

2024/2025 Newsletter



Loddon Highlands

Water Supply Protection Area

Groundwater Management Plan

Groundwater Management

The Loddon Highlands Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA) extends from Newlyn and Learmonth in the south to Maryborough and Dunolly in the north.

Groundwater resources are managed under the Loddon Highlands Water Supply Protection Area Groundwater Management Plan, approved by the Minister for Water in November 2012 (the Plan).

The Plan provides protection to existing groundwater users and the environment through licence limits and restrictions on the take of groundwater when triggers are reached. It also provides licence holders with flexibility to manage their licence entitlement volume through licence transfers and carryover.

Groundwater licence volume and use

The WSPA has a permissible consumptive volume of 20,697.0 megalitres per year (ML/yr). At 30 June 2024, the total licence entitlement volume (licence volume) in the WSPA was 20,482.6 ML/yr, which is the same as the previous year (Table 1).

Total recorded use in the WSPA was 8,793.9 ML, in the 2024/25 water year (Table 1).

This equates to 43 per cent of the total licence entitlement volume.

Recorded use was greatest (by volume) in Ascot Zone, at 4,138.3 ML. Blampied Zone recorded the greatest use as a percentage of licence entitlement, at 76 per cent.

Table 1 Recorded use by zone in 2024/25 season

Management zone	Licence volume (ML/yr)	Recorded use (ML)
Ullina Zone (1100)	3,023.2	257.7
Talbot Zone (1101)	1,176.7	446.8
Ascot Zone (1102)	7,028.2	4,138.3
Mollongghip Zone (1103)	353.0	135.8
Blampied Zone (1104)	1,252.5	955.6
Waubra Zone (1106)	4,702.8	1,293.0
Newlyn Zone (1107)	2,946.2	1,566.7
Total	20,482.6	8,793.9

Annual Allocations

Under the Plan, trigger levels have been established for the Ascot, Blampied, Newlyn and Waubra management zones where there is a higher density of licence entitlement volume, and seasonal groundwater-level drawdown is greatest.

In the 2024/25 water year, all management zones had an allocation of 100 per cent of licence entitlement volume (Figures 1 - 4).

Allocations for the 2024/25 water year were announced on 27 June 2024, based on the highest groundwater levels recorded up to that time.

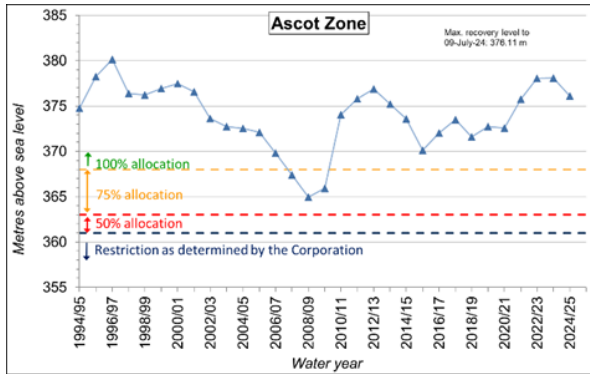


Figure 1 Trigger graph for allocation in the Ascot Zone

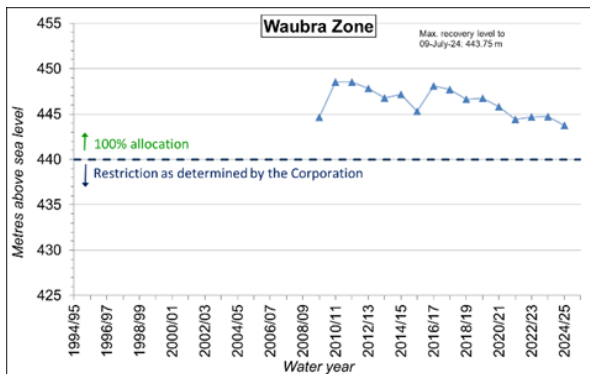


Figure 2 Trigger graph for allocation in the Waubra Zone

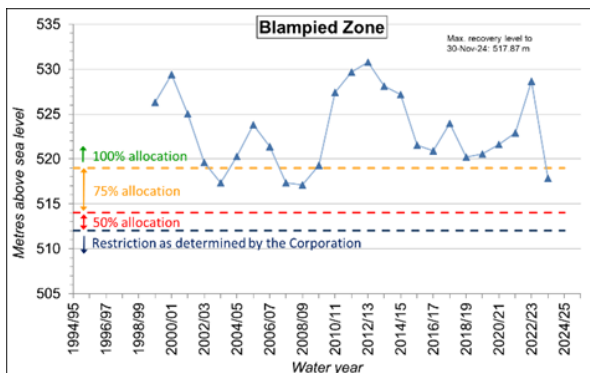


Figure 3 Trigger graphs for allocation in the Blampied Zone

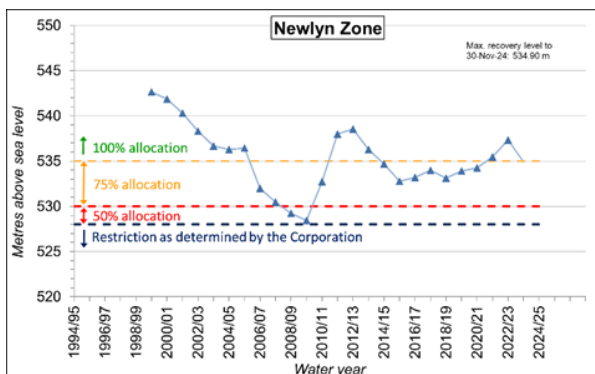


Figure 4 Trigger graph for allocation in the Newlyn Zone

Licence transfers

During the 2024/25 water year there were fifteen temporary transfers, totalling 456.5 ML. There were no permanent transfers for the water year (Figure 5).

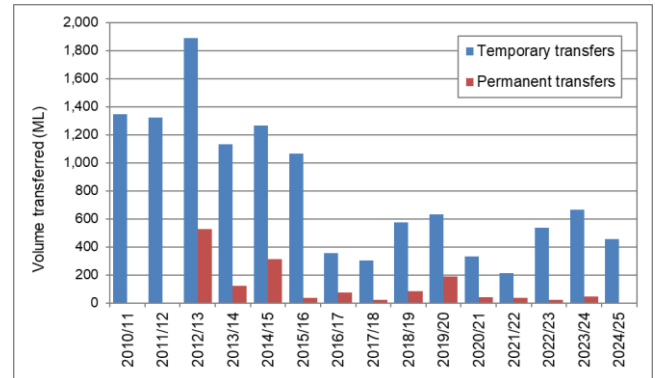


Figure 5 Annual volumes of Licence Transfers in 2024/25

Please refer to the [Loddon Highlands WSPA Groundwater Management Plan](#) for information on Trading Prescriptions.

Groundwater levels

Groundwater levels are monitored across the GMA by the State Observation Bores, Network (SOBN). During the 2023/24 water year, groundwater level monitoring occurred at 59 State observation bores, located across the WSPA.

Groundwater levels across all monitored aquifers have generally declined since the Plan was approved in late 2012, consistent with reduced rainfall recharge which is a result of drier-than-average rainfall conditions during the reported period.

In 2024/25, groundwater levels recorded in monitoring bores at Cotswold Road, Glengower (Ullina Zone) (Figure 6), and Forest Road, Glenbrae (Waubra Zone) (Figure 7) showed slight declines in levels, however levels remained within long term groundwater level fluctuations.

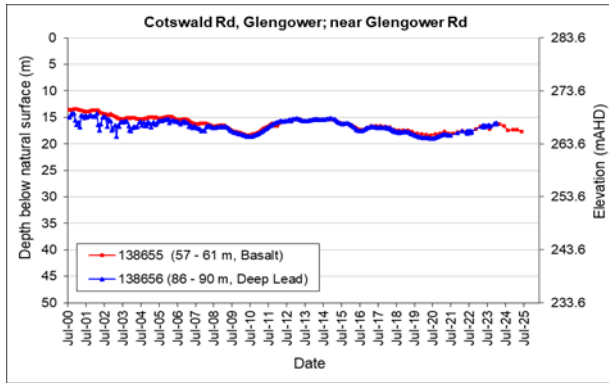


Figure 6 Groundwater levels at Cotswald Road Glengower

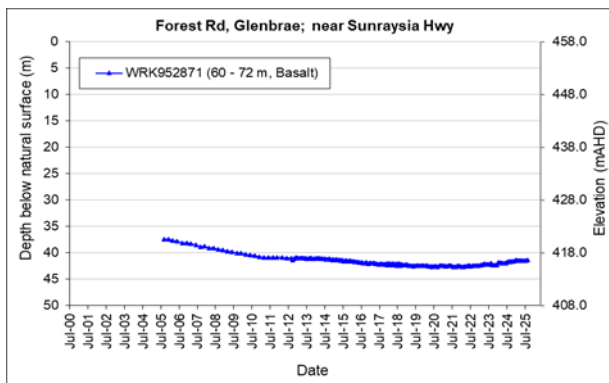


Figure 7 Groundwater levels at Forest Road, Glenbrae

Groundwater levels recorded in a shallower monitoring bore (upper Basalt aquifer) at a different location in Glenbrae (Waubra Zone) have continued to indicate a modest decline since June 2020 (Figure 8).

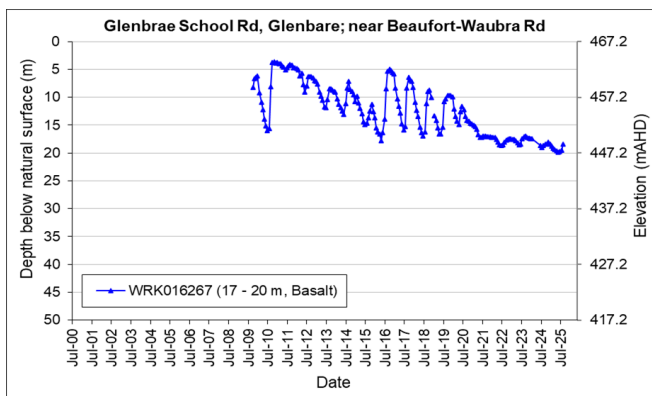


Figure 8 Groundwater levels at Glenbrae School Road, Glenbrae

GMW will keep a close watch on groundwater levels in the Waubra Zone and investigate further if required. Groundwater levels reached their lowest during the 2024/25 period.

Groundwater quality

Groundwater quality is monitored annually in State observation bores located near Campbelltown, in Ullina Zone, and Talbot Zone at Bung Bong.

Results from samples collected in October-November 2024 indicate that groundwater salinity has remained stable (Figure 9).

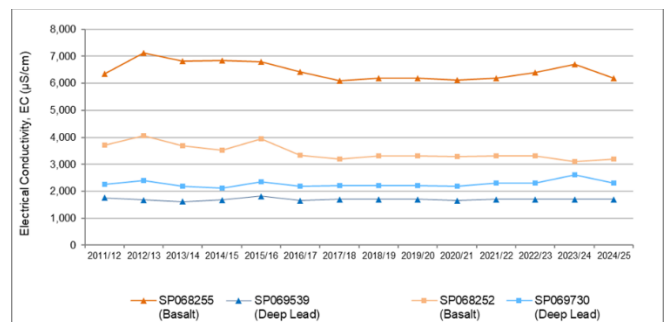


Figure 9 Groundwater Salinity monitoring in the Ullina and Talbot Zones

Licence compliance

In 2024/25, there were no prosecutions or convictions relating to groundwater in the Water Supply Protection Area.

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 refer to the Water Use Compliance web page.

Maps, hydrographs and previous years newsletters can be found on the [Loddon Highlands WSPA](#) webpage.