



QTech technology helps irrigators comply with tightening water regulations

Media release, 15 April 2013, QTech Data Systems, Christchurch, New Zealand: Telemetry and water management specialist, [QTech Data Systems](#), has created and launched a sophisticated [Aqua Flow Management System \(AFM\)](#) that enables water consent holders to remotely monitor, better manage and report their water usage data directly to their regional council.



Under New Zealand's National Regulations of Water Use Measurement and Reporting, all 20,000 water consent holders in New Zealand must install both a water measuring and data reporting system*. And by law the onus is on every one of them to provide their water usage data to their regional council in the required format. If they fail to comply with these measures councils will either charge to collect the data in person, or present the consent holder with an abatement order.

On recognising a gap in the market for an advanced water measuring and reporting solution, QTech designed the AFM especially for irrigators to meet the compliance needs of regional councils in New Zealand. It is a complete irrigation and resource consent data collection and reporting system manufactured and supported locally and designed for NZ conditions and requirements.

"We recognised that the combination of automated reporting and water measurement would greatly benefit both consent holders and councils," says QTech managing director Steve Champ. "Convenience, efficient water management, remote monitoring and online reporting are just a few of the many advantages that the AFM provides. It also provides peace of mind for irrigators when regional councils start to implement tighter restrictions to ultimately ensure full compliance with the regulations."



The AFM features an automated cellular GPRS / SMS transmitter that uploads the collected data to a secure online database called Datahost where consent holders can log in and view the collected information - such as water level, pressure, flow rate, their remaining allocation, a summary of the season to date, graphical trends, and more. This data can be provided directly to the regional authority. The system can also send a warning text message when the usage reaches 90% and 100% of the water consent.

CEO of Irrigation NZ Andrew Curtis says: "It is important that these types of web based data logging systems are adopted by water consent holders. Not only to fulfil NZ's resource management goals

but, most importantly, for the betterment of farm management practises among individual land users and the associated cost savings this technology will provide them over time.”

Irrigation is essential for both agriculture and horticulture in New Zealand, and a significant share of our country’s economy depends on it. But our water resource is limited – our history of extremely dry summers and wasteful inefficient use of water have necessitated action – which is why to use water in substantial quantities requires consent and any breach of limits will be fined.

At 42%, Canterbury has by far the largest proportion of water take consents in New Zealand, and this figure is increasing. For example, in the last four years the number of irrigated dairy farms being monitored by ECAN alone has risen by almost 15%, up from 851 in 2008 to 977 last year. And this trend is set to continue. ECAN has spearheaded a compliance programme that other regional councils around New Zealand are monitoring closely.

To optimise irrigation efficiency for farmers and growers QTech has also developed other water management products that include wireless point to point systems for remote monitoring and control of devices - such as pumps and tanks within a range of several kilometres, and an SMS controller that can send status alert text messages to multiple people and enable them to remotely switch the devices on or off.



QTech is an [ECAN preferred supplier](#) of *both* irrigation technology and data hosting & compliance reporting, and has also been awarded [Irrigation New Zealand’s](#) ‘Blue Tick’ accreditation as a data hosting provider.

About QTech Data Systems

QTech Data Systems established in Christchurch NZ in 1985 specialises in developing Irrigation NZ approved telemetry, remote monitoring and data recording solutions for the water industry. The company supplies products to local authorities, electrical wholesalers, irrigation suppliers, and systems integrators. For more information about QTech and its products visit www.qtech.co.nz or call **(03) 366 3713**.

Notes:

*The first National Regulation deadline for consent holders with takes of 20 or more litres per second (l/s) passed last November, and regional councils are now approaching those who failed to meet the deadline. The next compliance deadline will be November 2014 for those who take between 10-20 l/s, and November 2016 for those who take between 5-10 l/s.

For information about consented water takes and allocations in New Zealand visit:

<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/ser/snapshot-water-allocation-nov06/html/page3.html>

For information about the Resource Management (Measurement and Reporting of Water Takes) Regulations 2010 visit: <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/central/measuring-reporting-water-takes.html>

For ECAN advice on water measuring go to <http://www.ecan.govt.nz/advice/your-water/water-metering/Pages/Default.aspx>