

## Shepparton Irrigation Area GMA

The Shepparton Irrigation Region Groundwater Management Area (the SIR GMA) is mainly within the Goulburn Broken catchment and covers the Murray Valley, Shepparton, Central Goulburn and Rochester Irrigation Districts.

The northern boundary of the SIR GMA is the Murray River from Yarrawonga to just past Echuca, and the southern boundary generally follows the irrigation districts. The SIR GMA applies to groundwater resources to a depth of 25 metres.

### Local Management Plan

The SIR Local Management Plan (the Plan) was developed by Goulburn-Murray Water following extensive consultation with, and support from, key stakeholders and groundwater users. The Plan was approved on 3 June 2015.

The Plan provides information about the groundwater system and simple rules describing how the shallow groundwater is managed. The Plan recognises that shallow groundwater in the SIR is fragmented and opportunistic.

The Plan provides low intensity management, which means lower costs for SIR groundwater customers, and continues to support responsible pumping of shallow groundwater to assist with salinity control.

### Estimated licensed groundwater use

Under the Plan licensed groundwater use in the SIR GMA is no longer extensively metered. Instead a subset of licensed bores continues to be metered to enable annual usage to be estimated.

SIR GMA usage will be estimated at the end of each season using a method which assesses three key related factors:

- annual usage by the subset of SIR GMA licensed groundwater customers,
- the volume of metered groundwater used in the Katunga Water Supply Protection Area, and
- rainfall received in spring.

The method is considered to be a conservative and cost effective approach to understand annual use.

In 2014/15 the estimated shallow groundwater use by SIR GMA licences was 71,690 ML (Figure 1).

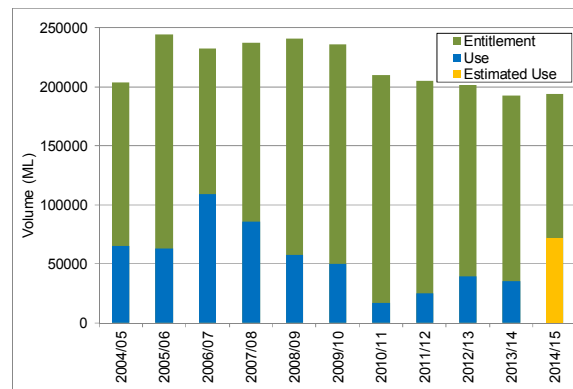


Figure 1 Licensed groundwater use in the SIR GMA

### Monitoring shallow groundwater levels

When groundwater occurs close to the ground surface it can pose a significant threat to social, economic and environmental values in the SIR due to land salinisation and waterlogging of soils.

Groundwater levels are monitored in approximately 1,500 shallow observation bores in the SIR. An annual water table map is produced which enables water table changes and trends to be understood. The most recent four water table maps are provided overleaf.

As shown on the 2015 water table map, the water table is currently lower than 2 metres below the ground surface across the majority of the SIR GMA. The risk from shallow groundwater salinity is currently low.

### Groundwater salinity

Each year, GMW sends sample bottles to customers in the SIR GMA to collect a sample for salinity analysis. In 2014/15 a total of 132 samples were returned from SIR GMA groundwater users.

Groundwater users are encouraged to return samples for analysis when requested as trends over time provide valuable information to help inform resource management decisions.

### Where can I get more information?

You can download a copy of the Plan from the GMW website [www.gmwater.com.au](http://www.gmwater.com.au) or call Karina Joy on 1800 013 357.

