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NEW ZEALAND
CONFERENCE & EXPO
22-24 September 2026
Claudelands, Kirikiriroa Hamilton

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THE 3 WATERS ASSET DATA STANDARD GUIDE

MWater
Water NZ

Karakia tīmatanga | Opening karakia

Whakataka te hau

Whakataka te hau ki te uru	*Cease the winds from the west*
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga	*Cease the winds from the south*
Kia mākinakina ki uta	*Let the breeze blow over the land*
Kia mātaratara ki tai	*Let the breeze blow over the ocean*
E hī ake ana te atākura	*The red-tipped dawn rises*
He tio, he huka, he hauhū	*On ice, on snow, on frost*
Tihei mauri ora!	***Behold, the breath of life!***

What we will cover

- **The standard** — What V4.0 is, and why consistent asset data matters
- **The guide at a glance** — The four sections and who should read them
- **Inside the guide** — What each section gives you
- **What we found** — What the sector told us while we wrote it
- **Where to go next** — Getting the guide, giving feedback, and your questions

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The 3 Waters Asset Data Standard, V4.0

A national standard for 3 waters asset data, published by Water New Zealand in January 2026. Developed from V3.6 (NTU), restructured by WW, extensively reviewed, and now being implemented by water service entities, contractors and software suppliers.

Guiding principles

- **Familiarity**
- **Simplicity**
- **Modularity**
- **Adaptability**
- **Scalability**

What is new

- Simpler, machine-readable structure
- Water meters added
- Backflow preventers added
- Hydrants added
- IIMM data confidence rating at asset level
- Location referenced to LINZ OP S 01287

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Why consistent asset data matters

Information disclosure

Regulatory asset classes roll up to the Commerce Commission's twelve

Entity formation

Design data once, before councils combine

Investment decisions

Renewal and criticality calls are only as good as the grouping

Data supply chain

One specification for developers, surveyors and as-built providers

National direction

Alignment is likely to gain legislative weight around 2028

Already working well?

Map to the standard now, and align at your next system change

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The four guide sections

01

Understanding the standard

The shared starting point for everyone

02

Applying the location hierarchy

How others have done it, and the choices that matter

03

Steps to follow

A decision flow from first step to go-live

04

References

Tables, starter values and the evidence base

Built on interviews across the sector, a Water Services Managers Group survey (11 responses from 10 organisations) and a review across five jurisdictions.

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Who should read what



Governance

Why consistency matters, and what it will take to invest

Start at
Overview and Section 1



Asset managers and practitioners

The structural choices, how others made them, and a decision flow for going live

Start at
Sections 2 and 3



Consultants and contractors

The technical detail, applied the same way across organisations

Start at
Sections 2 and 4

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01

Understanding the standard

- Find your way around the standard in minutes
- Understand the location hierarchy and asset classification
- Understand what is fixed and what you set
- Make the case for consistency in your organisation
- See how V4.0 compares internationally

The workbook at a glance

Eight tabs: an Information tab and seven working tabs. Read them by how each relates to an individual asset, not by what they are called.

Tab	The question it answers about one asset	Scale
Information	Which version is this, and what can I do with it?	—
Asset Classification	What is this thing?	783 unit types
Common and Financial Attributes	What does every asset record, regardless of what it is?	82 attributes
Accounting Attributes	What does the finance function need?	27 attributes
Technical Attributes	What is recorded for specific assets?	182 attributes
Class Attribute Mapping	Which of the technical attributes apply to which asset?	519 rows
Dropdowns	What values are preset for me?	1,176 rows
Dropdowns (Organisation)	What values do we allow?	37 rows

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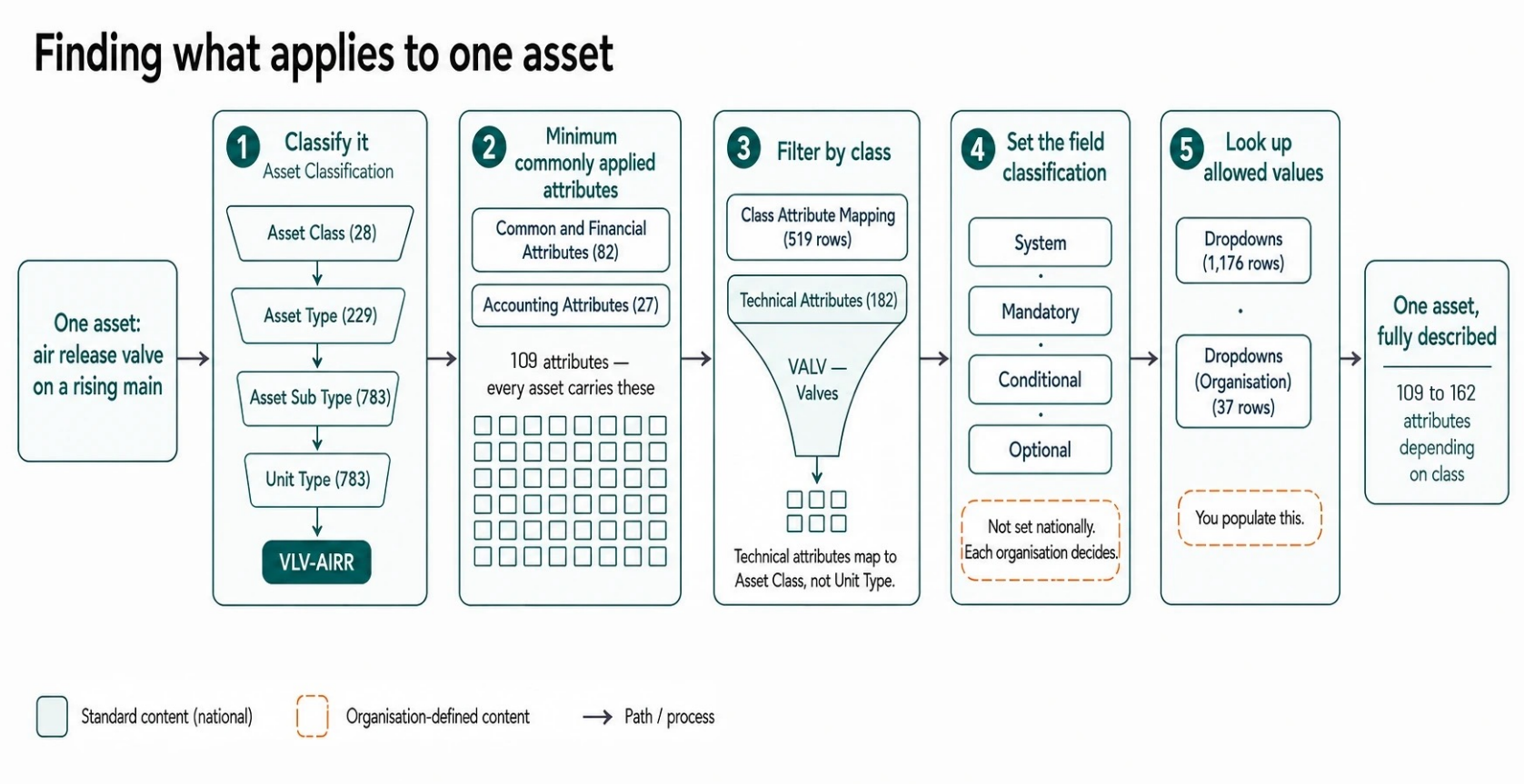
One asset through the workbook



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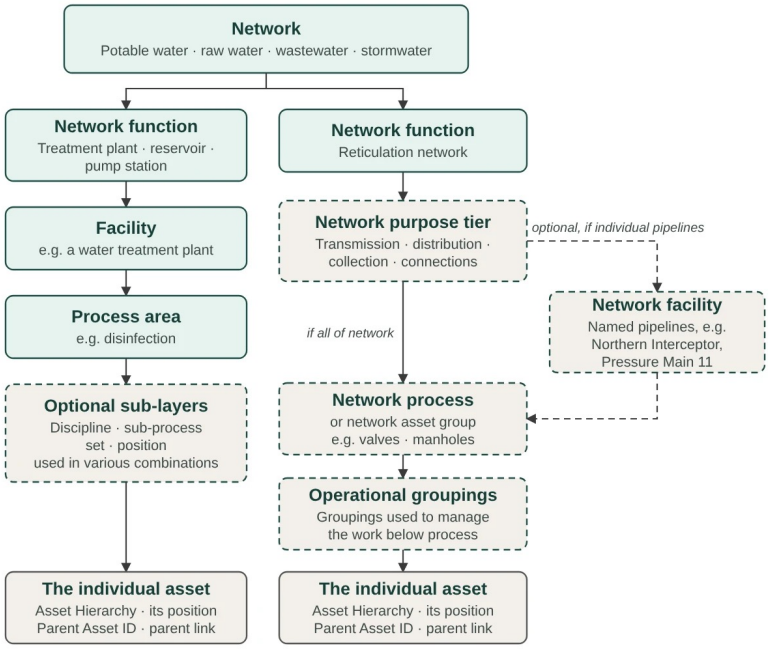
The guide's two core definitions

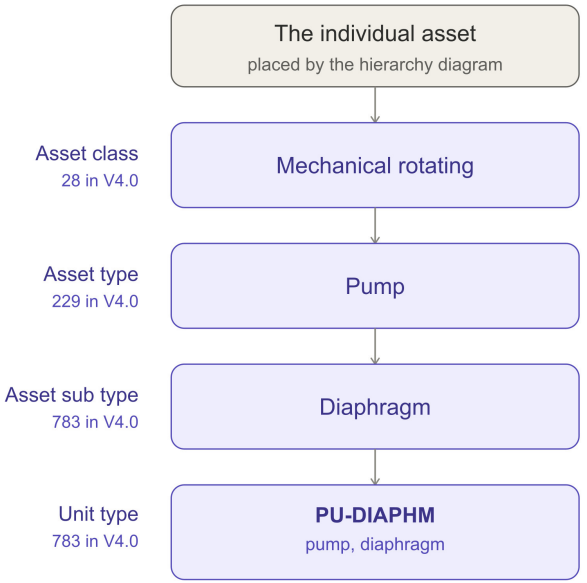
Location Hierarchy

Where an asset sits



Asset Classification

What an asset is



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What the hierarchy does for you

Groups assets

So related assets are managed, analysed and reported on together

Locates assets

So people find what they are looking for quickly

Collects activity

The place work orders, maintenance history and costs are recorded

Rolls information up

Cost, condition and performance at any level of the structure

Aggregates to a parent

Flow from several sources combined into one site total

Holds obligations

Consent and compliance requirements against the right place

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02

Applying the location hierarchy

- Build on others' experience, expertise and learnings
- Get the big decisions right the first time
- Decide whether to adopt, align or map
- Set the right depth for your plants and network
- Plan for your systems and their limits

How others are applying the standard

Section 2.2: six variations that recur across the implementations reviewed.

Extra levels below process area

Sub-process, set and position, all rolling back up to process area.

Reticulation gets structure

Purpose tiers, named pipelines and asset groups, with zone and catchment as attributes.

A discipline layer is added

Mechanical, electrical, instrumentation, civil. The one extension that does not collapse cleanly.

Classification values are added

Mostly in instrumentation, after exhausting what the standard offers.

Field classifications change

Each organisation sets Mandatory, Conditional and Optional for itself.

Not everyone uses the facility and process

Levels left out have to be re-derived for every report.

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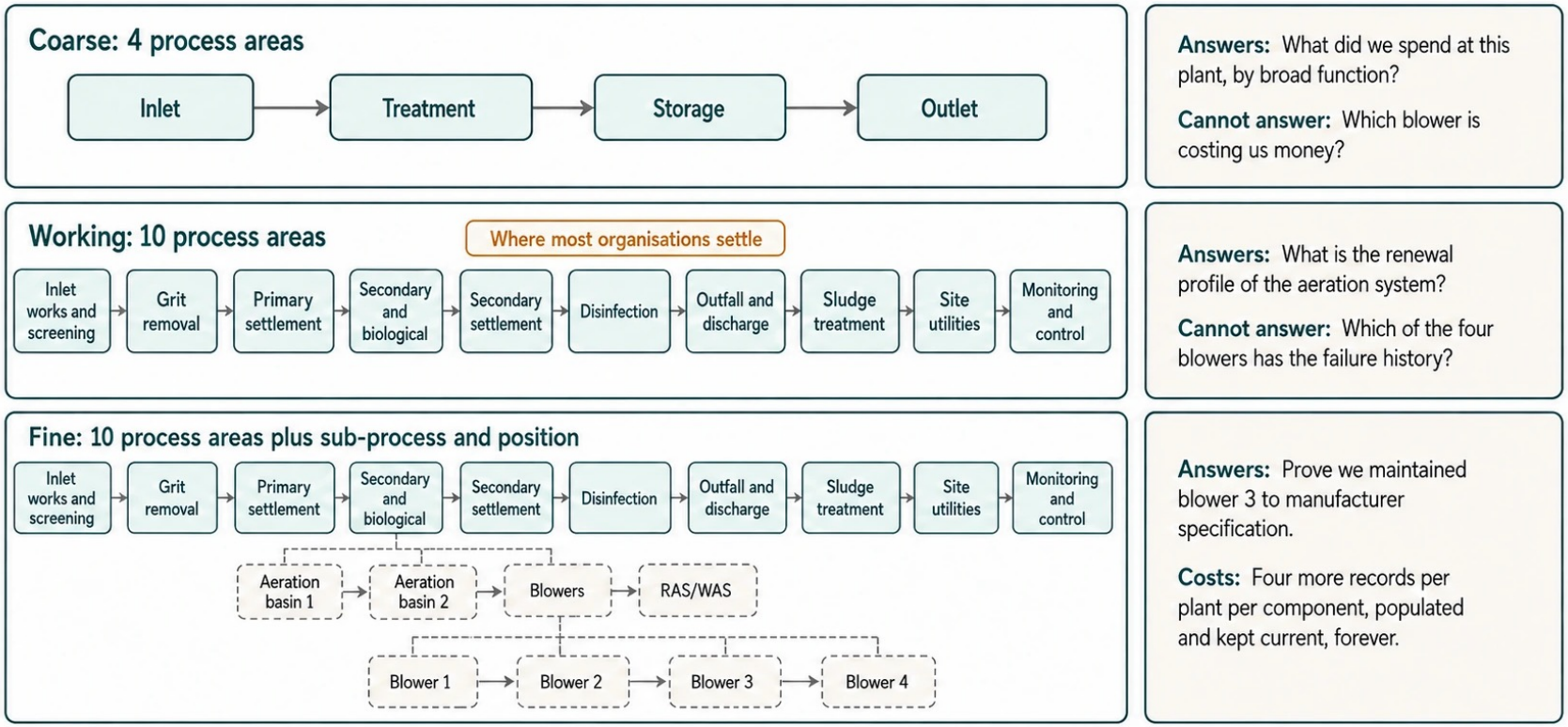
How deep to go: one WWTP cut three ways



Three key questions: what decision does this layer support, who maintains it, and what breaks if it is absent?

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03

Steps to follow

- A clear path from first decision to go-live
- Two routes, so you can pick the one that fits your network

Facility-led

Several plants and significant vertical assets

Reticulation-led

One or two small plants and a lot of pipe

Both routes share the same steps and finish at go-live

04

References

- Tools, starter values and evidence, ready to use

Attribute tables

Commerce Commission asset class crosswalk

Starter process lists and naming options

International comparison and survey findings

FAQs and glossary

What we found while writing the guide

Awareness and alignment

- High awareness of the standard across the sector
- A reasonable degree of commonality
- The New Zealand standard compares well internationally

Adoption in practice

- Varying degrees of adoption
- Structure handled differently in each asset management system
- Some facilities with no structure at all

Other takeouts

- The hierarchy matters a great deal to contractors
- Language is consistently inconsistent

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What the guide gives you

Makes it accessible

Find your way to what you need in the standard, fast

Lays out the decisions

The set-up choices, with guidance for your kind of organisation

A decision flow

Step by step, through to go-live

Shows what others did

Examples from across the sector, with the pros and cons

A starter for ten

Starter values for the fields you populate yourself

Scales with you

Useful at whatever stage of adoption you are at

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Where to go from here

Read the guide

- Online at https://3wads-guide.pages.dev/
- Start with the guide in one page, then the section for your role

Use the standard

- Workbook, webinar and FAQs at waternz.org.nz/3wads
- Free to copy and adapt with attribution

Give feedback

- On the standard: the 3W ADS feedback form at waternz.org.nz/3wads
- On the guide, or to talk to someone who has done it: Greg Preston, greg.preston@waternz.org.nz

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Questions?

Karakia whakamutunga | Closing karakia

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He tio, he huka, he hauhū	*On ice, on snow, on frost*
Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e!	***Joined, gathered, bound together!***