

Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday 16 May 2017

Time: 1pm

Location: Mundubbera Community Centre

Attendees: Ken Darrow, IAC Chair
Stewart McKenzie, IAC Member
Link Davies, IAC Member
Ben Harzer, IAC Member
Tim Allen, IAC Member
John Kelly, SunWater Service Manager, Chinchilla
Rob Lewis, SunWater, General Manager, Operations South
Gordon Delaney, SunWater, Manager, Environment and Water Planning
Ashley McDonald, SunWater, Storage Supervisor, Boondooma Dam

Apologies: Troy Emmerton, IAC Member
Andrew Vicary, IAC Member
Boyd Paton, IAC Member

Chair: Ken Darrow

Minutes: John Kelly

Agenda			
Item No.	Item	HB Doc No.	Presenter
1.	Welcome and Introductions		John K
2.	Apologies		Chair
3.	Review of Previous Minutes		Chair
4.	Business Arising from Previous Minutes		Chair
5.	Agenda Items		Chair
6.	Announced Allocation Options on 1 July 2017		Gordon D
7.	Pre-Feasibility Options for Long Term Infrastructure		Rob L
8.	2017 Network Service Plan		John K
9.	Review of releases prior to 24 Feb 17 Cutoff		John K
10.	Water Ordering		John K
11.	Customer Newsletter		John K
12.	General Business		All

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was opened at 1pm. SunWater staff Rob Lewis and Gordon Delaney attended the meeting.

Agenda Item 2 – Apologies

Troy Emmerton, Andrew Vicary and Boyd Paton

Agenda Item 3 – Review of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the previous IAC meeting held on 15 December 2016 were reviewed. Stewart moved that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Seconded by Tim.

Agenda Item 4 – Business Arising from Previous Minutes

1. SunWater to investigate what information can be provided to the IAC in terms of customers within the scheme

SunWater advised the IAC that details of other customers in the scheme including volumes of allocation held could not be supplied to the IAC due to privacy reasons. Numbers of customers, total available allocation, historical release information and loss estimates along with other generic data can be made available.

2. SunWater to investigate the use of cameras to monitor river flows in strategic locations

SunWater advised the IAC that this action had not been progressed as it was considered more prudent to pursue the installation of an additional gauging station in the first instance as this will provide better information than cameras when it comes to making decisions on releases from the dam. It was agreed that if after the installation of an additional gauge, it was considered cameras would still be beneficial, it would be further considered at that time.

3. SunWater to provide details of water released from Boondooma Dam to deliver customers water allocation and also what volumes were recorded at Derra gauging station

SunWater advised the committee that it would be progressing investigations into the installation of an additional gauging station between Cooranga and Derra in the coming financial year. The IAC advised there were possibly several locations that should be considered including Zippo's crossing, Rienke's crossing and other natural rock bars. SunWater will seek the advice and input from its hydrographers for the most suitable location.

4. SunWater to confirm the 'urban' revenue in table 3 of the NSP performance report

SunWater confirmed that the urban revenue identified in the revenue table in the 2016-17 NSP performance report between 2013-2015 was an allocation held by South Burnett Regional Council. The account was closed in May 2015 and as such no urban revenue appears in the NSP from 2016.

5. Back to Base Metering

The IAC raised the issue of Back to Base (BtB) metering as a means to assist SunWater with determining releases in real time. SunWater advised the IAC that BtB metering is dependent on the extent and reliability of the mobile communications network and the appetite to meet the cost of installation. SunWater has installed this type of metering on some assets (in other schemes) previously with limited success, predominantly due to the unreliability of mobile phone network. SunWater advised the IAC that there are definite advantages of remote metering, however the costs

to bulk install are a concern and not all meters will have coverage. Metering technology and strategy is something SunWater is currently reviewing across the business.

Post Meeting Note: In relation to mobile coverage across the area, whilst Sunwater has no control over this, SunWater are happy to provide customers feedback on this matter as part of any issues SunWater raises with third parties with respect to mobile coverage wherever possible. Refer to the link in relation to potential improvements in mobile coverage (media statement released by Minister Leeanne Enoch, dated 18 May 2017) <http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2017/5/18/improved-mobile-coverage-for-regional-queensland>

6. Electricity Prices

The IAC advised that some customers only take water at night or on weekends in an effort to take advantage of low electricity prices. SunWater advised that electricity prices are a concern for all business and households including SunWater. SunWater understands the cost implications of electricity.

Post Meeting Note: SunWater is willing to include feedback from irrigators in submissions we provide to the QCA during the next pricing process for irrigation water. Solar options could be explored as a mechanism to enable better pumping utilisation during peak hours and reduce or eliminate energy costs for pumping.

Agenda Item 6 – Announced Allocation Options on 1 July 2017

Gordon Delaney, SunWater’s Manager, Environment and Water Planning, provided the background to the options for determining the Announced Allocation on 1 July 2017. The IAC were provided with an historical graph of the storage levels of Boondooma Dam which show the periods of time the cutoff level has been reached since 2003. The IAC were also provided details from SunWater’s Storage Forecast Model for Boondooma Dam which is currently forecasting that the 70,000ML cut off will be realised again around January 2018, should only minimal inflows be received into the storage.

The ROP rules allow a supply period of less than 12 months to be used in determining the Announced Allocation. The current predictions for the Announced Allocation, for different supply periods and under the minimal inflow were provided to the IAC as follows:

MINIMAL INFLOWS – 98,058 ML on 1 July	
Supply Period (months)	MP AA (%)
1	100
2	100
3	100
4	78
5	51
6	24
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12	0

SunWater requested the IAC nominate the preferred supply period so that SunWater can determine the Announced Allocation on 1 July 2017.

After discussion of the various supply period options the IAC advised their only option for consideration was to have a 100% Announced Allocation for a shorter time period (expected to be 3 months).

Ben moved that the Announced Allocation be calculated for a 3 month period (AA=100%) to maximise the water available to irrigators at the start of the water year. Seconded Tim.

Agenda Item 7 – Pre-feasibility Options for Long Term Infrastructure

SunWater tabled a letter from SunWater’s CEO, Nicole Hollows and addressed to Ken Darrow, Chair of the Boyne IAC, dated 23 March 2017, addressing Pre-feasibility options for possible longer term water infrastructure in the Boyne catchment.

In summary, the options presented include the raising of Boondooma Dam, the construction of Cooranga Weir or the construction of an Off-stream Storage. SunWater advised that there were several issues associated with each option that would need to be overcome including Commonwealth and State Environmental Approvals, geological concerns with the left bank at the proposed Cooranga Weir site and no unallocated water from the strategic water infrastructure reserve in the Burnett Basin Water Plan for the Boyne catchment. Despite this SunWater advised the IAC that it could progress with modelling a preferred scenario if the IAC wished.

SunWater advised that in terms of major projects it is important to understand that, unless the costs are offset partially or fully through external funding, that water costs pursuant to any new infrastructure will attract very significant costs associated with water charges (Cooranga Weir estimated construction cost of \$25M, estimated increase in water charges \$200/ML, raising Boondooma Dam estimated construction cost \$110M, estimated increase in water charges \$700/ML as rough metrics).

In terms of any money to be spent on studies or options it is very important to understand what is required to be done first and what up front information is available. There is no guarantee that any more allocation is available in the Boyne catchment. SunWater advised that high priority water demand is not expected to shift dramatically over the short to medium term.

The IAC also discussed the option of 3 smaller ‘micro-weirs’ along the river as a method of improving the efficiencies of deliveries.

Agenda Item 8 – 2017 Network Service Plans

SunWater tabled the 2017-18 Annual Network Service Plan for the IAC’s review and endorsement. John talked the committee through the report and highlighted the impacts of the spillway repair work at the dam. Explanation was provided around the schemes revenue and expenditure cost items. The IAC queried the ‘other’ water in the Water Data table (table 2). SunWater to advise further on this. The NSP was generally well received with minimal queries around the proposed budget items.

Ken moved that the budget as set out in the 2017-18 NSP be accepted.

Seconded Linc Davies.

Post Meeting Note: The 480ML of ‘other’ water is stock and domestic users on the Tarong Pipeline

Agenda Item 9 – Review of releases prior to 24 Feb 17 cut off

SunWater tabled data detailing the releases from the dam for the period 1 January – 1 March 2017 being the period leading up to the 70,000ML cut off which was enacted on 24 February 2017. The data also included the corresponding flows at Cooranga and Derra gauging stations. The data shows the days in which flows at the end of the system ceased and also the dates and times SunWater requested customers to cease pumping to allow water to travel through to the end of the system.

SunWater advised that it was very difficult to make the required releases not knowing the volumes being extracted by customers between Cooranga and Derra with the exception of customers utilising water harvesting pumps, the flow rates of which were known. SunWater advised that the proposed water ordering system would go a long way to addressing this issue and would provide SunWater operators with the information they need to make informed decisions about releases.

The IAC agreed that a water ordering system, together with an improved knowledge of what customers could take and when they were taking, together with directions not to take as required, would greatly assist under the same circumstances in the future.

The IAC also noted that due to the unreliable mobile phone coverage across the area, some customers were not aware of the directions to not take water as they did not get the message until days later when they travelled into a mobile coverage area. This may explain why some people continued to pump unknowingly during these periods. SunWater advised it would make landline phone contact in the future with customers without mobile reception to ensure they are aware of any requirements to cease pumping.

Post Meeting Note: Customers with mobile coverage are to be identified as part of the next meter reading round.

Agenda Item 10 – Water Ordering

SunWater tabled some draft rules for the implementation of a water ordering system. SunWater advised the IAC that it would like to progress with the implementation of a water ordering system to ensure informed decisions can be made around releases from the dam and to increase the efficiency of the system.

The IAC were accepting of the need for water ordering and agreed it would allow for better decision making. It was agreed that SunWater's Operator, Ashley McDonald would discuss the water ordering rules with each customer individually during the end of quarter meter readings with a view to commence the implementation of the system from 1 July 2017.

The IAC suggested that interim meter reading, possibly at the end of July, should be conducted to measure the take up of water ordering by customers and also to assist in identifying those customers that may need further assistance in utilising the proposed water ordering system.

SunWater advised that it can run reports to compare water ordered with water taken (once meter reads are known) which will assist in the roll out of the water ordering system. Further, SunWater will make available metered water / water released as a loss metric on all future releases made

The IAC advised that some customers only operate their pumps during off peak power times while releases are underway and when rain is received mid release they will stop taking water. Overall, this has the potential to reduce the efficient taking of water released from the dam. SunWater advised that a water ordering system would assist the dam operator to account for when customers are likely to take their water.

Post Meeting Note: Water usage patterns typically means that pumping stops when sufficient rain is received while releases are underway and typically pumping only occurs during off-peak hours. Off peak hours account for 58% of available time. This means that up to 42% of the time during any given release, water available after transport losses (50% to Cooranga), may be being lost out of the

system. This results in significant amounts of available water not being utilised. The value of MP water, while it is available, requires careful consideration given supply losses and restrictions that may apply.

SunWater will make available metered water and system losses for all future releases via customer newsletters – Refer Agenda Item 11.

Agenda Item 11 – Customer Newsletter

SunWater tabled a draft Scheme Newsletter that it would like to provide to customers on a quarterly basis (or more frequently if current issues demanded). The newsletter will be kept to one page and will provide information such as forecast storage levels for the dam, predicted announced allocation, volumes released from the dam, current volume in the dam, water used in the scheme and water remaining to be used, released water and losses. The IAC agreed that this information would be beneficial to customers and endorsed the commencement of the newsletter.

Agenda Item 12 – General Business

The IAC raised the issue of utilising water harvest pumps to take allocation water during times when the 70,000ML cut off is approaching. SunWater advised that water harvesting pumps had been used in the scheme before, under similar circumstances and as long as meter reads before and after were provided then SunWater could not see any issues, unless there was a clear direction from the IAC that this should not be allowed.

The IAC advised that everyone's water was important and that everyone is entitled to their water not just those who are able to water harvest. SunWater agreed and advised the IAC that the difficulties experienced during February were not a result of the water harvesters as SunWater knew what their daily take was, but no detail about who was taking water and when was provided to SunWater by many other customers in the system. This makes getting the required water to all customers at the anticipated time very difficult.

SunWater advised that water ordering and information currently being collected on pumping capacities throughout the scheme, will assist in preventing the cessation of flows that occurred during the February releases.

Post Meeting Note: The assistance of customers is always sought in advising SunWater of any increased or decreased take of water as part of a release before this occurs to assist with release management. With reference to Agenda Item 10, if SunWater knows which customers need water and how much, releases become more manageable and reliable for all customers.

Meeting Closed 5pm