.187	91
Nitrite as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.004	0.006	89
Total Nitrogen as N mg/l [^]	0.090	0.116	0.151	0.245	0.418	0.514	0.591	96
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.005	0.005	0.006	89
Total Phosphorus as P mg/l [^]	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.008	0.016	0.019	0.022	98
Total Suspended Solids (1.5 μ m) mg/l [*]	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	3
Total Suspended Solids (0.45 μ m) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	5.000	7.600	17.300	95

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

Table 7 Winter

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	10.4	10.7	10.9	11.6	12.6	12.9	13.3	110
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	88.0	89.0	93.0	97.5	104.2	106.2	109.1	74
Field Cond @ TRef25 μ S/cm [^]	27.4	34.1	42.0	66.7	112.8	177.5	245.3	208
pH field - sensor TC [^]	5.8	6.0	6.3	6.7	7.3	7.4	7.7	172
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.5	0.6	1.0	2.0	5.4	7.7	11.0	146
Temperature (Celsius) [^]	3.9	4.3	5.1	6.2	7.9	8.7	9.3	205
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.009	0.013	0.016	0.020	66
Nitrate as N mg/l [^]	0.007	0.009	0.018	0.047	0.176	0.230	0.295	69
Nitrite as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.005	0.006	66
Total Nitrogen as N mg/l [^]	0.097	0.107	0.148	0.270	0.500	0.700	0.806	71
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.005	66
Total Phosphorus as P mg/l [^]	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.008	0.012	0.018	0.022	74
Total Suspended Solids (1.5 μ m) mg/l [*]	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5
Total Suspended Solids (0.45 μ m) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	3.000	4.700	8.350	74

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

Table 8 Spring

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	9.0	9.2	9.6	10.4	11.2	11.7	11.9	105
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	84.6	90.7	92.5	98.5	102.3	104.9	107.5	74
Field Cond @ TRef25 μ S/cm [^]	29.6	37.0	46.4	75.8	117.8	190.3	228.4	193
pH field - sensor TC [^]	6.0	6.2	6.5	6.9	7.4	7.6	7.7	167
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.9	4.0	5.7	7.7	137
Temperature (Celsius) [^]	5.9	6.6	7.5	9.7	12.4	14.4	15.8	194
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.004	0.005	0.006	0.009	0.011	0.015	0.016	67
Nitrate as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.039	0.139	0.175	0.206	70
Nitrite as N mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.005	0.005	67
Total Nitrogen as N mg/l [^]	0.089	0.123	0.159	0.260	0.418	0.642	0.678	70
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/l [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.005	66
Total Phosphorus as P mg/l [^]	0.003	0.003	0.004	0.009	0.013	0.020	0.021	69
Total Suspended Solids(1.5 μ m) mg/l [*]	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	3
Total Suspended Solids (0.45 μ m) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	3.000	6.000	9.650	88

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

The HEV biological DGVs detailed in Table 9 have been derived from 6 HEV sites within the catchment.

Table 9 Data Summary and biological DGVs (shaded) for HEV ecosystems of the Mersey Catchment

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
AUSRIVAS Band#	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	33
OE50#	0.81	0.87	0.91	1.00	1.07	1.09	1.12	33
OE50Signal#	0.97	0.98	0.99	1.01	1.02	1.03	1.04	33
Signal Index	6.1	6.2	6.2	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.6	33
Taxon Diversity	22	22	23	25	27	28	30	33
EPT Diversity	10	10	11	12	13	13	14	33
Macroinvertebrate composition	0.42	0.42	0.43	0.45	0.51	0.54	0.54	33

Based on combined season AUSRIVAS outputs.

SMD DGVs for aquatic ecosystems of the Mersey Catchment

The SMD water quality DGVs (Tables 10 to 14 shaded values) have been derived from 1 SMEV site within the catchment.

Table 10 Full year

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	8.0	8.6	9.1	10.3	11.3	11.7	12.1	693
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	86.5	89.0	92.0	97.0	101.0	104.1	106.9	424
Field Cond @ TRef25 µS/cm	45.0	57.0	65.0	77.0	108.0	132.0	214.5	51
pH field - sensor TC	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.5	7.7	7.9	7.9	49
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.5	0.7	1.1	2.4	5.6	9.9	20.8	1035
Temperature (Celsius)	6.0	6.3	7.3	11.9	17.3	19.2	21.7	45
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.010	0.021	0.044	0.064	446
Nitrate as N mg/L [^]	0.001	0.002	0.005	0.085	0.206	0.270	0.317	457
Nitrite as N mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.003	0.003	446
Total Nitrogen as N mg/L [^]	0.094	0.141	0.224	0.407	0.673	1.600	2.000	393
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.005	375
Total Phosphorus as P mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.011	0.029	0.078	0.123	467
Total Suspended Solids (1.5µm) mg/L [^]	0.500	0.500	2.000	5.000	5.000	6.000	10.000	59
Total Suspended Solids (0.45µm) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	3.000	11.000	20.700	33.750	134

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

Table 11 Summer

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	7.0	7.7	8.3	9.1	9.6	9.8	10.2	170
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	85.4	88.5	91.3	96.0	103.4	106.4	111.7	112
Field Cond @ TRef25 µS/cm	64.1	67.4	71.8	93.0	133.6	144.8	187.9	15
pH field - sensor TC	7.0	7.2	7.3	7.5	7.8	7.8	7.8	14
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.6	0.7	1.1	2.0	4.9	9.3	16.5	247
Temperature (Celsius)	14.7	15.2	16.9	18.0	21.5	21.9	22.6	13
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.002	0.003	0.007	0.013	0.033	0.048	0.055	110
Nitrate as N mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.092	0.159	0.225	0.251	112
Nitrite as N mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.003	110
Total Nitrogen as N mg/L [^]	0.106	0.148	0.213	0.373	0.734	1.520	1.810	99
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.005	94
Total Phosphorus as P mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.011	0.031	0.082	0.110	113
Total Suspended Solids (1.5µm) mg/L [^]	0.500	0.500	1.100	5.000	5.000	5.000	7.000	13
Total Suspended Solids (0.45µm) mg/L [*]	0.650	1.600	3.000	9.000	15.200	20.400	42.900	27

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

Table 12 Autumn

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	8.2	8.7	9.2	10.1	11.0	11.3	11.6	185
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	88.4	90.0	92.2	97.0	101.7	103.7	106.9	112
Field Cond @ TRef25 µS/cm	58.7	60.0	61.0	71.0	96.8	109.7	198.8	12
pH field - sensor TC	6.9	7.0	7.4	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.8	12
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.5	0.7	1.0	2.3	4.9	9.7	22.3	282
Temperature (Celsius)	5.8	7.9	9.2	10.7	14.8	15.7	16.6	9
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.009	0.025	0.057	0.072	124
Nitrate as N mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.063	0.154	0.197	0.211	126
Nitrite as N mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.003	0.004	124
Total Nitrogen as N mg/L [^]	0.096	0.136	0.204	0.353	0.663	1.800	2.300	113
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.004	0.004	0.005	106
Total Phosphorus as P mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.010	0.030	0.095	0.144	134
Total Suspended Solids (1.5µm) mg/L [^]	0.401	0.800	2.200	5.000	5.000	5.000	6.800	17
Total Suspended Solids (0.45µm) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	5.000	12.000	16.600	25.650	28

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

Table 13 Winter

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	10.3	10.6	10.8	11.5	12.0	12.5	12.7	180
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	85.0	88.3	91.4	96.0	99.1	102.5	104.7	106
Field Cond @ TRef25 µS/cm	37.8	43.8	51.0	70.0	79.4	89.8	172.4	13
pH field - sensor TC	6.7	7.0	7.0	7.4	7.8	7.9	7.9	13
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.7	0.9	1.5	2.6	6.3	10.7	28.5	268
Temperature (Celsius)	5.7	6.0	6.0	6.7	7.6	8.3	8.5	12
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.008	0.015	0.038	0.069	113
Nitrate as N mg/L [^]	0.005	0.006	0.012	0.148	0.300	0.351	0.422	118
Nitrite as N mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.003	0.003	113
Total Nitrogen as N mg/L [^]	0.083	0.148	0.315	0.467	0.635	1.394	1.920	97
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.006	92
Total Phosphorus as P mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.011	0.026	0.054	0.128	120
Total Suspended Solids (1.5µm) mg/L [^]	1.700	2.600	3.200	5.000	5.800	7.600	14.800	17
Total Suspended Solids (0.45µm) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	3.000	7.000	15.200	22.100	39

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

Table 14 Spring

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L [^]	8.7	9.2	9.6	10.5	11.0	11.3	11.6	158
Dissolved Oxygen % Saturation [^]	87.7	89.7	93.4	97.0	100.0	102.1	104.2	94
Field Cond @ TRef25 µS/cm	55.0	69.0	74.0	77.0	108.0	109.0	114.5	11
pH field - sensor TC	6.6	6.8	7.0	7.3	7.6	7.8	8.0	10
Turbidity NTU [^]	0.5	0.7	1.0	2.6	6.2	9.3	17.0	238
Temperature (Celsius)	7.8	8.2	8.3	11.9	16.0	16.5	17.3	11
TAN as N mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.004	0.010	0.019	0.036	0.044	99
Nitrate as N mg/L [^]	0.002	0.003	0.008	0.073	0.208	0.254	0.290	101
Nitrite as N mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.003	0.003	99
Total Nitrogen as N mg/L [^]	0.078	0.145	0.212	0.413	0.703	1.300	1.885	84
Phosphorus, Dissolved Reactive as P mg/L [^]	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.005	83
Total Phosphorus as P mg/L [^]	0.003	0.003	0.006	0.012	0.030	0.074	0.118	100
Total Suspended Solids (1.5µm) mg/L [^]	0.775	1.200	3.200	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.450	12
Total Suspended Solids (0.45µm) mg/L [*]	0.500	0.500	0.500	2.250	8.200	22.100	41.400	40

* State derived values, [^]Hydrological region values, TAN=Total Ammonia Nitrogen (NH₃ and NH₄⁺).

The SMD biological DGVs detailed in Table 15 have been derived from 5 SMEV sites within the catchment.

Table 15 Data Summary and biological DGVs (shaded) for SMD ecosystems of the Mersey Catchment

Parameter	5 th %ile	10 th %ile	20 th %ile	Median	80 th %ile	90 th %ile	95 th %ile	Sample Number
AUSRIVAS Band#	B	B	B	A	A	A	A	29
OE50#	0.78	0.83	0.86	0.94	1.01	1.04	1.05	29
OE50Signal#	0.96	0.96	0.98	0.99	1.01	1.02	1.03	29
Signal Index	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.5	29
Taxon Diversity	20	21	22	24	27	28	30	29
EPT Diversity	10	10	11	12	13	13	13	29
Macroinvertebrate composition	0.41	0.41	0.44	0.48	0.52	0.55	0.57	29

Based on combined season AUSRIVAS outputs.

The SMD DGVs may represent aspirational DGVs for moderately disturbed ecosystems but apply when site-specific guideline values consistent with the NWQMS are not available.

Information from the Tasmanian River Condition Index (TRCI) project has been incorporated into the biological DGVs in order to provide guideline values for key biological indicators relating to invertebrate abundance, native fish, and algae. Details are provided in the EPA document, [Technical Guidance for Water Quality Objectives \(WQOs\) Setting for Tasmania](#).

A summary of the HEV and SMD DGVs from Table 4 to Table 15 are provided in Appendix A.

Appendix A: DGVs summary for aquatic ecosystems of the Mersey Catchment.

HEV	Physico-chemical indicators and water quality DGVs for Aquatic Ecosystems																	
	DO (mg/L) [^]		DO (% sat) [^]		Cond [^]	pH [^]		Turb [^]	Temp (°C) [^]		TAN as N [^]	NO ₃ as N [^]	NO ₂ as N [^]	Total N as N [^]	DRP as P [^]	Total P as P [^]	TSS* (1.5 µm)	TSS* (0.45 µm)
	lower	upper	lower	upper	(µs/cm)	lower	upper	NTU	lower	upper	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)
Annual	9.2	11.4	89.4	103.0	135.6	6.4	7.4	3.5	6.8	14.4	0.014	0.119	0.004	0.450	0.004	0.015	5.00	3.00
Summer	8.2	9.8	86.5	101.6	153.0	6.5	7.5	3.0	12.6	17.7	0.017	0.091	0.004	0.463	0.005	0.017	5.00~	3.00
Autumn	9.2	11.3	86.5	103.0	161.0	6.5	7.5	3.0	8.5	13.6	0.014	0.094	0.004	0.418	0.005	0.016	5.00~	5.00
Winter	10.9	12.6	93.0	104.2	112.8	6.3	7.3	5.4	5.1	7.9	0.013	0.176	0.004	0.500	0.004	0.012	5.00~	3.00
Spring	9.6	11.2	92.5	102.3	117.8	6.5	7.4	4.0	7.5	12.4	0.011	0.139	0.004	0.418	0.004	0.013	5.00~	3.00

NB: DO (dissolved oxygen), Cond (electrical conductivity), Turb (turbidity), TAN (total ammonia nitrogen), DRP (dissolved reactive phosphorus), TSS (total suspended solids) filtered through, e.g., 1.5 µm. * State derived values, ^ Hydrological region values, ~ <95% confidence. Figures shown above are based on data from 21 HEV site across the HI Hydrological region unless noted otherwise in the table.

SMD	Physico-chemical indicators and water quality DGVs for Aquatic Ecosystems																	
	DO (mg/L) [^]		DO (% sat) [^]		Cond	pH		Turb	Temp (°C)		TAN as N [^]	NO ₃ as N [^]	NO ₂ as N [^]	Total N as N [^]	DRP as P [^]	Total P as P [^]	TSS [^] (1.5 µm)	TSS* (0.45 µm)
	lower	upper	lower	upper	(µs/cm)	lower	upper	NTU	lower	upper	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)	(mg/L)
Annual	9.1	11.3	92.0	101.0	108.0	7.1	7.7	5.6	7.3	17.3	0.021	0.206	0.002	0.673	0.004	0.029	5.00	11.00
Summer	8.3	9.6	91.3	103.4	133.6	7.3	7.8	4.9	16.9~	21.5~	0.033	0.159	0.001	0.734	0.004	0.031	5.00~	15.20
Autumn	9.2	11.0	92.2	101.7	96.8~	7.4~	7.7~	4.9	9.2~	14.8~	0.025	0.154	0.003	0.663	0.004	0.030	5.00	12.00
Winter	10.8	12.0	91.4	99.1	79.4~	7.0~	7.8~	6.3	6.0~	7.6~	0.015	0.300	0.002	0.635	0.004	0.026	5.80	7.00
Spring	9.6	11.0	93.4	100.0	108.0~	7.0~	7.6~	6.2	8.3~	16.0~	0.019	0.208	0.002	0.703	0.004	0.030	5.00~	8.20

NB: DO (dissolved oxygen), Cond (electrical conductivity), Turb (turbidity), TAN (total ammonia nitrogen), DRP (dissolved reactive phosphorus), TSS (total suspended solids) filtered through, e.g., 1.5 µm. * State derived values, ^ Hydrological region values, ~ <95% confidence. Figures shown above are based on data from 1 SMEV site within the Mersey Catchment unless noted otherwise in the table.

Biological Condition	Biological indicators and biological DGVs for Aquatic Ecosystems													
	AUSIVAS band		OE50		OE50 Signal		Signal Index		Taxon Diversity		EPT Diversity		Macroinvertebrate Composition	
	lower	upper	lower	upper	lower	upper	lower	upper	lower	upper	lower	upper	lower	upper
HEV	A	A	0.91	1.07	0.99	1.02	6.2	6.5	23	27	11	13	0.43	0.51
SMD	B	A	0.86	1.01	0.98	1.01	6.0	6.3	22	27	11	13	0.44	0.52

Figures shown above are based on data from 6 HEV and 5 SMEV sites within the Mersey Catchment.

Appendix B: Precautionary approach for recreational waters microorganisms

For recreational waters microorganisms are used as a regulatory parameter of public health significance. The indicator organism used for microbiological water quality assessment is intestinal enterococci and is related to a risk matrix which uses sanitary inspection of potential faecal contamination sources and 95th percentile levels of enterococci/100mL. The Public Health Act 1997 Recreational Water Quality Guidelines (Tasmania 2007) for a general water body (where no sanitary risk assessment has been undertaken) has determined microbial levels for investigation and action to informing the public of the elevated public health risk. These levels are at enterococci counts in a single water sample greater than 140 enterococci/100mL and when two consecutive water samples results are greater than 280 enterococci/100mL.

A precautionary approach is however recommended by the EPA, being that microbial levels should be at 40 enterococci/100mL or less and this should be the DGV for this key indicator. Refer to the Australian Government Guidelines for Managing Risk in Recreational Water for more detail on the classification matrix for faecal pollution of recreational water and other key indicators DGVs.



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