

2023 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Katunga Water Supply Protection Area

The Katunga Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA) is located in the Murray and Goulburn River valleys, extending from Yarrowonga in the east to Barmah in the west. It includes the townships of Cobram, Katamatite, Numurkah and Nathalia.

Groundwater resources are managed under the Katunga WSPA Groundwater Management Plan (the Plan).

Annual groundwater allocations

Groundwater licence holders in the WSPA were able to access 70 per cent of their licence volume in 2022/23. The allocation for 2023/24 has been announced at 70 per cent (refer to Figure 1).

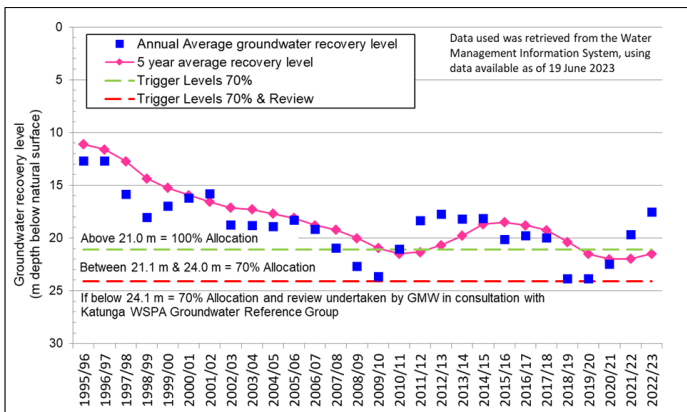


Figure 1. Groundwater allocation trigger graph

Groundwater licence volume and use

There is currently 60,200.9 megalitres per year (ML/yr) of groundwater licence entitlement volume (licence volume) in the WSPA (Table 1).

Table 1. Licence volumes and recorded use in 2022/23

Management zone	Licence volume (ML/yr)	Recorded use (ML)	Proportion of licence volume
North Western Dryland Zone	4,989.2	738.7	15%
Numurkah-Nathalia Zone	34,521.7	6,174.9	18%
Cobram Zone	20,690.0	2,177.5	11%
Total	60,200.9	9,091.1	15%

Recorded use in the WSPA in 2022/23 was 9,091.1 ML, or 15 per cent of total licensed volume. This equates to a 10 percentage points less than 2021/22 (Figure 2).

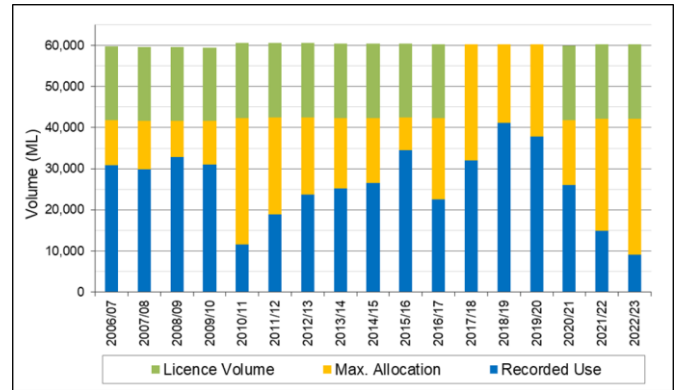


Figure 2. Licence volume, allocation and recorded use

Licence transfers

Licence holders may transfer licence volume on a temporary or permanent basis.

During 2022/23, there were six permanent transfers, for a combined transferred volume of 342 ML/yr; and 21 temporary transfers, for a total transferred volume of 3,799.0 ML (Figure 3).

These totals equate to a doubling of permanent trades and 28 per cent decrease in temporary trades compared with the 2021/22 water year.

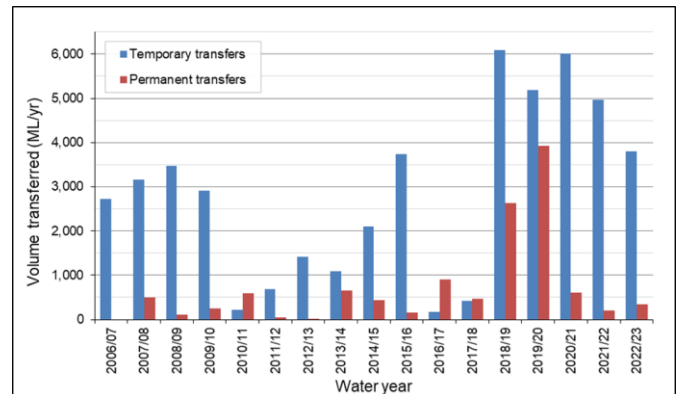


Figure 3. Licence volume transfer activity

Groundwater level monitoring

The Plan requires that groundwater levels are monitored in seven state observation bores, specified in Schedule 1 of the Plan.

Monitoring data indicates that groundwater levels in the Deep Lead (which comprises the Calivil Formation and the lower Shepparton Formation) have declined as groundwater development has increased since 1990. This is represented by water level monitoring records in two nested bores located in Katamatite, within the Cobram Zone (Figure 4).

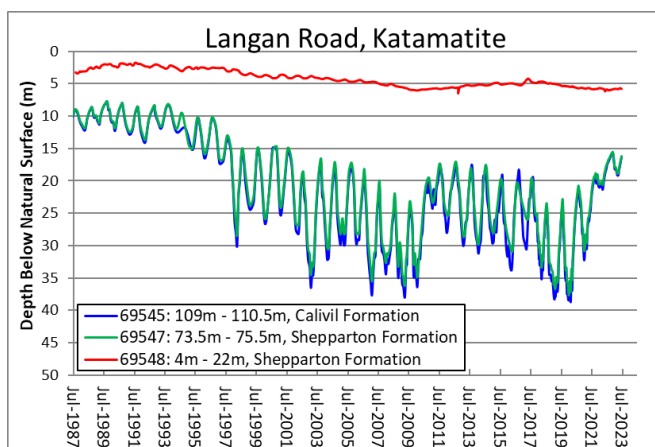


Figure 4. Groundwater levels recorded at Langan Rd, Katamatite

It is noted that the maximum drawdown levels in the Langan Road bores for the last three seasons have not reached the drawdown level observed in 2018/19 and 2019/20. This is likely a result of the above average rainfall conditions experienced over the last three seasons which coincides with less groundwater use, with recovery levels being the highest since 2001/02.

Groundwater levels in the Numurkah-Nathalia Zone are recovering well and have reached recovery levels not observed since the 2011/12 seasons as illustrated by groundwater levels recorded at a monitoring site in Strathmerton (Figure 5).



State observation bores in Katunga WSPA

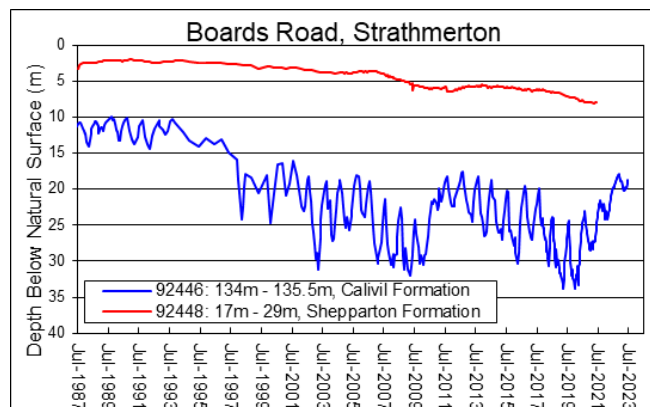


Figure 5. Groundwater levels recorded at Boards Rd, Strathmerton

Groundwater quality monitoring

GMW undertakes groundwater quality sampling from key monitoring bores listed in Schedule 1 of the Plan, which indicate that groundwater salinity levels for the Deep Lead aquifer remain stable.

If you would like your groundwater tested for salinity, please contact GMW to request a sample bottle. This is a service for licence holders provided under the Plan.

Licence compliance

In 2022/23, there were no prosecutions or convictions relating to groundwater in the WSPA. GMW has a zero-tolerance approach to unauthorised take of non-urban water. Relevant actions, if required, are taken in accordance with GMW’s Risk-Based Compliance and Enforcement Framework.

Please visit www.gmwater.com.au/compliance for more information.

Where can I get more information?

You can download a copy of the Plan, the 2022/23 annual report and other resources from the GMW website, www.gmwater.com.au.