



MINUTES OF MEETING – 29 January 2009

SunWater staff entered meeting at 2:30pm.

Present

Attendees	Representation
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
Peter Piotto (PP)	Acting Regional Manager – SunWater, Ayr
Peter Marshall (PM)	Asset Engineering Manager, SunWater, Ayr
Fiona Christie (FC)	ROP/ROL Compliance Officer, SunWater, Ayr

1. Apologies

Dean Sgroi (DS).

Standing Acronyms:

- BRIA Committee - the above listed committee
- ARM – Acting Regional Manager
- BHWSS - Burdekin Haughton Water Supply Scheme
- SW – SunWater
- BFD – Burdekin Falls Dam
- ROP – Resource Operating Plan
- ROL – Resource Operating Licence
- IROL – Interim Resource Operating Licence
- QFF – Queensland Farmers Federation
- BOM – Bureau of Meteorology

2. SunWater Manager's Report

Provided to the committee for review and stored on SunWater file

3. Business Arising From Manager's Report

Meter Outlets

- GB advised Lot 142 has had their meter replaced. SW needs to advise farmer before the meter is removed to enable the farmer to read the meter (due to the meter ticking on due to shaking/rattling etc).
- GB has noticed a lot of bags over meters in the field. PP advised that SW is replacing the electronics on many of the Tyco meters. Therefore, where possible SW is installing Siemens' meters instead of Tyco's.



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- RJ enquired as to whether the meter covers should be in place. RJ is missing one and water is covering meter.

Pump Station Flowmeters

- PP advised Millaroo and Clare A Pump Station original flowmeters are being replaced with electro-magnetic flowmeters in line with pending new Metering Standard.
- WS enquired as to the efficiencies of the Pump Stations (and pumps) e.g. how old are the pumps; how much does their performance improve after refurbishment etc? PP replied that we hope to improve pump and pump station efficiencies significantly after refurbishment, hence the R&E Programme (and budgets).

Shutdowns

- PP mentioned that he'd had thorough discussions with DS regarding shutdown (scheduling and notifications etc) and they'd worked through the issues.
- MB suggested that there weren't enough Acrolein trailers (SW Ayr has 3). Emerald has continuous injections, why can't Ayr? PP explained that all Emerald farms have onsite storages and that advice from a previous SW Manager was incorrect with regards to American labelling on Acrolein.
- MB enquired as to why copper sulphate couldn't be used. PP explained that Magnacide H kills the weeds, unlike copper sulphate which only kills algae.
- MB enquired as to whether SW would consider having copper sulphate constantly trickling through channel systems (concrete).

4. Business arising from previous minutes

Water Harvesting

- PP advised SW is investigating the possibility of setting up an SMS service to various Managers/Supervisors alerting when Clare Weir tail-water gauging station reaches a certain level e.g. water harvesting threshold is 5000ML/day, alert may start at 4750ML/day. This would assist SunWater staff to have channel water harvesting announcements ready to go when NRW announces river water harvesting. The current practice is to wait for NRW to announce the threshold has been reached and that water harvesting may commence. The issue is that these events infrequently coincide with newspaper advertising closing deadlines.
- TW suggested the Dalbeg gauging station be monitored instead. This would provide an earlier warning. PP acknowledged this may be an option however not an accurate indication as Clare Weir tail water gauging station is situated 60km downstream from Dalbeg gauging station (2-3 day travel lag time).
- PP advised that SW currently advises customers of water harvesting events via direct email/fax (where possible), Streamline, and notifications in the print media i.e. Ayr Advocate, Home Hill Observer and Townsville Bulletin.



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- FC enquired if WS was on the NRW email notification list. DS is; WS is not.
- MB requested that SW apply to decrease the current 5000ML threshold. MB also enquired as to how this original threshold was determined. GB advised that Peter Wheeler made this decision based on historical volumes released to Water Boards (annual cap). MB advised that they believed the licence volumes were based on prior usage volumes when announced allocations were 120%.
- MB advised that BRIAIC do not agree with water harvesting volumes and believe SW should be applying for an increase. WS provided BRIAIC with a copy of Tom Vanderbyl's email to QFF/Canegrowers advising that SW would not be applying for an increase to current water harvesting licences.
- PP reiterated that SW would be happy to assist Canegrowers/QFF with their submission should they wish to pursue their desired changes to water harvesting volumes and thresholds by way of supplying data. WS will mention this to QFF/Canegrowers and advise FC should they require anything at this stage.

Fencing

- Several requests for information on SW's fencing policy (answered by PM & PP):
 1. Where will fence be erected – on channel property boundary
 2. Who will mow around it – SW responsibility (within channel reserve)
 3. Cement channels only – no both cement and earth lined
 4. How far does residence need to be from channel to qualify – varies as per Risk Assessment performed (eg depends on location to bus stop, children in residence etc)
 5. How high is fence – 6 foot
 6. Can owners have a say in choosing type of fence to match their residence (as per Tom Wallwork's previous commitment to property owners where they were given \$1000 towards the cost of erecting their own fence) – after SW have costed fencing for a particular property the customer may be able to contribute the difference required to erect a fence of their own choice.
- PP explained that the Fencing Policy has been drafted to meet safety requirements and is similar to Qld Rail's fencing policy. It's to provide more of a deterrent than prevention.

Groundwater monitoring

- MB enquired as to why SW was monitoring groundwater in the Burdekin
 - FC explained that SW is required to measure and record underground water levels in monitored bores within regulated underground water areas on a quarterly basis as per BHWSS IROL conditions. Local NRW staff are contracted to obtain and record these levels for entry into their groundwater database, which ensure SW's compliance with the IROL.
 - MB suggested this should not be a SW responsibility and perhaps removing the responsibility and the associated costs would benefit farmers in the next Price Path.



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- FC advised that SW's draft ROP submission suggests that the groundwater monitoring should not be a ROL holder requirement.

5. General Business

- RJ advised that the main pipeline on Lot 10 (H10) is leaking onto same property and onto RJ's headland.
- Upon request, PM provided info on BOM's Water Regulations and NRW's Metering Standard, differentiating the two.
- TW enquired about weed control at Channel E1 (adj. to Ham Kelly Drive).
- MB enquired if water officers had been advised that they are on-call 24/7. This was due to a call out made by a farmer at 5.30am who was informed by water officer that they didn't start work until 6am. PP advised that this issue has been brought to both water officers and supervisors attention (following discussions with DS and Steven Pennisi – irrigator). PP added that of course Water Officers are On Call 24/7 and SW appreciates farmers' continuing cooperation re: delaying / minimising untimely calls, unless emergency situations exist.
- MB enquired as to whether there was any truth in the rumour that a gate had broken recently causing half a dozen farmers to run out of water. PP advised that the rumour was definitely not true. It was discovered that a farmer was taking twice the amount of water ordered over several days. PP has spoken to all farmers concerned (on site and altogether) and should this situation occur again they will be placed on roster/restrictions. PP also acknowledged that SW could have expedited a resolution, although water officer's intent was honourable.

6. Correspondence

NIL

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in February. Date TBA as meeting time/day clashes with the Groundwater Science Planning Committee meeting.

**BURDEKIN
IRRIGATOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE**



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SunWater left meeting at 4pm.

Chairperson

SunWater Manager

Date