

St George
IRRIGATOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE



MINUTES OF MEETING 23 January 2013

Present:

Attendees	Representation
Scott Armstrong	Committee Member
Bill Bennett	SunWater
Karan Quartermaine	SunWater
Glen Rogan	Committee Member
Peter Collett	SunWater
David Moon	Committee Member
Rob Jakins	Committee Member
Andrew Moon	Committee Member
Hamish McIntyre	Committee Member
Bill Knights	Committee Member
Chad Prescott	Committee Member
Scott Brimblecombe	Committee Member

1. Apologies

Nil

2. General Business

Situation Report

Peter opened the meeting with the update on the situation for St George Irrigation Area –

Beardmore Dam – EL 200.71 10150ML
Moolabah Weir – EL 199.40 1110ML
Buckinbah Weir – EL 198.10 4457ML

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Moolabah Weir had in an increase of capacity of 21ML and Buckinbah 66ML.

Minimum operating level for the St George area are:

Beardmore Dam 3120ML
Moolabah Weir 440ML
Buckinbah Weir 780ML
Jack Taylor Weir 200ML

William Bennett, SunWater, spoke to the meeting and gave an overview of the realigning of the gauge boards at Beardmore Dam on the 23rd January. This realigning of gauge board to the true height will allow SunWater to have a more accurate reading of water capacity remaining at Beardmore Dam at the present heights. Banjo also informed the meeting that from the 24 January 2013 Table Grapes who has an allocation at Moolabah Weir will be pumping 5ML/Day for their permanent planting of grape vines.

Peter Collette advised that the generator, switchboard and 2 of the 4 soft switches required to operate Buckinbah Pump station had arrived in St George and were being fitted at this time. The other two soft switches required will arrive in St George on Thursday and Buckinbah pump station could be operational by Friday. Buckinbah will continue to gravity feed until it is not possible to deliver 400ML/Day and at that time the Pump station will become operational.

Rain received in the lower Condamine during the week-end of the 19th January is expected to reach Beardmore Dam early next week and until this flow reaches Surat a forecast inflow would not be available. The question of forward draws was asked of SunWater by the irrigators and this was negated with the unknown quantity of inflow. Under the current continuous accounting rules allocations were not allowed to be in the negative. It was suggested by Mr Knights that a lot of Temporary Transfers of allocations will take place if this inflow reaches Beardmore. The irrigators asked if it was possible for SunWater to supply an administrative officer in St George for this period of high paperwork in preparing these temporary transfers.

Under continuous share rules if a Temporary Transfer is processed from St George Main Channel to Buckinbah Channel system a loss of 7% is applied to that water. The question asked 'If the temporary transfer of water was then reversed from Buckinbah to the St George Main channel would the account gain the 7% loss back'

Answer - No, under continuous accounting this 7% is taking into consideration at the end of each month during reconciliation.

Peter raised the issued of reimbursement of the costs to SunWater for the installation of the Low Level Pumps at Beardmore and the hire of equipment and running of the Buckinbah Pump Station. To date the costs for the Low Level Pumps at Beardmore Dam were approximately \$50,000 the majority of which is diesel fuel. The costs to date for the hire of equipment at Buckinbah Pump Station was also in the vicinity of \$50,000.

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The irrigators were not prepared to pay for these costs outside their current water charges because:

- The price path should have considered these costs as it is a routine operation which happens every few years
- This has never been billed separately in the past
- Should be paid for from the profit of the scheme as is done with other business, extra cost come from the profit of that year.
- There is a history of the over allocation of 20, 000ML of water from Beardmore Dam which reduces the reliability of the system. SunWater receives the money from this over allocated water in Part A charges each year.

When asked of the costs associated with fixing Buckinbah Pump Station Peter advised the irrigators that he had received a cost estimate of \$200,000. This pricing was from SunWater engineers. The Irrigators Advisory Committee asked if they could have the preliminary drawings for the new scope of works at Buckinbah Pump Station switchboard so that they could obtain an individual costing for this job. Peter agreed.

A discussion took place in relation to why only 3 pumps were operational at Beardmore Dam at the start. It was noted that at the last pumping at Beardmore Dam only 3 pumps were operational and the fourth pump was connected as a back up. Scott noted that this would have been because of the planting in that year would have been lower in 2007.

N: This should be taken into consideration when the low level pumps are set up when required.

Concerns were raised in relation to SunWater's consultation process in place with the irrigators. It was said that consultation with SunWater is by stealth. Agreement was that no consultation had taken place with the IAC in relation to the decommissioning of Buckinbah Pump station. It is to be noted that the Buckinbah Pump station is an important part of the infrastructure in the St George Irrigation area and should be brought back into service. Peter advised that in approximately 30 years of service the pumps had only operated for about 200 hours. The irrigators negated this information with Buckinbah was still an important part of infrastructure during present times.

Thurrugi Water course was discussed and Peter informed the irrigators that planned for the 2013/2014 year is work on the slumping in the channel to the value of \$300,000. This would be covered by insurance. The irrigators believe it is important for the trees to be removed from the working beam of Thurrugi Channel from Beardmore Dam to the Surat road. SunWater informed the irrigators that Thurrugi had been deemed a water course and an application would have to be made to the department to clear the trees.

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The IAC would like to have Thurragi split into two sections, one deemed man made (channel) and one natural water course for the purposes weed maintenance (tree clearing) and for the delivery of water through the system. This split could be conveyed via the original maps of work undertaken by SunWater.

Meeting Closed – 11.30am

3. Next Meeting – 10am, Wednesday 30 January 2013

Chairperson

Date

SunWater Manager

Date