



Lower Ovens GMA

The Lower Ovens Groundwater Management Area (GMA) extends from Myrtleford in the south including the Buffalo and King Rivers and extends to the Murray River to the north.

Groundwater resources in the GMA are managed under the Local Management Plan (LMP) that was endorsed by Goulburn-Murray Water in 2012.

Allocations

In 2013/14 allocations were 100% in both the Murray Zone and the Ovens Plain Zone for groundwater users accessing deep lead groundwater, as groundwater levels were well above the LMP trigger level (Figures 1 and 2).

Based on the three year rolling average recovery levels, allocations for the 2014/15 season will be 100% for all zones.

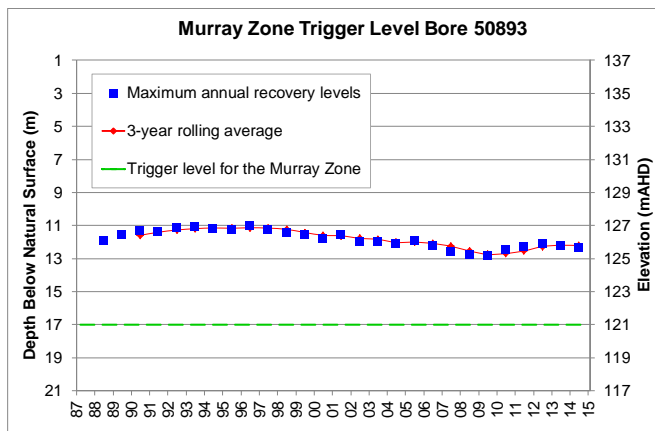


Figure 1 Murray Zone - Three year rolling average recovery level compared with trigger level

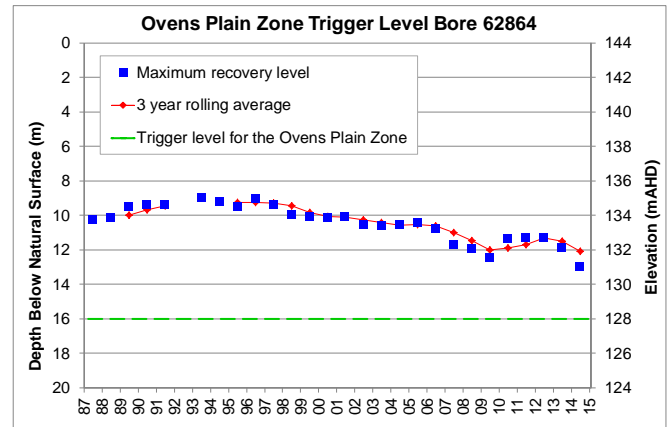


Figure 2 Ovens Plain Zone - Three year rolling average recovery level compared with trigger level

Metered groundwater use

Metered groundwater use in 2013/14 was above the historical average. The total metered usage across all zones was 5,104.0 ML (Table 1). The total metered usage was around 26% of the total licence entitlement in the Lower Ovens GMA (Figure 3).

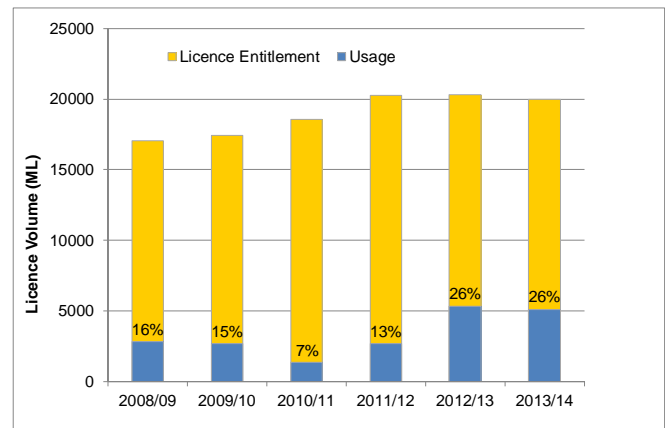


Figure 3 Metered groundwater extractions

| Management Zone | Metered Use (ML) | Total Entitlement (ML) |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Ovens Plain | 1,563 | 3,109 |
| Mid Ovens | 2,069.9 | 11,877.5 |
| Bedrock | 174.8 | 1,360.6 |
| Murray | 1,229.8 | 3,656 |
| Total | 5,104.0 | 20,003.1 |

Table 1 Groundwater use across Management Zones

Licence transfers

New developments may occur in the Lower Ovens GMA through either permanent or temporary transfer of licence entitlement. The 2013/14 season saw an increase in the volumes of licence entitlement transferred, with 500 ML temporarily transferred and 29 ML permanently transferred (Figure 4). The higher volumes of licence transfers indicate further development within the deep lead and greater certainty in regards to the transfer rules under the LMP.

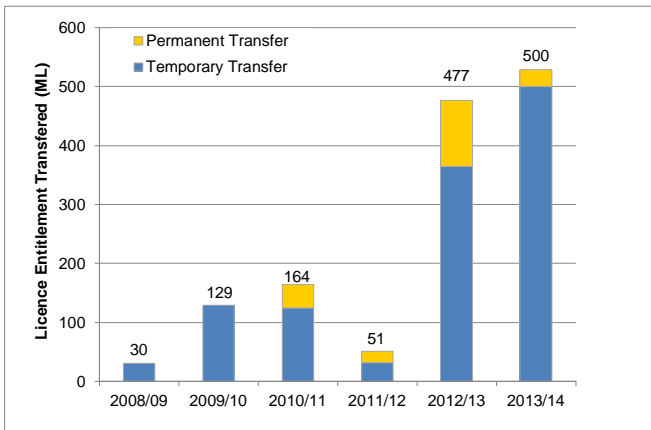


Figure 4 Permanent and Temporary licence transfers in the Lower Ovens GMA

Groundwater monitoring

Goulburn-Murray Water, in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Primary Industries, continues to monitor groundwater levels in more than sixty state observation bores in the Lower Ovens GMA.

Groundwater levels remained relatively steady across all groundwater management zones in the Lower Ovens Groundwater Management Area during 2013/14 (Figures 5, 6 and 7). The seasonal variation in the Ovens Plain Zone trigger level bore is due to licenced extraction within the deep lead aquifer.

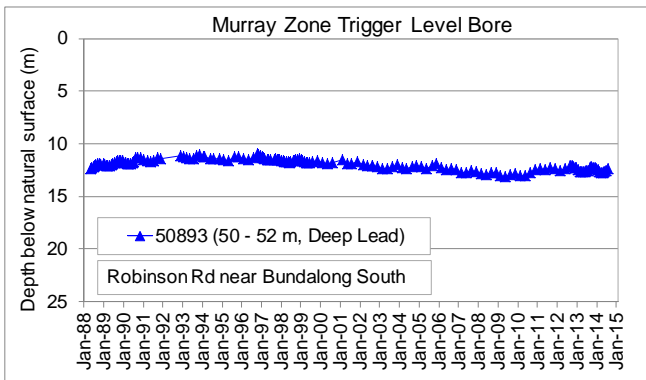


Figure 5 Murray Zone trigger level bore

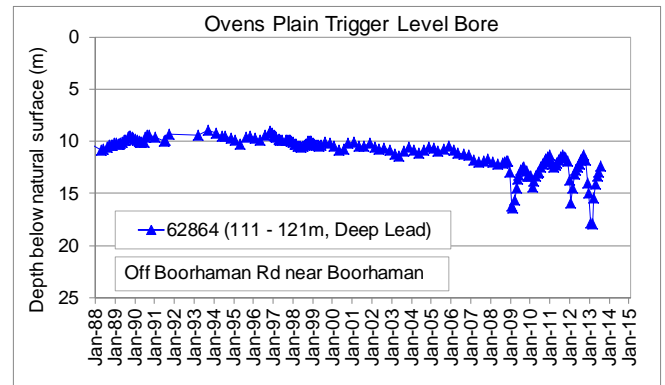


Figure 6 Ovens Plain Zone trigger level bore

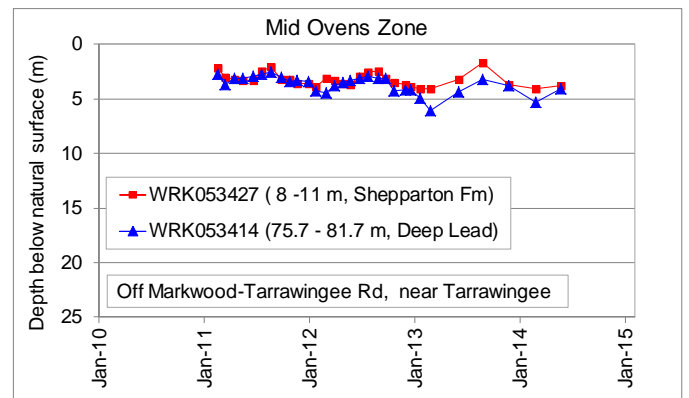


Figure 7 Mid Ovens Zone nested bore site

Future LMP amendments

No changes have been made to the Local Management Plan since it was released in August 2012.

The potential for any amendments to the LMP will be assessed and will consider, among other issues, the new Murray-Darling Basin Plan and upcoming changes to Victoria's *Water Act 1989*.

Where can I get more information?

You can download a copy of the Lower Ovens Local Management Plan from the Goulburn-Murray Water website www.gmwater.com.au or call Luke Richards on 1800 013 357 for any further information.