

## Barker Barambah Water Supply Scheme Operating and Water Sharing Rules: What you need to know!

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### Operating and Water Sharing Rules

The *Water Plan (Burnett Basin) 2014 (the Plan)* defines the water sharing rules by which SunWater is obligated to operate the Barker Barambah Water Supply Scheme. The Plan commenced on 22 August 2014 and replaced the repealed water plan from 2000.

Key changes:

- The reserve for high priority water allocations was amended to protect high priority water allocations;
- The requirement to have Critical Water Supply Arrangements was removed
- The ability to access water during stream flow periods was removed;
- The estimation of storage and transmission losses was improved;
- The compensation flow management rules were replaced with environmental release rules to provide flows for fish, aquatic plants and to improve water quality;
- The nominal operating levels in Joe Sippel and Silverleaf weir were revised to maximise storage and supply efficiencies.

Key points:

#### 1. The high priority reserve was increased to improve performance of high priority water allocations

The high priority reserve is the volume of water set aside for high priority water allocations (i.e. urban use) for use in years after the current water year. There is 2,236 ML of high priority water allocation in the scheme. The high priority reserve volume was amended by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (**the Department**) to provide a three year reserve for high priority (6,533 ML). The Department's hydrological modelling indicated that a lesser reserve volume eroded the performance of high priority water allocations.

#### 2. The Critical Water Supply Arrangements (CWSA) were integrated into the water sharing rules

Critical water shortages in 2005-2006 led to the development of a CWSA. The CWSA no longer apply as the Plan replaces the CWSA. There is no medium priority cut-off rule or stage 1 of CWSA. The announced allocation determines how much water you are entitled to take at all times. You are prevented from taking water once the announced allocation reaches 0% this includes the ability for drawing down Water Holes. From commencement of the water year on 1 July, the announced allocation can only be increased and not decreased.

#### 3. Streamflow period arrangements were removed

The arrangements under the CWSA also allowed water to be accessed during certain flow conditions when the CWSA were in place. The streamflow period arrangements were also removed by the Department due to impacts on water harvesters and environmental flows.