



3 December 2010

Urban Water Inquiry  
Productivity Commission  
LB 2 Collins Street East  
MELBOURNE VIC 3165

Dear Sir/madam

**SUBMISSION: PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION ISSUES PAPER – AUSTRALIA'S  
URBAN WATER SECTOR**

Further to the City's submission dated 25 November 2010 regarding the above matter, please accept this as a second part of that submission.

Please find attached a copy of a Briefing Note which has recently been prepared for this City's Elected Members regarding an application by the Water Corporation to abstract a maximum (exceptional circumstances) 165 GL from the Perth groundwater systems for the 2010-11 period.

The Briefing Note includes a copy of the submission which City Administration has made to the Department of Water on this application.

There are a number of matters discussed in the Briefing Note and submission which are very relevant to the Terms of Reference of this Productivity Commission Inquiry, particularly point 2a. of the scope of the inquiry (relating to economic, social and environmental impacts) and point 2 of the 'considerations' (relating to the need to avoid compromising social, health and environmental outcomes).

Yours faithfully

  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Attach:

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**BRIEFING NOTE****All Elected Members**

**SUBJECT:** Proposal for Maximum 165 GL Abstraction from Perth Groundwater Systems for 2010-11

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**ISSUE:**

To advise Elected Members of an application by the Water Corporation for groundwater licences to abstract a maximum of 165 Gigalitres (GL) from Perth groundwater systems for the Integrated Water Supply Scheme (IWSS) for the remainder of the 2010-11 period.

**BACKGROUND:**

In October of each year, following the winter rains, the Department of Water (DOW) and Water Corporation consult on the matter of how much water the Water Corporation may be permitted to abstract from the Perth groundwater systems (comprising the Gnangara and Jandakot systems) for the following year.

The basis the agencies use for determining this is the 'Variable Groundwater Abstraction Rule' (VGAR) (see Attachment No. 1). This basically involves a sliding scale, whereby the less water there is in the hills dams, the more water will be taken from the groundwater sources.

The VGAR allows for a maximum of 145 GL to be taken from groundwater sources, however, under 'exceptional circumstances', up to a maximum of 165 GL may be abstracted.

The exceptional circumstances apply when storage in the hills dams is extremely low, and abstraction above the normal maximum of 145 GL and up to 165 GL may be permitted under those circumstances, and subject to the following conditions:

1. that all possible efforts have been made to secure alternative (contingency) water supplies.
2. that demand management measures for drought circumstances are in place.
3. that the impact of additional abstraction is more acceptable than increasing the probability of water restrictions.
4. DOW and the Water Corporation are able to develop an annual abstraction pattern that does not breach the environment sensitivity rules in the IWSS Operating Strategy.

Following the initial consultation between DOW and the Water Corporation, the process then is basically as follows:

- Water Corporation advertises its application for the amount of groundwater it wishes to abstract for the following year, and invites public submissions on it;
- Public submissions are made to the DOW which assesses them and then makes a recommendation on the matter to the Minister for Water;
- The Minister for Water determines the application, and DOW issues the groundwater licences to the Western Corporation in accordance with that determination.

## **CURRENT SITUATION:**

This year's extremely dry winter has seen only 11 GL inflow to the hills dams, and their storage currently stands at approximately 204 GL, which can be compared with 325 GL this time last year.

This has led DOW to agreeing in principle to the Water Corporation taking the maximum (exceptional circumstances) amount of 165 GL from Perth's groundwater systems (see Attachment No. 2).

The 165 GL is proposed to comprise 151.71 GL from the Gnambarra system, and 13.3 GL from the Jandakot system.

DOW provided a briefing on this matter to government and industry stakeholders on 9 November 2010. The powerpoint presentation used at the briefing was subsequently provided by DOW (see Attachment No. 3).

The Water Corporation application for the groundwater licences involved was advertised in the West Australian newspaper of 17 November 2010 (see Attachment No. 4).

It should be noted that the figures in the advertisement relate to increases in allocation, with the total amount proposed for abstraction being the amounts listed above.

## **BUDGET/OTHER IMPACT [include any financial, statutory, policy, strategic or risk management implications]:**

Nil.

## **COMMENT:**

For many years now, Council has been making submissions to the State Government, arguing that the Gnambarra groundwater system should stop being used as the contingency (fall back) water source for the IWSS during dry years, and that alternative new water sources need to be developed to serve as that contingency supply.

Notwithstanding that DOW's own "Gnambarra Groundwater Areas Allocation Plan", as well as condition 1 relating to 'exceptional circumstances' referred to earlier, also require that such alternative water supplies be developed, this has not been done and the groundwater systems themselves continue to be used as the contingency supply.

The current Water Corporation advertisement for groundwater licenses perpetuates this approach so it has therefore been considered important to take this opportunity to make a submission in response to the advertisement, rather than remain silent on this matter.

Due to the short timeframe involved between the publishing of the advertisement and the submission deadline of 2 December 2010, it has not been possible to report this matter to Council, so an Administration submission has been made (see Attachment No. 5 )

Please note that the Chief Executive Officer has forwarded a copy of the City's submission to the following:

- Minister for Water, Hon Graham Jacobs MLA
- Minister for Environment, Hon John Day MLA

- Shadow Minister for Water, Hon Francis Logan MLA
- Shadow Minister for Environment, Hon Sally Talbot MLC
- Hon Alison Xamon MLC
- Member for Wanneroo, Mr Paul Miles MLA
- Director General, Department of Environment and Conservation
- Chairman , Environmental Protection Authority
- General Manager, Office of the Environmental Protection Authority

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Elected Members note the content of this Briefing Note.

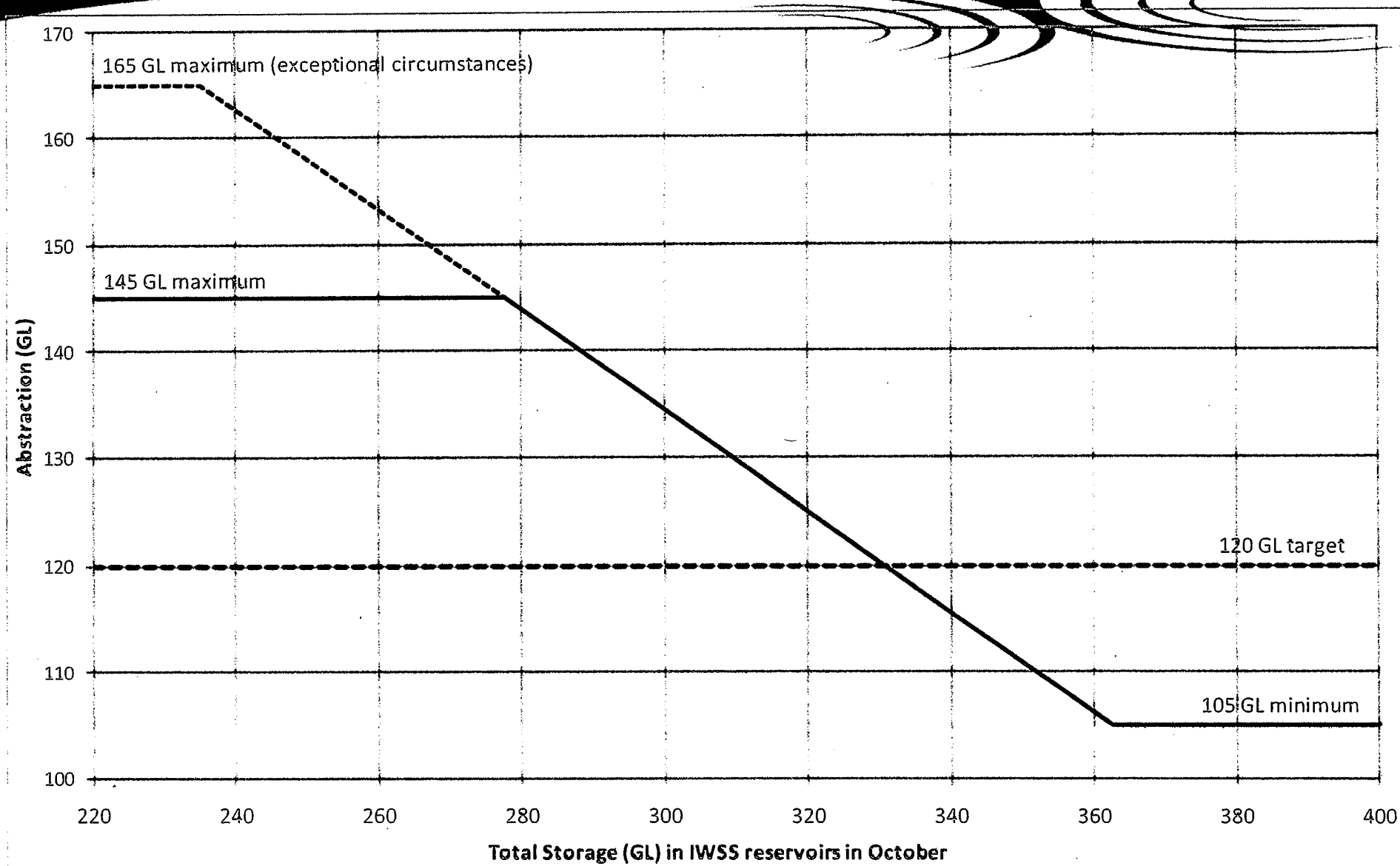
BRIEFING OFFICER:	Phil Thompson	DATE: 30/11/10
APPROVED BY MANAGER:	Mark Dickson	DATE: 30/11/10
APPROVED BY DIRECTOR:		DATE: 1.12.10
APPROVED BY CEO:		DATE: 3.12.10.
DATE ISSUED		

**File Reference: 2036**



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water

# Gnangara groundwater areas management plan Variable Groundwater Abstraction Rule (VGAR)



## Department of Water

### Looking after all of our water needs

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Home > News & events > Current news

## Current news

### Department applies extra conditions to proposed Gngangara increase

November 10, 2010

The Department of Water has agreed in principle for Water Corporation to take 165 gegalitres (GLs)\* from Perth's groundwater for public water supply – on the proviso that certain conditions are met.

In the proposed decision extraction will be targeted to get more water from the deeper confined aquifers and less from the superficial aquifers, which are more directly connected to lakes and wetlands.

The proposal is for 150.7 GLs to be taken from the combined Gngangara aquifers and 14.7GLs from the Jandakot aquifers.

"The proposal will see 12GLs less than we took from the superficial Gngangara aquifer than the last time extreme dry caused a maximum draw on Gngangara in 2006-07," Director Water Resource Use Rob Hammond said.

"We will also increase the take by 5.4GLs from the Jandakot-Leederville."

Mr Hammond said the extractive pattern has been designed to minimise impact of abstraction on key ecological values attached to the Gngangara groundwater system.

"This has been an exceptionally dry year. The wetlands and lakes will be affected by the lack of rainfall, and this will not be the only difficult decision we have to make," he said.

He said the department was doing its best to balance the need for Perth's water supplies, and the health of the Gngangara mound.

The department can authorise up to 165GLs\* under the current Gngangara groundwater areas allocation plan, if circumstances are proved to be exceptional.

The Water Corporation has requested this volume after dams that supply greater Perth's scheme water recorded only 11GLs inflow in 2010.

"We have considered the case for exceptional circumstances, including the implications for Perth's scheme supply without the maximum draw, and agreed to propose a decision that considers all values and needs.

To trigger the exceptional circumstances the Water Corporation had to prove to the department that it had:

Made all possible efforts to secure alternative supplies including maximising output from the Perth Seawater Desalination Plant

Demand management measures for extreme dry circumstances remain in place

Mr Hammond said the shortfall in inflow to Perth's dam water supplies was one impact of the driest winter on record.

He said the department remained committed to reducing the annual draw on Gngangara to mitigate the sustained impact of a drying climate over 30 years.

"At the same time last year we had enough water to reduce the draw on Gngangara, and we did significantly.

"However this year, following record low inflow into metropolitan dams, the Water Corporation has proved to us they need the water to meet Perth's supply needs.

Mr Hammond said the government had developed a long term plan for the groundwater system's sustainability in the draft Gngangara Sustainability Strategy.

"After an extensive across government process of consultation with key water user groups, conservationists and the general public, we have a long term plan.

The final aspects of the plan were recently adjusted following public feedback and how some major aspects of the plan would be funded was the next stage of its development.

"The department and its partners remain committed to ensuring the long term sustainability of the system not only for Perth's high quality scheme water, but for all users of the system.

"There is no question that the Gngangara system in particular is under stress because of the drying climate and it has always been the intention of the Department of Water and the Water Corporation to reduce drinking water abstraction by a significant amount when possible.

"Last year, while still only about 54 per cent full overall, the dams were at their highest level for 10 years which allowed us to reduce the draw. This year, despite increased efficiency measures, we are not in that position."

The annual draw on Gngangara has historically provided 60 per cent of scheme water with the State's first desalination plant reducing that to 50 per cent in recent years.

Average abstraction in recent years has ranged from more than 158GL\* to a low of 110GL\* in 2009-10.

"Sustainable abstraction from the Gngangara system remains a high priority as it is essential to greater Perth's water needs," Mr Hammond said.

Note: \* Abstraction figures are a combination of Gngangara and Janadakot mounds.

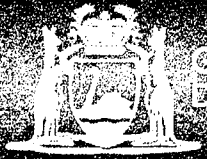
10 year IWSS abstraction history Gngangara and Jandakot

Year	Jandakot (GLs)	Gngangara (GLs)	Combined (GLs)
2001-02 (dry year)	11.92	153.21	165.13
2002-03	7.8	159.2	167
2003-04	7	151	158
2004-05	5.7	150.3	156
2005-06	5	136	141
2006-07 (dry year)	8.36	160.84	169.2
2007-08	8.5	15	143.5
2008-09	10.8	136.2	147
2009-10	10.8	110.2	121
2010-11 (dry year)	13.3	151.71	165.01

Media contact: Peter Collins (08) 6364 6848 / 0434 603 441

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Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water

# Abstraction proposal Perth groundwater to Integrated Water Supply Scheme

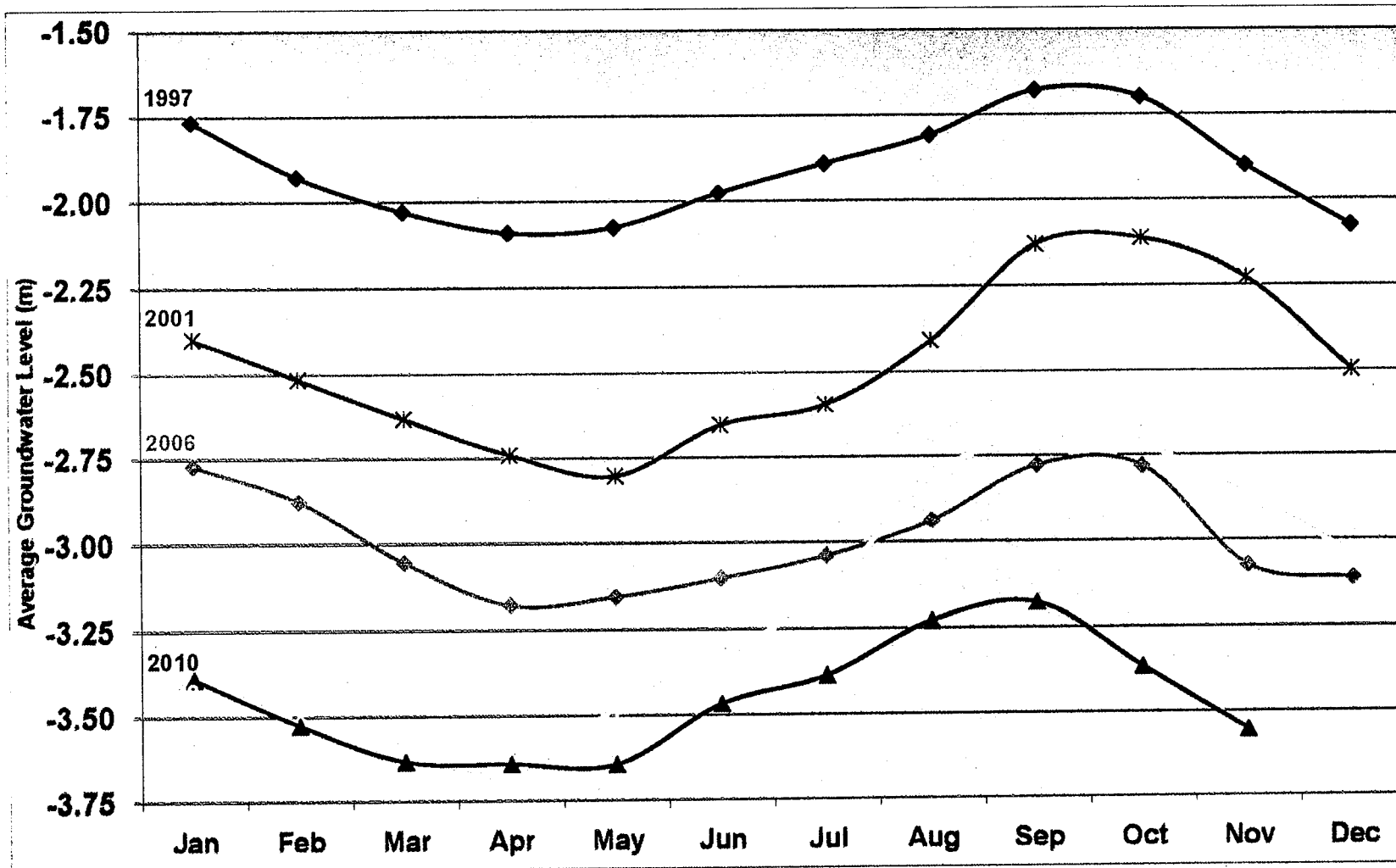
## **2010-11: Dry Season Response**

Director Water Resource Use  
Rob Hammond  
November 2010



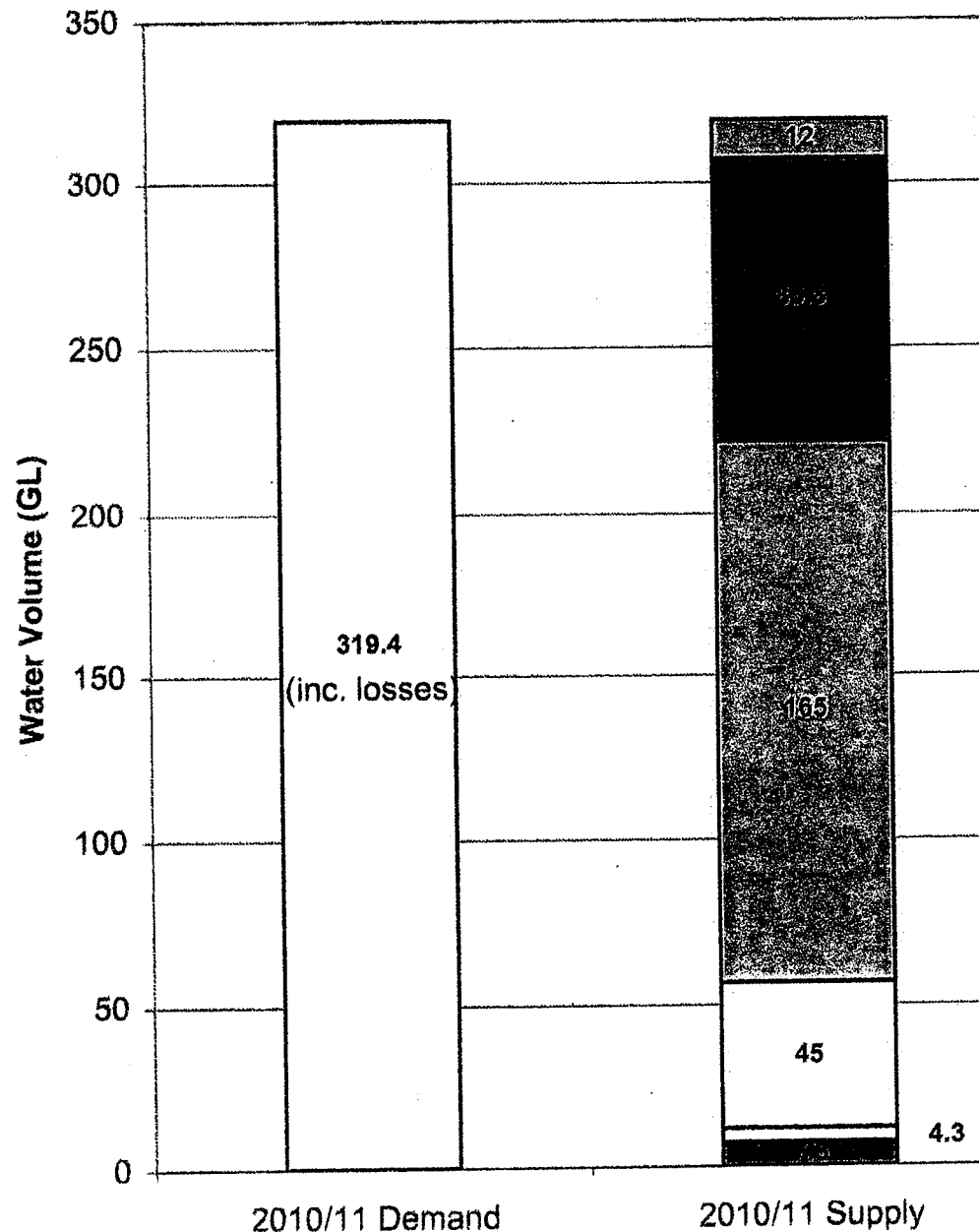


Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water



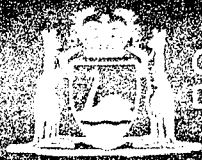
Average Gnangara Groundwater Levels November 2010

# 2010-11 Water Demands



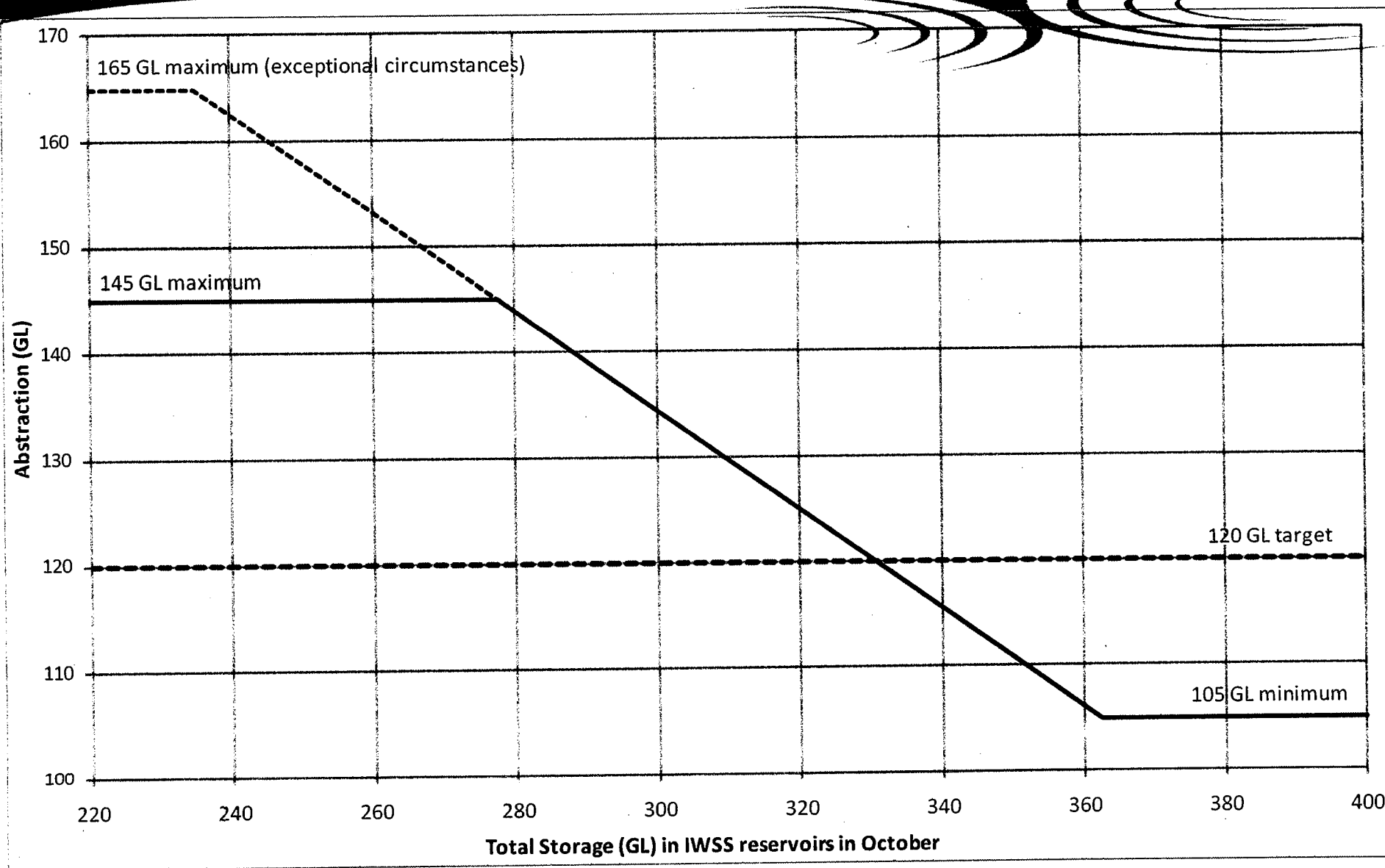
• Given the low dam inflows meeting 2010/11 demands will require a 165 GL take from groundwater

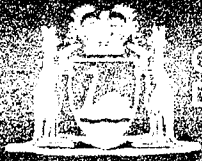
- Winter inflow 2010
- Required/Available from storage
- Groundwater
- SSDP
- PSDP
- Contingency supply actions
- Efficiency initiatives



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water

# Gnangara groundwater areas management plan Variable Groundwater Abstraction Rule (VGAR)





Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water

- An allocation of up to 165 GL for the IWSS may be considered under exceptional circumstances provided that:
  - All possible efforts have been made to secure alternative supplies
  - Demand management measures for drought circumstances are in place
  - The impact of additional abstraction is more acceptable than the probability of increased water restrictions
  - The department and Water Corporation are able to develop an annual abstraction pattern that does not breach the environmental sensitivity rules in the IWSS Operating Strategy



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water

## 10 year IWSS abstraction history Gnangara and Jandakot

Year	Jandakot (GLs)	Gnangara (GLs)	Combined (GLs)
2001-02 (dry year)	11.92	153.21	165.13
2002-03	7.8	159.2	167
2003-04	7	151	158
2004-05	5.7	150.3	156
2005-06	5	136	141
2006-07 (dry year)	8.36	160.84	169.2
2007-08	8.5	135	143.5
2008-09	10.8	136.2	147
2009-10	10.8	110.2	121
2010-11 (dry year)	13.3	151.71	165.01



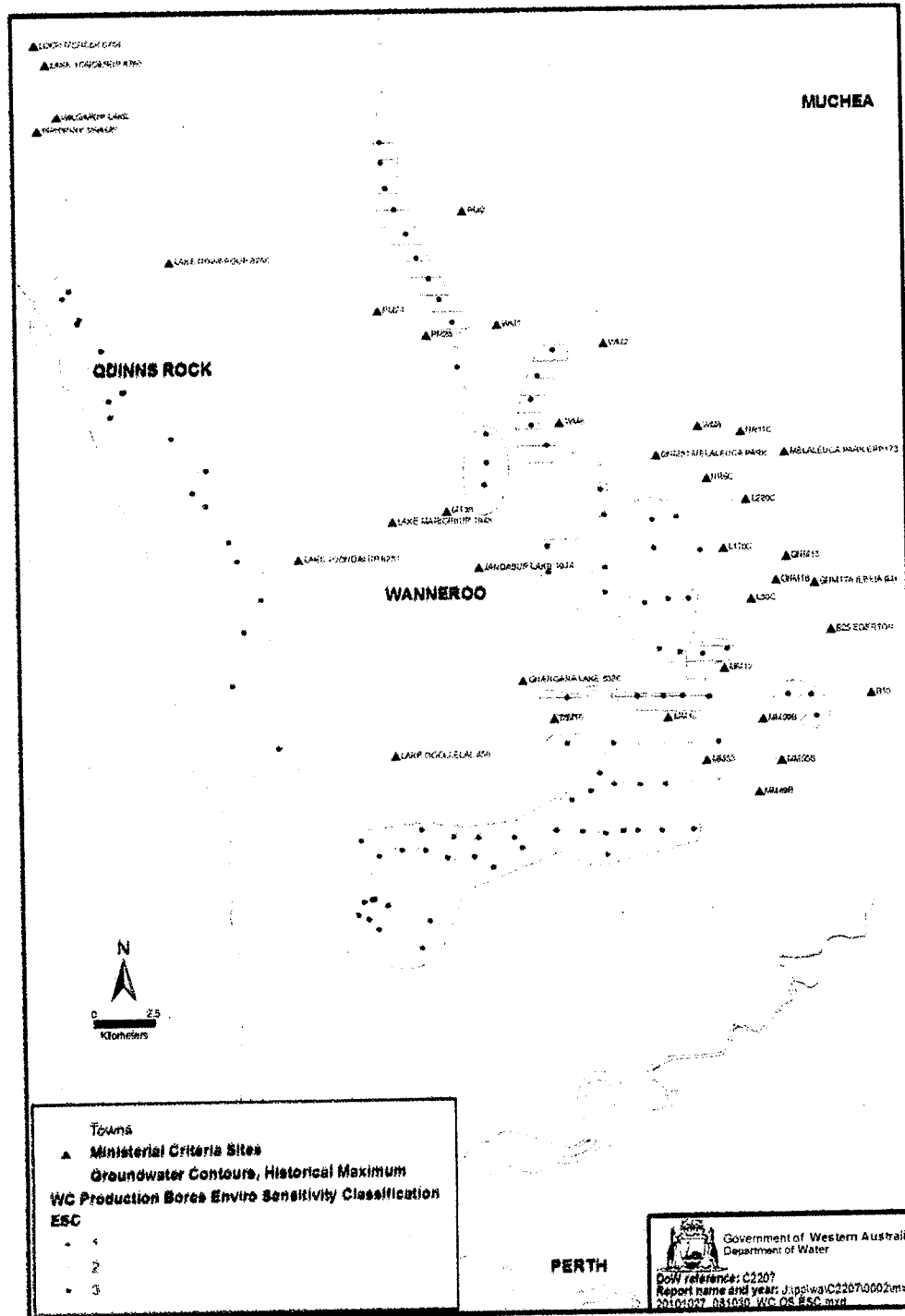


## Abstraction from Gnangara and Jandakot – 2010-11 compared to 2006-07

	Aquifer	2006-07	2010-11
Gnangara	Superficial (Gnangara Mound)	60.16	48.25
	Mirrabooka	4.20	4.40
	Leederville	45.66	48.56
	<u>Yarragadee</u>	49.88	49.50
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>159.90</b>	<b>150.70</b>
Jandakot	Superficial (Jandakot Mound)	5.81	5.90
	Leederville	1.96	7.40
	<u>Yarragadee</u>	0.94	1.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8.71</b>	<b>14.30</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>168.61</b>	<b>165.50</b>



# Environmental sensitivity classifications



■ Sensitivity 1 – most sensitive

□ Sensitivity 2 – medium sensitivity

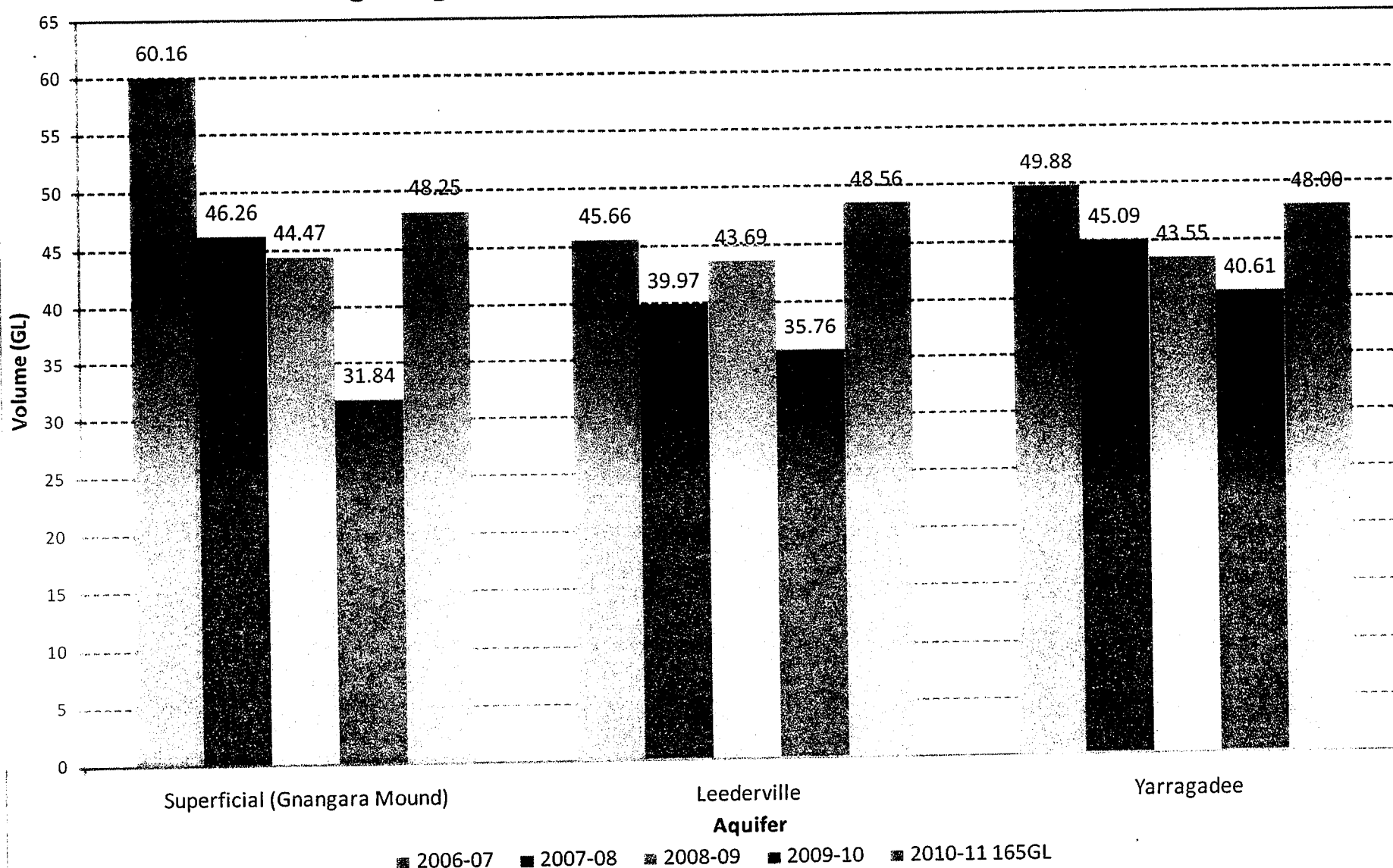
■ Sensitivity 3 – least sensitive



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water

# Consistency with environmental rules

## Gnangara groundwater system breakdown by aquifer



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Raymond Buchholz  
Acting General Manager, Marine Safety  
Department of Transport

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914

The Water Corporation has made application for Groundwater Licences under 55C for a 12 month period to take an increased allocation of 23,960 megalitres (ML) from the following Groundwater Areas and Aquifers (refer table) for public water supply purposes for the Perth metropolitan area. These requested increases will be offset with a reduction of 3,960 ML from associated groundwater resources that also supply the Perth metropolitan area. It is a statutory requirement that this application be advertised.

Groundwater Area	Superficial Aquifer	Mirrbooka Aquifer	Leederville Aquifer	Yarragadee Aquifer
Gnangara	1,900 ML		4,810 ML	
Mirrbooka	500 ML		2,100 ML	200 ML
Perth	3,050 ML	650 ML	100 ML	3,150 ML
Gwelup			1,050 ML	1,050 ML
Yanchep	100 ML			
Jandakot	2,700 ML		2,600 ML	
Totals	8,250 ML	650 ML	10,660 ML	4,400 ML

Minor amendments within the allocations may be implemented throughout the 12 month period where beneficial environmental outcomes or system constraints are identified. Interested persons may make a written submission within 15 days of this publication to the Department of Water, PO Box K822 Perth WA 6842, quoting ref. WT 7390.

Submissions are to specify what actions, if any, would overcome objections. General enquiries to Steven O'Brien on phone number 08 6364 6865 or Matt Viskovich on phone number 08 6364 6869.



**WATER**  
CORPORATION

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associated with any loss, damage, accident, death or injury resulting from the promotion.  
17. Entry into this competition signifies acceptance of all conditions. The Promoters' decision will be final and cannot be contested. No correspondence will be entered into. The Promoters reserve the right to limit, entry or amend rules if considered necessary without notice.  
18. The promoter is West Australian Newspapers Limited Group of 50 Hasler Road Osborne Park, WA 6017, (ASN 98 008 667 632).

#### WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PRISON OFFICERS' UNION NOTICE OF MEETING

A Special General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 24th November 2010 at 1700 hours at the Union Office, 63 Railway Parade, Mount Lawley WA 6050.

The purpose of this General Meeting is to consider rule changes.

It is proposed that there be changes to Rule 6 - Entrance Fees and Contributions.

The rule change will allow the State Council to set the rate of Union contributions, otherwise known as Union dues, at a rate no higher than that which the formula currently set out in the Union rules would allow.

It is also proposed that there be changes to Rules 14, 16 and 21A.

The second set of rule changes have the effect of changing the role of the Assistant Secretary to make it a staff position appointed by the State Council. The change would also increase the Union Executive by one position to ensure that there was no loss in the democratic representation of the membership on the Executive.

It also introduces a notice period of one month for the Assistant Secretary.

We have written to all members explaining the detail of the proposed rule changes.

All members must be advised that they can raise objections at the meeting or in writing to State Executive. Members can also write to the Industrial Registrar, WAIRC, 16th Floor, 111 St George's Terrace PERTH WA 6000 outlining objections within 21 days of the date of receipt of the Circular being sent to delegates explaining the rule change.

Authorised by  
John Welch  
Secretary

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(ii) the repair of the goods;  
(iii) the payment of the cost of replacing the goods or of acquiring equivalent goods;  
(iv) the payment of the cost of having the goods repaired;  
(b) in the case of services:  
(i) the supplying of the services again or;  
(ii) the payment of the cost of having the services supplied again.

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ATTACHMENT 4

"West Australian" 17 Nov. 2010, page 86; Public Notices section.

SUBMISSION  
TO  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER



File Ref: 2036 (10/61541)  
Your Ref: WT7390  
Enquiries: Phil Thompson

2 December 2010

Department of Water  
PO Box K822  
PERTH WA 6842

Attention: Mr Matt Viskovich

Dear Sir

**SUBMISSION ON WATER CORPORATION APPLICATION FOR GROUNDWATER  
LICENCES FOR GNANGARA AND JANDAKOT GROUNDWATER SYSTEMS FOR  
2010-11**

I refer to the notice in the West Australian newspaper of 17 November 2010, which invited submissions on the above application by the Water Corporation.

City of Wanneroo Administration submits the following comments on this application:

**KEY POINTS OF SUBMISSION**

1. Despite the Government intentions for sustainable management of the Gnangara groundwater system, it continues to be managed in an unsustainable manner, which essentially involves substantially more water being taken out of the system than is going into it. The result is declining aquifer storages and water table levels and environmental harm being caused to many of the area's groundwater dependent ecosystems. Applications such as this perpetuate that unsustainable management regime.
2. A number of the conditions which are required to be met in allowing more than 145 GL to be taken from the Perth groundwater systems are not being met. Specifically:
  - a) Alternative (contingency) water supplies to the Perth groundwater systems are not being secured, and those groundwater systems themselves continue to be used as the main contingency water supply as demonstrated by this application. This means even more water being taken out of them at the time when even less is going into them. The Water Corporation does not appear to be intending to secure such alternative contingency water supplies.
  - b) Demand management measures for drought circumstances are not in place. Demand management measures have actually been eased through the decision to revert to a two-day per-week sprinkler system.

3. In presenting this application to the Minister for Water, it is important that the Minister is also fully informed regarding the impacts, which this additional abstraction will have on aquifer storages, water table levels and groundwater dependent ecosystems. This information is also supposed to have been made publicly available, but it has not.

#### DETAILS OF SUBMISSION

1. The Gngangara Groundwater Areas Allocation Plan (GGAAP) (Department of Water, November 2009) advises on page 57 that:

*"The Department may consider an allocation up to a maximum of 165GL under exceptional circumstances, subject to the following:*

- that all possible efforts have been made to secure alternative (contingency) water supplies*
- that demand management measures for drought circumstances are in place*
- that the impact of the additional abstraction is more acceptable than increasing the probability of water restrictions*
- the Department and Water Corporation are able to develop an annual abstraction pattern that does not breach the environmental sensitivity rules in the IWSS Operating Strategy."*

'Exceptional circumstances' are presumably considered to apply when the total storage in the Integrated Water Supply Scheme (IWSS) reservoirs in October are at very low levels, and this is clearly the case at the moment.

Where this City considers further scrutiny is required is in relation to the first three conditions stated above:

**a) Alternative (contingency) water supplies.**

The GGAAP includes the following further advice on this matter:

*"In recent years, the Department has been working with the Water Corporation to determine contingency sources of water for the IWSS. Alternative sources will enable the Water Corporation to reduce groundwater abstraction from the Gngangara system in line with the allocations set by the Department. They will also ensure that the continued supply of water to the IWSS is not compromised in the period prior to the commissioning of Southern Seawater Desalination Plant. The Water Corporation will use those sources to avoid increased groundwater take through the life of the plan." (page 58)*

What we currently have is the nonsensical situation of the main contingency water supply continuing to be the Gngangara groundwater system, and rather than alternative contingency water supplies (see first condition above) being used to avoid increased groundwater take, groundwater take is increasing. Exactly the opposite is happening to what is intended according to the GGAAP.

Concern on this matter has recently been heightened by the Water Corporation media release of 4 November 2010 (see Attachment No. 1), which indicates that the Water Corporation does not see that new water sources will be developed which will only be used during dry times, and not used during non-dry times. This begs the question then of what does it expect to be the main contingency water supplies during dry times? The first condition above clearly requires them to be an alternative to the Gnangara groundwater system and these alternative contingency supplies need to be determined and implemented as soon as possible.

If it is intended that Perth groundwater systems continue to be used as the main contingency water supply during dry years, then having regard for the Water Corporation position referred to above, consideration should be given to the approach of development of new water sources to progressively replace the Perth groundwater systems, and with these groundwater systems mainly being used as the contingency water supply during dry years.

This would have a number of benefits:

- i) It would allow the groundwater systems and the groundwater dependent ecosystems they support to recover much quicker than would otherwise be the case.
- ii) It would mean that the new water sources developed would be used year-round, and not only during dry years.

It is recognised that the above approach would be much more costly than continuing to use the Perth groundwater systems as a major part of the IWSS, however if the government is genuine about seeking to provide water for Perth's growing population in a truly sustainable manner, and properly taking account of our drying climate, then these costs need to be accepted.

- b) **Demand management measures for drought circumstances are in place.**

On this matter, the GGAAP advises:

*"The government has introduced permanent restrictions on the use of IWSS water in the Perth region including that taken from the Gnangara system, as a measure to reduce water consumption. The Department will continue to inform government decisions on demand management, including restrictions. As part of this role, the Department will review the level of permanent restrictions on the use of IWSS water in response to seasonal water use and annual rainfall and advise government when appropriate".*

*"Action 15 – Continue to inform government decisions on demand management and restrictions to reduce abstraction for the IWSS."*  
(page 58)

The recent State Government decision, based on advice from the Department of Water (DOW) and Water Corporation, to revert back to a two day per week sprinkler roster from 1 December 2010 to 31 March 2011, clearly represents a relaxation of the demand management measure on this matter (see Ministerial Media Statement – Attachment No. 2).

It will also mean an increase in abstraction for the IWSS (contrary to Action 15 above). In making this decision, the State Government should have also informed the community of approximately how much this increase in abstraction is likely to be. At a DOW briefing held on 9 November 2010 attended by City of Wanneroo staff, the question was raised as to approximately how much water would be saved if a total domestic sprinkler ban was imposed. DOW officers present estimated that approximately 30GL would be saved.

**c) Impact of the additional abstraction being more acceptable than increasing the probability of water restrictions.**

This is related to b) above, and can be taken to mean that in deciding to relax sprinkler restrictions, it has been determined that the impact of additional abstraction is more acceptable than increasing the probability of water restrictions.

As noted in b) above, the nature of the impacts of additional abstraction needs to be more fully known to the community. On this matter, the GGAAP advises:

*"In October each year, when the allocation based on the variable groundwater abstraction rule is agreed between the Department and the Water Corporation, the Department will advise the Minister for Water Resources of the volume of water to be allocated and will provide advice on the likely impacts of abstracting this volume. This information will be made publicly available, as part of meeting Ministerial condition 9 (see Appendix B)." (page 58)*

This raises a number of issues:

- i) Will the Minister be advised of the above likely impacts? Such advice should include the results of modelling of the proposed abstraction, to then be able to include advice on such matters as estimated decline in aquifer storages and water table levels, and likely impacts of these declines on groundwater dependent ecosystems.
- ii) Information on likely impacts has not been made publicly available as part of the advertisement of the current Water Corporation's application.



- iii) This application should be advertised in a manner which maximises community awareness of this issue. The advertisement has been placed on page 86 of the West Australian newspaper of Wednesday 17 November 2010, in the Public Notices section. Very few in the community would have been likely to have been aware of it.

2. The Foreward to the GAAP includes the following:

*"Our goal is to optimise water availability within a sustainable limit. To achieve this for Gnambarra we have reduced the amount of water available for abstraction and promoted better use of water. We aim for a secure supply of water for public use and for developments while at the same time protecting wetlands and other groundwater-dependent ecosystems from the direct impacts of abstraction." (page iii)*

The above goal is considered sound, however, approval of applications such as that currently proposed is clearly contrary to achievement of that goal. These applications arise from use of the Variable Groundwater Abstraction Rule, which is also intrinsically contrary to this goal, through essentially meaning that the drier it is, the more groundwater that can be abstracted. This is also contrary to the GGAAP's requirement for alternative contingency water sources.

Unless these fundamental issues are properly addressed, goals such as the above, and the goals of related initiatives such as the Gnambarra Sustainability Strategy, will not be achieved.

Please contact the undersigned if you require any further information in relation to this submission.

Yours faithfully

\_\_\_\_\_  
Len Kosova  
DIRECTOR PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Attach:



## ATTACHMENTS TO SUBMISSION TO DEPARTMENT OF WATER

Media and publications

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### Media Releases

#### Response to The West Australian - Bill Hassell opinion piece

04 November 2010

Bill Hassell advocates a Perth in which rich people have lush gardens and the others live in a dust bowl. This is not the future the Water Corporation envisions at all.

Early recognition of a changing climate led to a huge investment in construction of climate independent water sources, such as desalination, so that Perth now has the luxury of essential in-house water, for drinking, cooking and washing, no longer reliant on the vagaries of rainfall patterns. A trial to recharge recycled water into our deep aquifers for future water supply use is under way and, if successful and approved by our regulators, this will add to that climate independent supply.

These new water sources are significantly more expensive than rain into a dam and to invest huge sums to fully replace runoff with desalination would mean many years of paying for these when they were not in use when it does rain. Witness the debate on the east coast at present with billions of dollars worth of water plants turned off due to heavy rainfall. The private sector is unlikely to be attracted to gambling on the weather by making such investments without a guaranteed supply contract in place. This, in turn, would dramatically increase prices to our customers for what is an essential commodity.

Our long hot summers, sandy soils and love of large English style gardens, however, drive very high per capita water use which is at odds with our actual environment. Residential water users make up about 80% of the Water Corporation's customers so a focus on cutting waste in the home garden is both appropriate and responsible. In most suburbs, shallow aquifers provide natural rainwater tanks under homes so garden bores are a sensible way for individuals seeking to use more water to pay for it themselves. But even these privately constructed bores access a finite resource that must not be wasted, hence the inclusion of bores in the water efficiency rules.

The role of the Corporation is to ensure water forever - we must realise that the Perth we build today will be the home of our children and grandchildren.

Sue Murphy  
Chief Executive Officer  
Water Corporation

#### Media Enquiries:

Contact: Phil Kneebone  
Senior Media Coordinator

Telephone: (08) 9420 3043



## Ministerial Media Statements

### Welcome

Please contact the relevant Ministerial office if you require further information relating to a media statement.

If you require assistance regarding the website please contact the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Media Office on (08) 9222 9595.

### Recent Statements



**Graham Jacobs**  
Minister for Water; Mental Health

*Sun 21 November, 2010*

#### **Two-day sprinkler schedule for summer**

##### **Portfolio: Water**

Water Minister Graham Jacobs today announced that from the start of summer, scheme water users affected by the spring sprinkler restrictions would revert back to the two day a week sprinkler roster until at least the end of March.

Dr Jacobs said State Cabinet had endorsed this decision based on advice from the Department of Water and the Water Corporation that the best approach for this summer was to build community support for long-term water conservation and not tighten mandatory restrictions.

"The State Government agreed and the sprinkler roster will be reviewed next March," he said.

"Obviously the supply situation remains severe, but there is a strong belief within Government that the spring sprinkler roster has reinforced to the community just how critical the situation actually is - following by far the lowest run-off into our dams ever.

"However, we are also aware there is a high risk that leaving the one-day roster in place through summer would result in considerable loss of green spaces and investment in gardens.

"There would also be a highly adverse impact on several industries, in particular the nursery, garden and tourism industries. We must protect these industries and the thousands of people employed in them while moving Perth towards becoming a water sensitive city."

The Minister said the corporation would move quickly on a range of contingency actions and work closely with the Department of Water to reduce the risk of further and, possibly more severe bans later in 2011.

There will be a continuation of the current three day a week roster for domestic bores in the Perth and Mandurah areas.

"The fact is, in this unprecedented situation, even with an extra 50 billion litres of water from the new desalination plant next year and the full emergency groundwater quota, we need at least 70 billion litres of run-off into our dams next winter to get through the 2011-12 summer without the need for further restrictions," he said.

"That will dominate water management planning and Government decision making."

The Minister said in recognition that the community must be part of the long-term journey to using less water on a permanent basis, the department and corporation would next week launch a significantly

escalated educational advertising and general media campaign imploring customers to do much more to save water as an alternative to a continuation of tightened mandatory summer restrictions.

"The very direct appeal is to all of the community - householders, small business and major industry - to do their part and we will manage," he said.

"We urge everyone to continue the commitment to water conservation they demonstrated during the spring restrictions. Simple measures, like mulching and limiting sprinkler run times, can dramatically reduce the volume of water a garden uses while maintaining plant health."

Dr Jacobs said the Government was aware of water carting into various South-West towns and potentially in parts of the Great Southern. As in previous years, there may be a requirement to impose further restrictions in a number of towns within these areas to minimise the requirements for water carting. This situation would be monitored closely and decisions on sprinkler rosters for these areas would be made at an appropriate time.

Minister's office - 9213 6900

#### Sprinkler roster for Perth, Peel and Mandurah areas

	December 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011	
Last digit of House/Lot number	Scheme and bore users watering days	Bore owners only: Additional watering day
0	Monday and Friday	Wednesday
1	Wednesday and Saturday	Monday
2	Sunday and Thursday	Tuesday
3	Monday and Friday	Wednesday
4	Tuesday and Saturday	Thursday
5	Sunday and Wednesday	Friday
6	Monday and Thursday	Saturday
7	Tuesday and Friday	Sunday
8	Wednesday and Saturday	Monday
9	Sunday and Thursday	Tuesday
Note that day time sprinkler restrictions apply between the hours of 9am and 6pm.		

Page last revised: 20 May 2010