

Response times – water main breaks and leaks

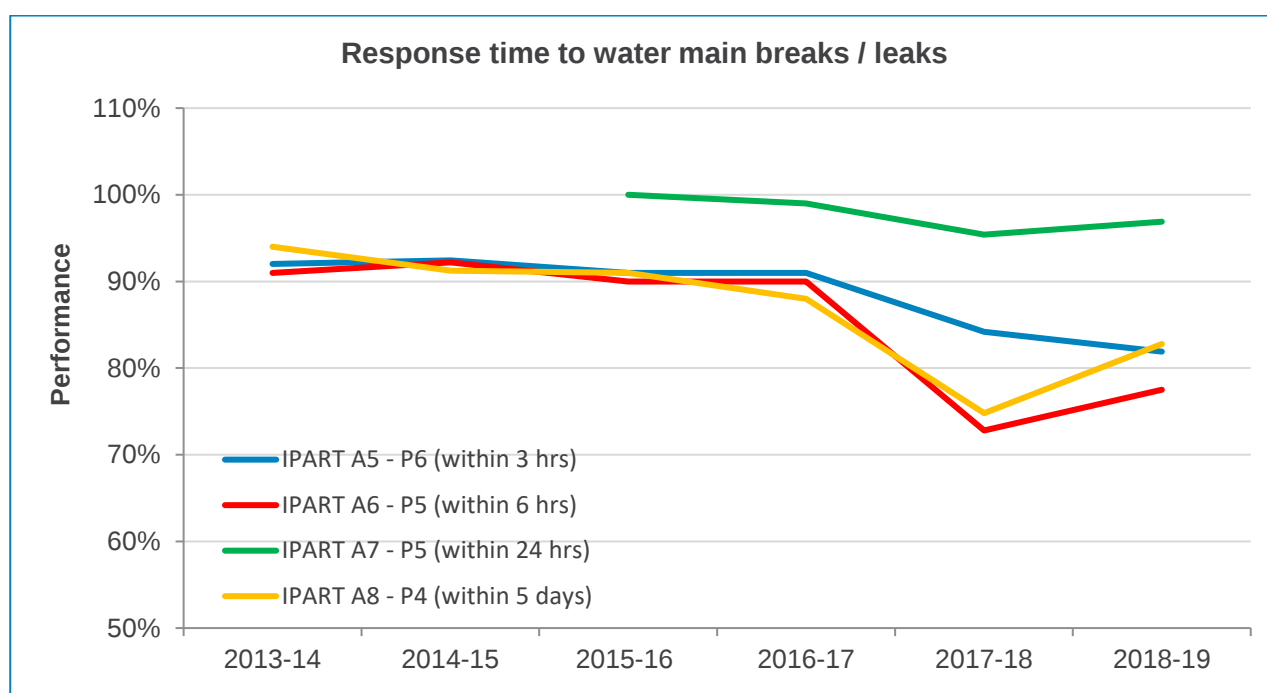
Sydney Water's *Operating Licence 2015-2020* contains indicators to measure our response time to water main breaks and leaks in our system.

Performance against response time priorities in 2018-19

Indicator number	Indicator*	Performance 2018-19
A5	Percentage of Priority 6 breaks/leaks in drinking water mains that Sydney Water responded to within three hours.	82%
A6	Percentage of Priority 5 breaks/leaks in drinking water mains that Sydney Water responded to within six hours.	78%
A7	Percentage of Priority 5 breaks/leaks in drinking water mains that Sydney Water responded to within 24 hours.	97%
A8	Percentage of Priority 4 breaks/leaks in drinking water mains that Sydney Water responded to within five days.	83%

* See pages 3 and 4 for Priority 4, 5 and 6 definitions

Response time for water main breaks/leaks: historical performance comparison



* Note: historical data is unavailable for indicator A7 prior to 2015-16

Sydney Water's overall response time performance has improved from last year, except for Priority 6 breaks and leaks (within three hours), where response time performance was slightly lower than the previous year (82% in 2018-19 compared with 84% in 2017-18). There was a 6% increase in the number of Priority 6 breaks and leaks in 2018-19 compared to 2017-18.

Performance has been impacted by an increase in the volume of reactive work as well as the number of significant water main breaks due to the prolonged hot and dry weather experienced since late 2016. This is because seriously dry conditions cause our clay soils to move and contract, placing pressure on pipes and fittings.

Over the past two years we've responded to the worsening effects of drought by employing additional field staff to make repairs across our network and we are also continuing to supplement our internal workforce with contract crews to help manage and reduce our backlog, allowing our teams to focus on complex repair work.

Our response time can be impacted by a range of factors including:

- the number of breaks and leaks that occur in the system
- the severity of the leak and complexity of the repair
- site accessibility
- traffic and time of day.

We monitor these indicators to ensure we maintain good performance.

Read more about [how we manage and respond to breaks and leaks](#).

Response time definitions:

Indicator number	Indicator	Definitions
A5	Percentage of Priority 6 breaks/leaks in drinking water mains that Sydney Water responded to within three hours.	Water main breaks/leaks refers to the trunk and reticulation components of Sydney Water's drinking water supply system between water treatment plants and a property. Response time is measured from when Sydney Water receives notification of a break or leak to the time Sydney Water stops the loss of water. Priority level 6 A high flow of water causing an immediate danger to people, property or the environment. A leak that: • is to result or results in a major loss of water • is to cause or causes damage to property, or • is to pose or poses immediate danger to the environment or people. An example of a Priority 6 leak is water gushing or spurting from the ground and resulting in a major loss of water.
A6	Percentage of Priority 5 breaks/leaks in drinking water mains that Sydney Water responded to within six hours.	Priority level 5 A moderate flow of water representing a risk to people, property or the environment. A leak that: • is to result or results in the moderate loss of water • is to cause or causes service disruption to a customer or customers • is to threaten or may threaten damage to property, or • is to pose or poses a potential risk to the environment or people. An example of a Priority 5 leak is a leak that results in a moderate loss of water. A leak classified as a Priority 5 would be running at a rate greater than the full flow of a garden tap.
A7	Percentage of Priority 5 breaks/leaks in drinking water mains that Sydney Water responded to within 24 hours.	Same as Priority 5 definitions above.

Indicator number	Indicator	Definitions
A8	Percentage of Priority 4 breaks/leaks in drinking water mains that Sydney Water responded to within five days.	Priority level 4 A low flow of water that does not represent a risk to people, property or the environment. A leak that: • is to result or results in a minor loss of water • is to cause or causes a limited service disruption to: ○ customers, ie lower pressure than normal or a reported ○ minor leak on a roadway, and • is not a danger to the environment or people. An example of a Priority 4 leak is a leak which results in a minor loss of water. A leak classified as a Priority 4 would be running at a rate less than the full flow of a garden tap.