

Version 4.2

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**PREFACE**

Since its first publication in 1958, Australian Rainfall and Runoff (ARR) has remained one of the most influential and widely used guidelines published by Engineers Australia (EA). The 3rd edition, published in 1987, retained the same level of national and international acclaim as its predecessors.

With nationwide applicability, balancing the varied climates of Australia, the information and the approaches presented in Australian Rainfall and Runoff are essential for policy decisions and projects involving:

* infrastructure such as roads, rail, airports, bridges, dams, stormwater and sewer systems;
* town planning;
* mining;
* developing flood management plans for urban and rural communities;
* flood warnings and flood emergency management;
* operation of regulated river systems; and
* prediction of extreme flood levels.

However, many of the practices recommended in the 1987 edition of ARR have become outdated, and no longer represent industry best practice. This fact, coupled with the greater understanding of climate and flood hydrology derived from the larger data sets now available to us, has provided the primary impetus for revising these guidelines. It is hoped that this revision will lead to improved design practice, which will allow better management, policy and planning decisions to be made.

One of the major responsibilities of the National Committee on Water Engineering of Engineers Australia is the periodic revision of ARR. While the NCWE had long identified the need to update ARR it had become apparent by 2002 that even with a piecemeal approach the task could not be carried out without significant financial support. In 2008 the revision of ARR was identified as a priority in the National Adaptation Framework for Climate Change which was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments.

In addition to the update, 21 projects were identified with the aim of filling knowledge gaps.

Funding for Stages 1 and 2 of the ARR revision projects were provided by the now Department of the Environment. Stage 3 was funded by Geoscience Australia. Funding for Stages 2 and 3 of Project 1 (Development of Intensity-Frequency-Duration information across Australia) has been provided by the Bureau of Meteorology. The outcomes of the projects assisted the ARR Editorial Team with the compiling and writing of chapters in the revised ARR. Steering and Technical Committees were established to assist the ARR Editorial Team in guiding the projects to achieve desired outcomes.

**Assoc Prof James Ball Mark Babister**

ARR Editor Chair Technical Committee for

ARR Revision Projects

**ARR Technical Committee:**

*Chair*: Mark Babister

*Members:*

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Professor George Kuczera

Professor Martin Lambert

Associate Professor Rory Nathan

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Associate Editors for Book 9 - Runoff in Urban Areas

Peter Coombes

Steve Roso

Editorial assistance: Mikayla Ward

**Status of this document**

This document is a living document and will be regularly updated in the future.

In development of this guidance, and discussed in Book 1 of ARR 1987, it was recognised that knowledge and information availability is not fixed and that future research and applications will develop new techniques and information. This is particularly relevant in applications where techniques have been extrapolated from the region of their development to other regions and where efforts should be made to reduce large uncertainties in current estimates of design flood characteristics.

Therefore, where circumstances warrant, designers have a duty to use other procedures and design information more appropriate for their design flood problem. The Editorial team of this edition of Australian Rainfall and Runoff believe that the use of new or improved procedures should be encouraged, especially where these are more appropriate than the methods described in this publication.

Care should be taken when combining inputs derived using ARR 1987 and methods described in this document.

**Change Log**

**Version 4.2 - Climate Change Chapter Update**

In late 2022 the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water in partnership with Engineers Australia commenced an 18 month project to update the climate change considerations chapter of the Australian Rainfall and Runoff guidelines (Chapter 6, Book 1) to incorporate the most recent and relevant climate science and projections. The project involved the undertaking of a rigorous literature review of hydroclimatology under climate change relevant to design flood estimation, which was peer reviewed and published in a leading international journal. The findings were used to draft practical flood guidance which was finalised after an extensive process of review and feedback by industry. Funding for this project was received from National Emergency Management Agency under the Disaster Risk Reduction Package. The project report was adapted to replace Book 1 chapter 6.

*Climate Change Update Project Control Group*:

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This version updates Book 1 Chapter 6 to reflect updates in climate science as discussed above. While no other chapters have been updated some minor amendments were made to remove inconsistencies with the new chapter. FAQs relating to the update are available https://arr.ga.gov.au/contact-us.

**Key updates in Version 4.2**

| **Update** | **Version 4.2** |
| --- | --- |
| Book 1 | Book 1 Chapter 6 Climate change updated |
| Guideline formats | PDF  Web-based version  Epub version |
| User experience | FAQs added to Geoscience Australia Website |
| Climate change | Reflected best practice as of 2024 and IPCC 6 |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Other Minor Changes | List the minor changes to the following chapters for consistency  Book 1 Chapter 4 Section 15.1  Book 1 Chapter 4 Section 16.1  Book 1 Chapter 5 Section 10.4  Book 2 Chapter 1 Section 3  Book 2 Chapter 3 Section 3  Book 6 Chapter 5 Section 5  Book 8 Chapter 7 Section 7  Book 9 Chapter 6 Section 4.2  Book 9 Chapter 6 Section 4.6 |

**ARR 2019 (now Version 4.1)**

Geoscience Australia, on behalf of the Australian Government, asked the National Committee on Water Engineers (NCWE) - a specialist committee of Engineers Australia - to continue overseeing the technical direction of ARR. ARR's success comes from practitioners and researchers driving its development; and the NCWE is the appropriate organisation to oversee this work. The NCWE has formed a sub-committee to lead the ongoing management and development of ARR for the benefit of the Australian community and the profession. The current membership of the ARR management subcommittee includes Mark Babister, Robin Connolly, Rory Nathan and Bill Weeks.

The ARR team have been working hard on finalising ARR since it was released in 2016. The team has received a lot of feedback from industry and practitioners, ranging from substantial feedback to minor typographical errors. Much of this feedback has now been addressed. Where a decision has been made not to address the feedback, advice has been provided as to why this was the case.

A new version of ARR is now available. ARR 2019 is a result of extensive consultation and feedback from practitioners. Noteworthy updates include the completion of Book 9, reflection of current climate change practice and improvements to user experience, including the availability of the document as a PDF.

**Key updates in ARR 2019**

| **Update** | **ARR 2016** | **ARR 2019** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Book 9 | Available as “rough” draft | Peer reviewed and completed |
| Guideline formats | Epub version  Web-based version | Following practitioner feedback, a pdf version of ARR 2019 is now available |
| User experience | Limited functionality in web-based version | Additional pdf format available |
| Climate change | Reflected best practice as of 2016 Climate Change policies | Updated to reflect current practice |
| PMF chapter | Updated from the guidance provided in 1998 to include current best practice | Minor edits and reflects differences required for use in dam studies and floodplain management |
| Examples |  | Examples included for Book 9 |
| Figures |  | Updated reflecting practitioner feedback |

As of May 2019, this version was considered to be final.

**ARR 2016 (now Version 4.0)**

Released July 2016