



**MINUTES OF MEETING – 5 October 2010**

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Meeting opened at 9.10am at the SunWater Depot Esmond Street, Emerald

**Present**

Attendees	Representation
Dougall Millar	Chairperson
Geoffrey Kavanagh	Committee Member – Weemah Channel System
Ross Burnett	Stand in for Ian Burnett
Neek Morawitz	Stand in for Carl Morawitz
Tom Wallwork	SunWater – Area Operations Manager North
Peter Collett	SunWater – Service Manager Emerald Depot

**1. Apologies**

Ian Burnett, Carl Morawitz, Glenn Pearmine, Rob Ingram

**2. Previous Minutes**

- The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February, 2010 were accepted as distributed.
- The new SunWater website was demonstrated with a quick tour through the Nogoa Mackenzie section of the site.

**3. Business Arising from Minutes**

**Bedford Weir Update**

- No new information since the last meeting.
- Geoff reminded SunWater that the removal of the fabridam was impacting on the system yield and needs to be included in the water accounting process.

**Fairbairn Dam and Weir Levels**

- Peter Collett provided a summary of the current dam and weir levels at 28 October 2009:

Storage	Level	Volume	Percent	24 Hour Change	Over-topping	Daily Discharge
<b>Fairbairn Dam</b>	205.11	1,440,973ML	110.6%	-1.4%	+0.88	19,800ML
<b>Bedford Weir</b>	124.44	25,144ML	109.8%	-6.0%	+1.64	56,988ML
<b>Bingegang Weir</b>	105.88	>8,060ML	>100%		+2.98	76,460ML
<b>Tartus Weir</b>	83.92	19,093ML	159.2%	+1.2%	+2.17	76,902ML

- **First Post Winter Flow Management Strategy:** DERM initiated the First Post Winter Flow Management Strategy on Friday 01/10/10. The daily inflows (up to the limit of the outlet works) must be released from Fairbairn Dam for 19 days [until 20/10/10] or until inflows reduce to below 20ML/day. Geoff questioned why the event was not triggered earlier. Geoff will speak to DERM about the start date.

## ROP Issues

- **Carry-over Water:** In accordance with the ROP, all carry-over water entitlements were cancelled when Fairbairn Dam spilled on 10/09/10. Meter readings were completed in September and the adjustment of carry-over and primary water accounts completed and included in the first quarter billing round.
- **Forward Draw:** Forward Draw was again briefly discussed with the same outcomes as the February meeting. While Forward Draw is allowed for by the ROP, it is not a product offered by SunWater. General discussion ensued, but it was decided that the advantage of being able to forward draw was out-weighed by the impact on the water trading market resulting from its introduction.
- **BoM Gauging Stations:** CHRC and BoM have installed a number of automated gauging stations around the central highlands including at Bedford and Bingegang Weirs and Fairbairn Dam. The stations are operational, but not yet feeding live to the BoM website. The data will also be available to SunWater when the sites go live. CHRC have been asked about alerts for the station at Fairbairn Dam.
- **HUF & Carry-over Water:** Geoff highlighted that the SunWater charge for carry-over water is at a discounted rate when compared against the HUF used for other water stored in Fairbairn Dam. With the QCA reviewing water prices, it was decided not to pursue any changes to pricing for carry-over water.
- **Channel Harvesting:** Dougall asked why water harvesting was not allowed on the channels while the dam was spilling? He has had enquiries from a number of channel customers. Geoff ran through some of the history of water harvesting and highlighted that if it was allowed, it could impact on water that would otherwise be available for river harvesting by existing entitlement holders.
- **Peak Flow Entitlements:** At present there is an informal arrangement for peak flow entitlements. On the channels, each farm that was part of the original design of the irrigation scheme is entitled to an equal share in the total available peak flow. New farms and new works that increase the benefited areas do not have a peak flow entitlement. The management of flow is more problematic on the river where each farm has different pumping arrangements and pump flow rates. Often the pumps are dual purpose for taking both irrigation allocation and flood harvesting. Geoff suggested using the list of river volume entitlements in the 2003 ROP as the starting point for river flow entitlements. Peak Flow Entitlements are not a tradeable commodity. Geoff suggested that we need to look at a method for moving peak flow entitlements. This could lead to improved efficiencies in water use. In addition it would allow irrigators to move peak flow entitlements to the section of the system where they need the flow – assuming of course that the existing infrastructure could support the changed flow rates. Peter noted that allowing peak flow entitlements to be traded and moved would be a significant administration burden for the Water Officers, particularly if the flow entitlement could be permanently, temporarily and/or partly transferred. Everyone agreed that the flow entitlements need to be better defined and formalised. Tom agreed to pull out the work that was undertaken about 10 years ago by Bob Geneck.

## Intersafe Project

- The project aim is to upgrade infrastructure assets that have been assessed as HIGH or EXTREME WH&S Risk. The works include the installation of:
  - Regulating gates
  - Walkways and handrails
  - Screens
- AWMA have completed the installation of the gates. All gates are operational with some minor commissioning issues outstanding (gauge boards on 3 gates).
- The non-gated structures have been measured up and the new walkways and handrails will be installed this financial year.

## Asset Management and Maintenance

Peter Collett provided a brief overview of current works including:

- Close out of the Selma Siphon upgrade.

- 25 year inspection and certification on all cranes
- Upgrades to switchboards at Fairbairn Dam
- Headworks Group annual inspections of Fairbairn Dam and weir were completed in July – no significant issues found.
- Condition Assessment by Irrigation & Drainage group in August
- Condition Assessments planned by Pumps & Pipelines Group on 18-19 October
- Design on upgrade to the Bullring
- Repairs to concrete on the Fairbairn Dam spillway
- Piezometer boards have been replaced
- Bingeingang tailwater capillary
- Re-gravel channel road on Selma (vicinity of 19 mile)
- Re-location of the water and sewer lines off saddle dam 5.

### **Network Service Plans**

- Peter advised the IAC that the Nogoia Mackenzie NSPs were 99% complete and will be delivered to the QCA in the next week. They should be available on the QCA website by the middle of October.

### **Drainage**

- Peter tabled two letters from Bob Anderson for consideration by the IAC.
- **Flood Plain Development near block 157:** Bob has raised concerns about development on the flood plain near his farm (block 157) and the state of Drain RR7 (Ford Creek). The IAC discussed jurisdiction for the area. It is outside of the Nogoia Mackenzie Flood Plain Management Board area and the developments are outside of the Emerald Irrigation Area. The consensus was that DERM are the only agency with responsibilities for management of development in this area. In regard to Drain RR7, SunWater noted that Ford Creek is a natural watercourse and cannot be maintained in the same method as a man-made drainage structure. The IAC agreed that Drain RR7 with its natural water channel provides adequate drainage during normal farm operations. However, during flood events, Drain RR7 is inadequate to cope with large flows and often breaks its banks. The IAC has requested that SunWater meet with DERM to discuss flood plain development in the Ford Creek area and maintenance in Ford Creek.
- **Channel Lining:** Bob has requested that the section of the Selma Main Channel from the 25 Mile structure be lined to reduce the impact of water leaking from the channel onto his farm. There was some discussion about the actual source of the water. It has been a wet year and the ground water throughout the area is high with many springs running freely. SunWater informed the IAC that the channel lining program will continue. However, the SunWater Board has directed that the installation of new lining is to be funded from the sale of water saved from earlier lining works. SunWater has no plans for lining any channels in the next two years. The IAC has requested that SunWater investigate the source of the water.

### **Urban Encroachment**

- SunWater informed the IAC that the Drain LN1 and LN1/2 were being increasingly impacted by development on the northern side of Emerald. In addition, the Central Highlands Regional Council (CHRC) has plans to extend the airport runway across Drain RN6. SunWater and CHRC have commenced discussions about the drains.

### **Vegetation Regrowth & Environmental Management**

- SunWater has submitted a PMAV application for the flood margin area around Fairbairn Dam.

### **General Business**

- SunWater was asked about the spillway upgrade program for Fairbairn Dam. The risk assessment for Fairbairn Dam based on the ANCOLD standards with Emerald close downstream of the dam, makes Fairbairn Dam a High Risk dam. However, any upgrade works will not commence in the next five year plan.

- Peter tabled a draft IAC Code of Conduct for discussion. The IAC was generally in agreement with the draft, but it was felt that more time was needed to consider the draft. The Code of Conduct will be confirmed at the next IAC meeting.
- The IAC thanked Peter Collett for his time as Service manager in Emerald and wished him well in his move to Toowoomba. Tom informed the IAC that Neil Farrell has been appointed as the Acting Service Manager until a permanent appointment is made.

#### **4. Next Meeting**

TBA

Meeting Closed at 11:45am.

#### **MINUTES CONFIRMED**

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**Chairperson**

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**SunWater Manager**

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**Date**

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**Date**