

Katunga Water Supply Protection Area

The Katunga Water Supply Protection Area (the 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 2020/21.

The allocation for 2021/22 has been announced at 70 per cent (refer to Figure 1).

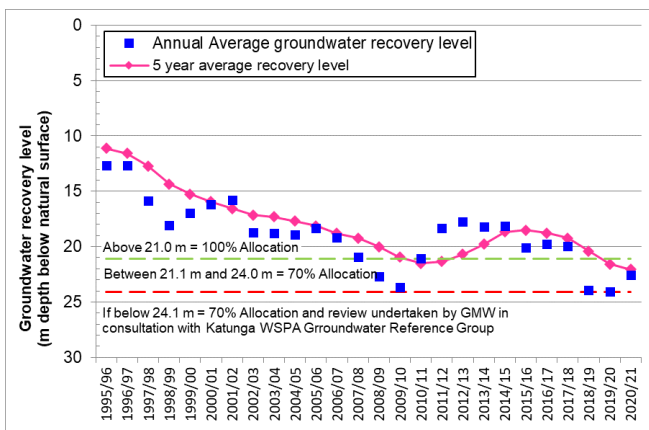


Figure 1. Groundwater allocation trigger graph

Groundwater licence volume and use

There is currently 60,202.9 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 2020/21

| Management zone | Licence volume (ML/yr) | Recorded use (ML) | Proportion of licence volume |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| North Western Dryland Zone | 5,000.2 | 2,212.9 | 44% |
| Numurkah-Nathalia Zone | 34,360.7 | 15,420.7 | 45% |
| Cobram Zone | 20,842.0 | 8,459.6 | 41% |
| Total | 60,202.9 | 26,093.0 | 43% |

Recorded use in the WSPA in 2020/21 was 26,093.0 ML, or 43 per cent of total licensed volume. This equates to a 20 per cent decrease from 2019/20 (Figure 2).

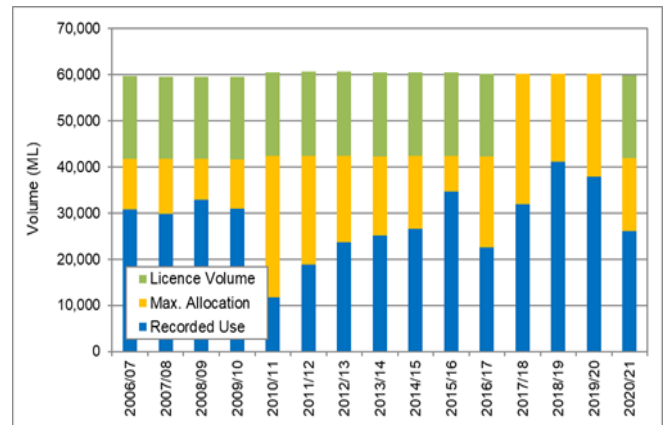


Figure 2. Licence volume, allocation and recorded use

Licence transfers

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

During 2020/21, there were eight permanent transfers, for a combined transferred volume of 615.0 ML/yr; and 50 temporary transfers, for a total transferred volume of 6,008.3 ML (Figure 3).

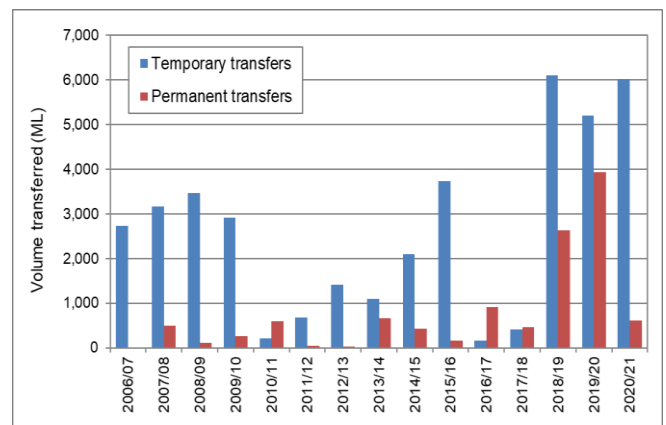


Figure 3. Licence volume transfer activity

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).

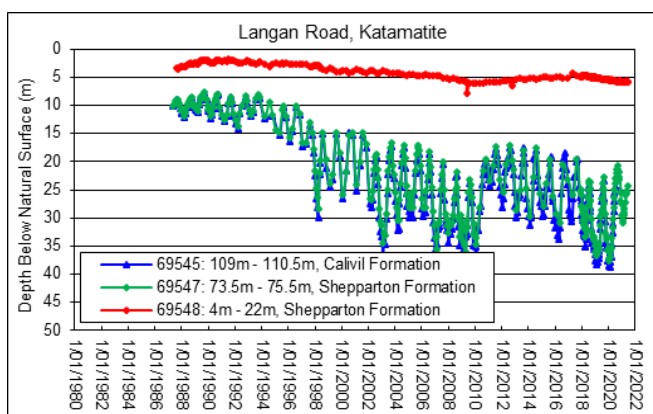


Figure 4. Groundwater levels recorded at Langan Rd, Katamatite

It is noted that the maximum drawdown levels in the Langan Road bores were not been as significant during the 2020/21 season as have been seen in the three preceding seasons. This is likely a result of less groundwater use in 2020/21, which also resulted in a stronger recovery of Deep Lead water levels.

Groundwater levels in the Numurkah-Nathalia Zone have continued to decline in the 2020/21 season, as illustrated by groundwater levels recorded at a monitoring site in Strathmerton (Figure 5).



State observation bores in Katunga WSPA

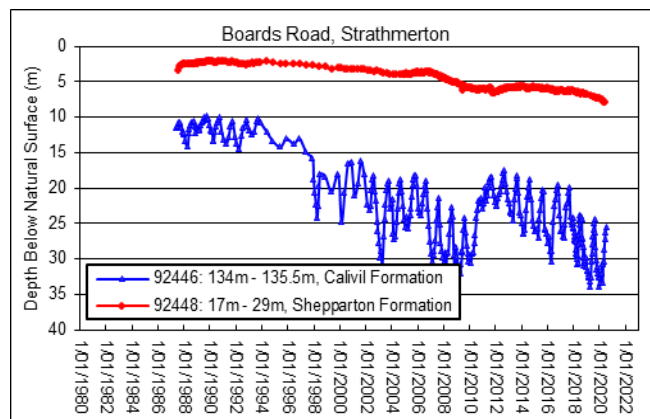


Figure 5. Groundwater levels recorded at Boards Rd, Strathmerton

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.

Licence compliance

In 2020/21 there were 25 reported instances of alleged unauthorised take of groundwater (incl. overuse) 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 2020/21 annual report and other resources from the GMW website, www.gmwater.com.au