



MINUTES OF MEETING – 28 May 2009

SunWater staff entered the meeting at 3.30pm.

Present:

Attendees	Representation
Dean Sgroi (DS)	Chairperson
Mario Barbagallo (MB)	Committee Member
Greg Barbagallo (GB)	Committee Member
Mauro Garbuio (MG)	Committee Member
Terry Williams (TW)	Committee Member
Russell Jordan (RJ)	Committee Member
Wayne Smith (WS)	BRIA Secretary - Canegrowers
Jason Williams (JW)	Environmental Officer – SunWater, Ayr
Richard Papale (RP)	Service Delivery Supervisor – SunWater, Clare
Shane Power (SP)	Operational Supervisor – SunWater, Clare
Sonia Duncan (SD)	Business Centre Officer – SunWater, Ayr

1. Apologies

Nil.

Standing Acronyms:

- BFD – Burdekin Falls Dam
- BHWSS - Burdekin Haughton Water Supply Scheme
- BOM – Bureau of Meteorology
- BRIA Committee - the above listed committee
- IROL – Interim Resource Operating Licence
- DERM – Dept of Environment and Resource Management
- QFF – Queensland Farmers Federation
- ROL – Resource Operating Licence
- ROP – Resource Operating Plan
- SMT – Senior Management Team
- SW – SunWater

2. SunWater Manager's Report

Provided to the committee for review and stored at SunWater on file.

3. Business Arising From Manager's Report

Water Availability and Storage Position Reports

RP clarified the report headings; confirming that the dam is currently spilling 100mm (with inflows from the Bowen River contributing). The committee expressed concern about the possible loss of Carryover. TW believed that because there has been non-interrupted continuous flow, Carryover should not be cancelled.



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Summary of Transfers – Water Year to Date Table

Provided to the committee for review as part of the Manager's Report May 2009.

4. Business arising from previous minutes

- DS requested the attendance of JW at the next BRIA meeting to discuss hymenachne, as well as the follow-up of JW's submissions to the APVMA for the use of glyphosate when aerial spraying.
 - ➔ PP to arrange.
- JW attended the meeting and discussed these matters. JW confirmed that the APVMA granted SW with a twelve-month off-label permit for the aerial spraying of glyphosate (in particular, the balancing storage). JW advised that SW was not advised by the APVMA that the submission was successful, but accidentally learnt of this five months after the fact. SW is therefore currently applying for an extension (of at least the five months); with verbal confirmation received. JW mentioned that the APVMA stated that they were trying to obtain a state-wide label for aerial application (of which JW has heard nothing further to date). JW confirmed that SW did not require support from the BRIA Committee at this stage.
- Further to RJ's previous issue, general discussion took place re: observed water level in "The Gumholes" adj. to Ch. H10. Discussion resulted from RJ driving through water when accessing The Gumholes crossing to his home. PP advised that Jason Williams (JW) would investigate this matter; including the possible presence of significant weed growth, unauthorised weir structures and/or excessive Ch. H10 drainage waters exacerbating the situation. JW's investigations confirmed that (as expected) excessive weed growth following the recent two months rainfall is the major cause. Works have since commenced. JW added that due to recent prolonged rainfall, the groundwater level would naturally be elevated and therefore would also contribute somewhat. JW noted that no unauthorised weirs were found. Unfortunately, although not a contributing factor previously, recent overflows have significantly contributed to the conditions i.e. worsening the effects. Remedial works will continue (as factors allow). RJ highlighted the need to control the hymenache to allow the water to drain away. JW agreed and advised that he is working with Peter Piotto (PP), the Service Delivery Coordinator and weed contractor to undertake non-contracted selective spraying (with the Gumholes being one of the target areas).
- General discussion took place re: the February 2009 water availability and storage position reports. MG stated the different column headings in the Water Availability and Storage Position Reports; BFD (Flow – ML/day) and Clare Weir (Capacity – ML) created confusion. PP explained that BFD (flow) and Clare Weir (capacity) readings were instantaneous.
 - ➔ PP to investigate changing this report (headings).
- As confirmed by PP, RP advised that the report headings could not be changed.



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- RJ enquired whether all meter outlet covers should be in place. RJ is missing one and water is covering his actual meter. RJ confirmed that Brad Torkington had barricaded around (Felesina's) Ch. H10 meter outlet until SW constructs a pit lid.
RP confirmed that this meter outlet lid will be fabricated and installed during the annual shutdown.
- PP reiterated the Fencing Policy Implementation Project for DS's benefit, as he was unable to attend the January meeting. General discussion took place. DS proposed the use of 'bump gates'. PP said he'd pass on this suggestion. Further discussions highlighted foreseen issues esp. Cane Harvesters and Haul-outs access and turnaround areas. The BRIA Committee formally decided to propose the following:
 - Landholders having the option to be able to fence around their homes;
 - If so, landholders formally discharging SunWater's obligation;
 - If so, SunWater subsidising the cost of said fencing.
- ➔ PP to request Gary Everson (GE) to lodge this option at the next SMT Meeting.
- ➔ Post Meeting Note: Peter Marshall will lodge these options (as Acting Regional Manager, Ayr) when he attends the SMT meeting in May. This will coincide with Gary Everson's tenure as Acting General Manager, Water Services.
RP reported that the landholder holds the right to install fencing on his/her own property. However, fencing installed by the landholder will not necessarily prevent SW installing boundary fencing, as SW's decision is based on risk assessment. Any cost contribution by SW to fencing installed by landholders will only be considered if the fencing is on the mutual property boundary and the fencing is to an appropriate standard. Peter Marshall (A/RM, Ayr) is currently attending the Senior Manager's Forum in Brisbane and will discuss these options then. General discussion took place. As per PP's advice, SD advised the committee that SW's cost contribution for fencing on a shared boundary would be based on the half-share value of six-foot chain-mesh fencing.
➔ A/RM to report post SMT Meeting.
- WS mentioned Aguirresarobe (Ayasondrio Pty Ltd) and their continuing concern re: erosion encroaching on their property (Lot 2 RP736433) adj. to Val Bird Weir. PP acknowledged SW oversight i.e. staff inadvertently spraying weed adj. to the weir's left abutment. WS mentioned the River Trust had conducted an inspection but he'd heard nothing to date and wanted clarification from PP as to the responsible entity. PP stated he believed SW wasn't ultimately responsible in this instance and that the River Trust or DERM could be responsible for remedial/stabilisation works required to the river bank adj. to Aguirresarobe's property. PP stated that JW would endeavour to establish the responsible entity and what works are possible.
- ➔ PP to engage JW to follow-up and report.
RP advised that Ron Shaw is coordinating a meeting between relevant parties including SW, Burdekin Shire Council and especially the Burdekin River Improvement Trust to discuss this and other similar matters.
WS mentioned that he had received a call from the Aguirresarobe's last week advising him that there has been another wash out (5 metres wide, 3-4 metres



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deep) five metres above the weir and that they are worried that any further washout will encroach on their farm land. RP replied that he will investigate this incident as it appears to be in addition to the washout he's already concerned with.

→ RP to investigate Aguirresarobe's washout five metres above the weir.

- MG requested PP to provide a progressive total of water spilt over BFD to date. PP advised he would attempt to provide this information.

→ PP to attempt to provide information.

As per PP's advice, RP reported that just recently, 24 million megalitres of water spilt over BFD.

- FC enquired if WS was on the DERM Water Harvesting notification email list. DS is; WS is not.

→ PP to follow-up.

SD confirmed that WS was on the DERM water harvesting email distribution list, however noted that DS was currently not. SD requested WS to forward an email direct to Roger Timms requesting DS be included on same.

5. General Business

- RJ asked RP whether the gate on H10 had been fixed. RP replied that SW was experiencing a problem there again this morning, with the electricians working to resolve it. The only problem gate was 99 (the first gate in the whole system) and eventhough all gates downstream were operational, water still ended up at the bottom. RP inspected the area thoroughly himself. RP advised RJ that SW was aware that some of the contributing factors over the last week have been those spills. RJ acknowledged that these things happen, with RP agreeing that all the factors are against us at present (raised groundwater levels etc.).
- MB asked as to whether SW had capped for water harvesting. SD replied that SW is currently collating the usage data. DS mentioned that he thought that's why SW's water harvesting had ceased. SD reported that SW is unable to establish exact totals until all usage readings are received and entered and as a guide, can only use 'volume pumped' totals. DS mentioned the cessation notification which is sent by Roger Timms (DERM). SD reiterated that SW has its own water harvesting caps imposed by DERM and uses the 'volume pumped' totals to monitor same; highlighting that usage and pumped totals will differ.
- DS briefly mentioned his previous problem with weeds in the channel and advised that he was unaware of any current issues within the scheme. RP replied that he has noted a small amount of algae in a few of the channels due to stagnate water and not a lot of usage, however overall the scheme looked fine. RP referred to Section 3. Operations and Shutdowns of the BHWSS Manager's Report May 2009. DS reiterated that Gary Everson (GE) had previously indicated that Emerald has continuous Acrolein injections while the channels are full. SP highlighted that these irrigators have on-farm storages, taking water into their on-farm storages and then irrigating from there; whereas the Burdekin irrigators do not. DS believed the issue was with what flowed into SW drains. RP advised that nothing can leave the channel until it's deemed to be safe. DS indicated that he believed GE was looking



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into this further to see if there was a way around it to help better manage the weed control. MB then advised that GE was also looking into another system where a bay is filled up and then run through with a truck and boom. SP highlighted that the Acrolein label states that there is a withholding period of 72 hours. RP mentioned that with the severity of the Acrolein itself, SW would like to see the bays as low as possible to ensure there is no overflow into the drains etc.

- ➔ GE to advise of further updates regarding weed control processes (Acrolein injections).
- MB asked RP about the Millaroo Pumpstation maintenance. RP reported that there has been maintenance performed which will continue in to the annual shutdown period.
- MB spoke of the annual shutdown. RP reported that a whole-system shutdown will take place from 7 to 20 June inclusive; receiving only a handful of written water requirements which will be serviced. RP provided the committee with an overview of the planned works and inspection regime during this time and referred to Section 2. Assets and Refurbishments of the BHWSS Manager's Report May 2009. MB asked that if there was no maintenance to be undertaken in the individual operational systems, does that system need to be shutdown. SP replied that the shutdown maintenance involves the Clare Weir which makes it impossible to provide water to individual operational systems once maintenance is completed or not required. RP confirmed that the shutdown comprises of BFD downstream and due to the current flow, SW will find it difficult to run the storage of the weir out. MB asked as to whether it would be better if SW dumped a bit of water out of the dam to get it under the crest so it doesn't overflow for when SW commences the annual shutdown. RP replied that he is looking at it naturally running out over the next week, but is considering doing this and stated that he had run the weir down to below its original EL in 2008 so SW could inspect the bottom of the flood gates, torque the bolts and obtain an overview of de-silting and excavations. However, RP highlighted that he currently has constraints on releasing out of the Clare Weir as SW is presently undertaking remedial work downstream at the Clare A Pumpstation. RP also mentioned that he has received notification today from the waterboards, stating that they wanted to erect sand dams and his consideration of the 300 ML current inflow from the Bowen River.
- RP referred to the shutdown notification (via individual letter to irrigators) and reiterated that unless written notification is received within the given timeframe for water requirements during the shutdown, requests will not be serviced. SD advised that a Public Notice is being placed in the *Ayr Advocate* and *Townsville Bulletin* tomorrow. General discussion took place regarding irrigators' shutdown requirements received. RP mentioned that when transacting the shutdowns, an email is automatically generated and sent to irrigators' via their SunWaterOnline email account. SD took the opportunity to request the BRIA Committee encourage irrigators to advise SW of their email addresses and also register for SunWaterOnline as a tool for managing their customer and water account details.
- ➔ DS requested for future annual shutdowns, an email advice be generated and sent to irrigators (as per the channel harvesting advices received from Michael Taylor).



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6. Correspondence

Nil to report.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held 25 June 2009.

JW left the meeting at 3.50pm, with the remaining SunWater staff leaving the meeting at 4.45pm.

Chairperson

Date

SunWater Manager

Date