



RURAL WATER COUNCIL OF WA (INC)

Meeting held at the Water Corporation Depot, Conference Room
2 Cubbine Street, Cunderdin
Friday 13 October 2023 commencing at 10:00 am

Minutes

1 OPENING & WELCOME

The President and Chair of the meeting, Cr T Sachse, welcomed the Minister for Water, Hon Simone McGurk MLA, acknowledged Hon Darren West MLC, Member for Agricultural Region, and Ms Mia Davies MLA, Members for Central Wheatbelt, welcomed delegates and representatives, and thanked the Water Corporation for making their Conference Room available for the meeting.

The Chair, Cr Sachse, acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which the Rural Water Council meets and paid respect to Elders, past, present and emerging.

Mr J Mills, Water Corporation gave a safety induction. Water Corporation staff outlined housekeeping procedures.

2 ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

2.1 Attendance

President	Cr Tony Sachse - Shire of Mount Marshall, President
Deputy President	Cr Ross Chappell - Shire of Lake Grace, Deputy President
Shire of Chittering	Ms Melinda Prinsloo - CEO
Shire of Dowerin	Cr Lindsay Hagboom
Shire of Dumbleyung	Cr Amy Knight - Deputy President
	Mr Les Morgan - Director of Infrastructure
Shire of Lake Grace	Cr Len Armstrong - President
Shire of Mount Marshall	Cr Tanya Gibson
Shire of Mukinbudin	Cr Gary Shadbolt - President
	Mr Dirk Sellinger - CEO
Shire of Nungarin	Cr Eileen O'Connell
	Cr Gary Coumbe - Deputy President
Shire of Quairading	Ms Sarah Caporn - Executive Manager Works & Services
Shire of Toodyay	Cr Rosemary Madacsi - President
	Cr Beth Ruthven - Deputy President
	Cr Susan Pearce
	Cr Charmaine Duri
Shire of Victoria Plains	Cr Pauline Bantock - President
Shire of Westonia	Cr Mark Crees - President
	Cr Ross Della Bosca - Deputy President
Shire of Wongan-Ballidu	Cr Dwight Coad
Minister for Water	Hon Simone McGurk MLA
Minister's Office	Ms Lucinda Peters
Department of Water & Environmental Regulation	Ms Renae Thorpe A/Manager, Rural Water Planning
	Mr Iqbal Samnakay Strategy Manager for Strategic Policy
	Brian Giltay Acting Swan Avon Regional Manager
Water Corporation	Mr Mike Roberts Director of Country Regions
	Mr Joe Mills Regional Manager, Goldfields & Agricultural Region
	Ms Rebecca Bowler Manager Customer & Stakeholder, Goldfields & Agricultural Region

Water Corporation	Mr Anthony Bodycoat Principal - Regulation & Research (R&D), Asset Strategy
Wheatbelt Development Commission	Ms Rebecca Manning Principal Regional Development Officer – Central East
UWA School of Agriculture & Environment	Associate Professor Nik Callow
Member for Agricultural Region	Hon Darren West MLC
Member for Central Wheatbelt Executive Officer	Ms Mia Davies MLA Robert Dew

2.2 Apologies

Shire of Chittering	Cr Mark Campbell Cr David Dewar
Shire of Cunderdin	Cr Alison Harris - President
Shire of Gingin	Cr Frank Johnson
Shire of Lake Grace	Mr Alan George - CEO
Shire of Goomalling	Mr Peter Clarke
Shire of Merredin	Cr Julie Flockart
Shire of Moora	Cr Tracy Lefroy - President
Shire of Narembeen	Cr Chris Bray
Shire of Victoria Plains	Cr Gary O'Brien Mr Sean Fletcher - CEO
Shire of York	Cr Denese Smythe - President
Dandaragan	Mr Lawrie Short
Department of Primary Industries & Regional Development	Dr Richard George Senior Principal Research Scientist, Water Science
RDA Wheatbelt Inc	Ms Mandy Walker Director Regional Development
Member for Moore / Leader of the Opposition	Hon Shane Love MLA
Member for Agricultural Region	Hon Colin de Grussa MLC Hon Steve Martin MLC

2.3 Introduction of Attendees

The Chair asked attendees to introduce themselves.

3 MINISTER FOR WATER

3.1 Address by the Minister for Water

Hon Simone McGurk MLA addressed the meeting and commented on –

- First appointed a Minister in 2017. Took on the water portfolio just before Christmas 2022.
- A drying climate and increased variability an extra challenge for water.
- Water reform legislation –
 - Six existing Acts to be modernised and brought together.
 - Some of the existing legislation is over 100 years old.
 - Six Ministers for Water have committed to the reform, however the complexity in bringing the existing legislation together has caused a drafting challenge.
 - Importance of water for industry and community. Conscious of the challenge and concerns; a sensitive issue.
 - Existing legislation developed when demand for water was lower and water was abundant.
 - In some parts of the State water has been fully or overallocated (37%) and other areas are nearing full allocation (19%).
 - Important to acknowledge and take into account climate change in the legislation. Recognise in the objects of the new Act.

- Elements of the Bill –
 - Water licenses –
 - Simplify the current system.
 - Applications need to be properly assessed. A more streamlined process if water is fully allocated.
 - Existing water licenses to be transitioned.
 - Limited water trading in WA. At present trades must remain in the same water resource. No intent to change.
 - Transparency around water licensing. Will look at a more transparent process and availability of making public.
 - Traditional owners – Take into account that Aboriginal people have a cultural interest in overall water management plans and to be consulted. Happens now. Recognise in the objects of the new Act.
 - Timeframe for Consideration –
 - Drafting is quite complex and a choke point.
 - Policy issues.
 - Physical issues in bringing together the existing legislation.
 - Will consult with the community.
 - Draft (Green) Bill not yet ready due to the above.
 - A discussion paper on the principles is available.
 - Entitlements for unused water.

Cr R Madacsi asked – When looking at sustainability of ground water resources is there protection for existing commercial use. Currently this is through DWER but they do not look at broad allocations only specifics.

The Minister replied that DWER takes into account broad allocations when looking at overall plans and then specific allocations. Collie and Kalgoorlie-Boulder a challenge for new industry. Communities will have priority.

Cr R Madacsi commented that it seems there is an incremental loss as each application is taken in its own right. At the same time there has been a dramatic change in rainfall and loss of groundwater.

The Minister replied that the new Gnangara allocation plan provides for a reduction of 10% to most licenses water users and a 27% reduction in groundwater extracted by the Water Corporation.

Mr B Giltay commented that DWER modelling around allocation plans used the best available science to come to the best outcomes.

Mr L Morgan referred to the amount of saline groundwater in the agricultural region and to many local governments being issued with non-standard water service notices. He enquired if there were any plans for reverse osmosis to enable these water services to be brought up to standard.

The Minister replied that a third seawater desalination plant for Western Australia was proposed to be built at Alkimos. The challenge was to make desalination economical.

Mr L Morgan commented that most businesses in the Wheatbelt support agriculture which provides a lot of income to the State. He asked how people could be encouraged to come to the agricultural regions without adequate water services.

The Minister replied that it was about scale, cost and numbers serviced.

Mr I Samnakay commented that small scale desalination trials were being undertaken.

Mr A Bodycoat commented that small scale desalination was unique to Western Australia. Trials being undertaken were working out how to do it, the costs and the disposal of waste. DWER were looking at large scale desalination.

The Minister commented that in Western Australia this was quite a widespread issue.

Mr M Roberts commented on the need for disinfection of water services. In a service which has low use chlorination drops off and disinfection is low. It becomes a health risk. Quite a number of these low use services have been identified in the agricultural region.

Ms R Bowler commented on funding to install bespoke disinfection while investigations made into alternatives, changes in use. The water services are bound by health guidelines.

Mr L Morgan commented that he understood that the cost of bespoke systems were to be met by the local government or the customer.

Ms R Bowler replied that working on the lowest cost possible while investigating alternatives.

Cr P Bantock referred to the Community Water Supplies Partnerships program and the reverse osmosis pilot being undertaken at Piawaning as part of the program. She asked if there was going to be an increase in funding under the program and whether there was a program available in peri urban areas. Cr Bantock commented that the Mogumber townsite had no water supply; water was trucked in at the cost of the local government and pointed out that the program was not all about potable water but non-potable water for firefighting and stock.

The Minister replied that she was not aware of any changes to the Community Water Supplies Partnerships program. There was no guarantee of increases in funding as this was part of the budget process, however there were no plans to reduce funding. Peri urban areas are a challenge with expanding urban sprawl and more people. It was also a challenge with people living on smaller lots. Continuing to look at innovative solutions.

Cr A Knight asked whether the Minister was aware that the Water Corporation can declare a non-standard water service or stop services to communities.

The Minister replied that she was, that advise to her was that just under 10,000 customers were affected by non-standard water services and that in declaring non-standard water services the Water Corporation will be doing so in line with existing legislation.

Mr M Roberts advised that the Water Corporation was not stopping services but was taking a risk adverse perspective.

Cr T Sachse commented that mining exploration was going beyond the depth of existing aquifers and asked how this was being dealt with.

The Minister replied that in many areas limited information was available on the different water sources. A challenge was the state of water a depth. She didn't believe there would be any change under new legislation.

Cr D Coad referred to Caravel Minerals copper project at Wongan Hills and the proposal to source water for the mine from Gillingarra, approximately 60 km to the West. He enquired as to the effect of the proposal on other water resources and as to how much water Caravel Minerals can access.

Mr B Giltay replied that it comes down to the point of extraction of the water and how extracted, the primary interest will be the potential environmental impact and EPA processes will determine the amount of water allocated.

Ms Mia Davies MLA left the meeting at 11:07 am.

The Minister commented that she was keen to stay for the WaterSmart Dams and WaterSmart Farms updates as she would like to understand the issues and ensure communities are in the best place to support jobs and community liveability.

The Chair thanked the Minister for Water for her attendance, address and answering questions from delegates.

3.2 Questions

Matters which have been put forward are -

- Update and progress on water reform legislation, in particular provisions to be amended and new provisions to be created.
- Clarification under the new legislation of the issues surrounding "Water Trading".
- Concerns regarding sale of Water Licences independent of Title Transfer. It is understood that if an allocation of water, per license conditions, is not being used it is reallocated by DWER. Is this to remain or is it to be revised so that portion or all of the allocation or part thereof can be traded on the open market?
- Given the current situation of exploration permits for mining purposes (gas and various minerals) where water has been found at depths not normally associated with known aquifers, down to say beyond 2,000 m and much more, will this be allowed to be allocated for primary production?
- Given the current "Planning Policy towards 2050" wherein there is a proposed limit to urban expansion to the South bank of the Moore River, will this require the surrender of Water Licences within say the Shire of Gingin ensuring increased pressure on productive cropping and grazing lands in say the Shire of Dandaragan?

- Changes to the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914 under the new legislation and impacts on riparian rights -
 - In regard to the time of the original Act the waters would have been permanent streams in uncleared land, as noted by the original licensed surveyors and recorded on the original Plans or Crown Grant documents. Pre-Federation titles clearly define streams in terms of permanency.
 - Due to massive clearing since those times, there have emerged many permanent streams or destruction of same. Believe the new legislation should only apply to those streams recorded at the time of subdivision.
- In the first people's oral history the 10,000 inhabitants of the Wheatbelt were nomadic tribes moving with the six seasons between known water sources, thought to be springs at or near granite outcrops, with rights of tribal carriageway through various tribal fought over areas. Will this be considered under the new legislation?

Dealt with as part of Item 3.1.

4 PRESENTATIONS

4.1 WaterSmart Dams

Update by Associate Professor Nik Callow, UWA School of Agriculture and Environment.

4.2 WaterSmart Farms

Update by Mr Anthony Bodycoat, Principal – Regulation & Research, Asset Strategy, Water Corporation.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.

RESUMPTION: The meeting resumed at 11:58 am. Except for the Minister for Water Hon Simone McGurk MLA, Ms L Peters, Mr B Giltay and Mr I Samnakay, all those present at the time of adjournment were present on resumption.

4.3 Seasonal Update and Fire Outlook

Update by Mr Gianni Colangelo, Senior Forecaster, Bureau of Meteorology (via video conference).

The Chair welcomed Mr Colangelo.

Mr Colangelo commented on –

- Climate Change – Temperatures and rainfall trends.
- Implications of increasing temperatures.
- Global seasonal drives – Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) and El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO).
- IOD and ENSO – Recent history and impacts.
- Rainfall and maximum temperatures.
- Root zone soil moisture
- November 2023 to January 2024 long range forecast.
- Context for fire potential long range forecast.
- Tropical cyclone history by ENSO phase.
- WA seasonal outlook summary October 2023 to January 2024.

The Chair thanked Mr Colangelo for his presentation.

5 BUSINESS SESSION

5.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5.2 MINUTES

(a) Confirmation of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held by video conference on 21 July 2023 are submitted for confirmation. Copies of these Minutes have been circulated to all members and delegates.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the meeting held 21 July 2023, as printed and circulated, be confirmed.

RESOLUTION

Ross Chappell moved and Rosemary Madacsi seconded –

That the Minutes of the meeting held 21 July 2023, as printed and circulated, be confirmed.

CARRIED

(b) Business Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters brought forward.

5.3 REPORTS

(a) Water Corporation Report

Incorporated with the address by the Minister for Water.

Ms R Bowler advised that she would be happy to take questions after the meeting.

(b) Department of Water and Environmental Regulation Report

Presentation of the Rural Water Planning report.

Ms R Thorpe commented on –

- Water supply issues.
- Water carting
- Community Water Supply Partnership program – Funding allocated by December. Funding includes tanks, bores, standpipes, etc.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Rural Water Planning report be received.

RESOLUTION

Eileen O'Connell moved and Pauline Bantock seconded –

That the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's Rural Water Planning report be received.

CARRIED

Cr R Della Bosca enquired as to progress of the project for provision of gutters and tanks on CBH infrastructure.

Ms R Thorpe replied that funding was available, working on getting the agreements in place and the timing of work. CBH have advised that the agreement of their District Managers is needed to do the work.

Cr R Chappell suggested that Mr Ben Macnamara, CBH CEO, or Mr Simon Stead, CBH Chairman, be contacted.

(c) Region Reports

Presentation by delegates of region reports.

Lake Grace (Ross Chappell)

Rainfall 2023 -

January - 5 mm February - 0 March - 15 mm April - 53 mm May - 2.5 mm June - 64 mm (38 mm fell on 30 May but the official recording is in June) July - 8.5 mm August-44 September-15 mm.

Total so far 209.5 mm.

Recordings still vary throughout the Shire. South of Lake Grace during September receiving 10-15 mm than I recorded.

There has been frost damage in the area not sure how much. There have also been some quite hot days causing crops and pasture to turn quite quickly. In general crops are quite good in the area but for those that haven't had the rainfall yield will be down on previous years.

Shire

Budget was passed in July with a 3% increase this year and it is business as usual. This Shire is being reduced from 9 Councillors to 7 Councillors now so we have vacancies for 3 seats with 5 nominations for the coming election.

Pingaring recently celebrated it's Centenary.

Toodyay (Rosemary Madacsi)

The good early rainfall in September was followed by early heat and nearly the hottest September day since 1918 (short by 0.2° C). Comparison between the annual rainfall of 1918 (682 mm) and 2023 to date (274.6 mm) highlights the changes occurring. Toodyay averages since 2018 is 425.5 mm (skewed by the 645 mm of the 2021 storm event).

Early heat has caused premature drying of some crops and pastures, will slightly reduce yields and possibly grain quality, although pasture topping is completed and hay making is underway. Dams are below average levels.

Overall soil moisture is below average. The Keetch-Byram reading indicates second driest season in the last 6 years with approximately 90 mm required to saturate the soil profile compared to 20 mm at the same time last year. Levels are concerning entering an early bushfire season.

Fire Emergency Water status is as follows. A delay in reconnection of community depot water tanks to the depot roof water collection has resulted in low catchment and alternate sources are needed to augment bushfire water this season. Carry over of a DFES grant will be used to augment the Coondle Fire Station supply with a bore and training hydrant to reduce mains water usage and emergency water tanks. This will also provide use for Shire works. At Morangup (20 km West) the last overhead standpipe is to be removed and replaced with bottom fill fittings to decrease fill times. Options to augment the Morangup co-located Emergency Facility's existing fire emergency water facility, is in the early stages of consideration. The Shire road verge spray program was undertaken with use of non-potable sources.

Additional submeters are to be installed at the new Toodyay Recreation Centre. Despite strong monitoring of Shire water use, use has doubled for the last quarter at Duidgee Park and the old Showgrounds. A mains leak at Stirling Park has been repaired and water leakage beneath the Recreation Centre basketball courts is to be investigated. The feasibility of a wastewater return pipe and rainwater catchment options within the town will be revisited in 2024.

Chalice Mining have conceded there is insufficient groundwater and water will be piped in. Management of onsite wastewater is to be discussed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Region Reports be received.

RESOLUTION

**Pauline Bantock moved and Rosemary Madacsi seconded –
That That Region Reports be received.**

CARRIED

5.4 Members of Parliament

Brief comments by Members of Parliament.

Hon D West MLC commented on –

- Thanks for the invitation.
- Funding available.
- The Minister for Water is very interested in learning more. He is happy to be the central point of contact.
- Best wishes for the coming local government elections and for harvest.

Hon D West MLC left the meeting at 12:35 pm.

5.5 Other

No other matters were brought forward.

5.6 FINANCE

(a) Financial Reports

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the period 1 January 2023 to 30 September 2023 (attached).
The Group's current cash balance is \$4,169.52.

RECOMMENDATION

That the financial report for the period 1 January 2023 to 30 September 2023 be received.

RESOLUTION

Ross Chappell moved and Rosemary Madacsi seconded –

That the financial report for the period 1 January 2023 to 30 September 2023 be received.

CARRIED

(d) Accounts for Payment

The following accounts are presented for payment –

<u>Payee</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<u>Accounts to be Paid</u>		
R W & S Dew	Secretarial Service July 2023 to October 2023	1,485.00
	TOTAL	<u><u>\$1,485.00</u></u>

RECOMMENDATION

That the accounts as listed above, totalling \$1,485.00 be passed for payment.

RESOLUTION

Mark Crees moved and Rosemary Madacsi seconded –

That the accounts as listed above, totalling \$1,485.00 be passed for payment

CARRIED

5.7 BUSINESS

(a) Geelakin Tank

The Shire of Westonia has drawn attention to funding they believe has been allocated for the reroofing of the Geelakin Tank (North of Warralakin) by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation. As yet the Shire has not been advised of the amount allocated or the future program for the work. They are seeking assistance in obtaining advice.

Ms Renae Thorpe, Rural Water Planning, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has advised that there are several parts to the project which depend on the project going ahead including the transfer of the tank to the Shire. She has indicated that she will check the project details and advise.

Cr R Della Bosca advised that the tank is being inspected to see what work is required.

(b) Non-Standard Water Service

The Shire of Dumbleyung has requested the consideration by the Rural Water Council of the following matter which it feels has implications across the local government sector. The Shire is currently not a member of the Rural Water Council but was a member for several years up to 2019.

Following discussion with the President it was agreed that delegates from the Shire of Dumbleyung be invited to this meeting to discuss this matter. As the Shire is currently not a member of the Rural Water Council the meeting will need to determine if it wishes to consider the matter.

The Shire of Dumbleyung has provided the following information –

Background

Water Corporation has formally contacted the Shire of Dumbleyung to advise that it intends to classify a number of Shire locations as a 'Non-Standard Water Service' (NSWS). This means that Water Corporation can no longer meet the required level of service and conditions under Water Corporation's operating licence. Conditions can relate to water quality, water pressure, flow rate and/or continuity of supply. Water Corporation has provided the following options for Shire consideration -

1. Install a water treatment option, (WC to install, Shire to manage ongoing costs for maintenance).
2. Install signage at tap 'Water not for consumption'.
3. Disconnect service.
4. EHO could conduct regular water sampling, if water quality is within an acceptable range, no treatment is required.

Comment

Specific Shire of Dumbleyung owned sites earmarked for reclassification include Moulyinning Hall, Nippering Cemetery and Kukerin Cemetery. In relation to the Moulyinning Hall, Water Corporation has offered to provide free bottled water to users/hirers of the hire until a satisfactory treatment option is identified and established. There is also a CBH property and five residential properties all based in Moulyinning. Water Corporation has indicated that it will make direct contact with local residences and property owners impacted by this decision.

Water Corporation is seeking Shire feedback on preferred options moving forward. If water treatment is the preferred option, the Water Corporation has indicated that it would fund the purchase and installation of the agreed solution, but the Shire would then be responsible for ongoing operations and maintenance, including eventual replacement. Water treatment would appear to be the most optimal solution (of the options provided) to safeguard and maintain a consistent quality product.

This Water Corporation advice has serious implications for one of our smaller communities (Moulyinning) in which the entire town (community) is potentially slated for standard water services withdrawal (including town hall). This advice raises a number of pertinent issues that need to be better understood and resolved prior to the Shire confirming its preferred position, namely -

1. The Shire being asked to take on responsibility for provision of potable drinking water that was previously the responsibility of Water Corporation.
2. The public health and risk implications to the Shire in relation to 1 above.
3. The cost implications to the Shire in relation to 1 above.

Water Corporation has been contacted to seek feedback and comment in relation to the above matters. With these known risks and concerns, the Shire's immediate response should be to 'push back' against this Water Corporation initiative and insist that they maintain previous water provision licensing arrangements to all sites and customers.

This matter would appear to have cross LGA implications.

Financial Implications

As mentioned above, this matter has significant (unknown) risk and cost implications to the Shire of Dumbleyung. It also has cost shifting impacts on the entire Local Government sector.

RECOMMENDATION

To Be Determined

Mr M Roberts advised –

- A potential risk has been identified in some water services due to the loss of chlorination where water use is low.
- Water Corporation will help install necessary chlorination equipment with asset handed over to the end user.
- Water Corporation not turning off water supply but will help manage the supply.
- Solution for drinking water is low cost chlorination.
- There is no change to infrastructure for non-standard water services.
- There is a health risk in reduced flow water services as chlorination drops off.
- Water Corporation has identified 190 properties which will be affected. Looking at what can be done and working with the Health Department.

Cr L Armstrong commented that he was aware of six local governments in his area who have received notifications of non-standard water services.

Ms R Bowler commented –

- Non-standard water services are not just those with low chlorination but also relate to those with pressure and flow requirements. Agreements are in place with these customers to have two days water supply on hand.
- Water Corporation adhering to Australian Standards.
- 10,000 agreements in place for non-standard water services. 190 require chlorination before use, 36 are impacted in this area. Have spoken to 28 local governments.
- Consulted with local governments on specific conditions and then go to customer.
- Water Corporation has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Health Department who is obligated to communicate with impacted customers and tell them what is happening. Working with the Health Department on a bespoke solution. Health Department directive not to advise customer, Department will talk with impacted customers.
- Cost passed on to customers. Cost benefit analysis undertaken. Dealing with customers to meet their specific needs.

RESOLUTION

Ross Della Bosca moved and Rosemary Madacsi seconded –

That information on non-standard water services be requested from members and that the Executive Committee consider a recommendation to the next meeting. CARRIED

(c) Western Wheatbelt

Discussion on water issues specific to the Western Wheatbelt (comprising, but not limited to, the Shires of Gingin, Dandaragan, Chittering, Toodyay) including water allocations and usage.

RECOMMENDATION

For consideration

NOTED

5.8 URGENT BUSINESS (as permitted by the Presiding Member)

No matters were brought forward.

5.9 DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Future meetings are scheduled for –

- Friday 15 March 2024 (AGM)
- Friday 5 July 2024
- Friday 11 October 2024

RECOMMENDATION

That the next meeting (Annual General Meeting) of the Rural Water Council be held Friday 15 March 2024 at the Water Corporation's Depot in Cunderdin.

The Water Corporation confirmed that the Cunderdin Conference Room would be available.

RESOLUTION

**Rosemary Madacsi moved and Pauline Bantock seconded –
That the next meeting (Annual General Meeting) of the Rural Water Council be held Friday 15 March 2024 at the Water Corporation’s Depot in Cunderdin. CARRIED**

6 CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chair thanked delegates and presenters for their attendance, the Water Corporation for use of their function room and providing catering and declared the meeting closed at 1:08 pm.

CERTIFICATION

These Minutes were confirmed by the meeting held on

Signed:
(Chairman of meeting at which the Minutes were confirmed)



Briefing Note

Subject: WaterSmart Dams Initiative Overview

Date: 9/10/2023

Prepared by: Associate Professor Nik Callow (UWA), WaterSmart Dams Technical Lead

Summary: WaterSmart Dams is a multi-partner, grower-led project. The partnership includes innovative growers hosting demonstration sites that showcase methods to improve water security. Advanced farm water planning tools that include costs will support growers in making informed water investment decisions, improving on-farm water security and building more drought-resilient farm businesses and regional communities.

Governance and Funding: The project is managed by the Grower Group Alliance (GGA) through the SWWA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, in partnership with The University of Western Australia (UWA) as technical lead, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), and four regional grower groups. The project was funded (2022-25) by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund (FDF) and the Western Australian State Government's Agriculture Climate Resilience Fund (ACRF).

Grower-Driven Approach with On-farm Research: UWA's research and technical leadership is shaped by the input and needs of growers through collaboration with four grower groups: Compass Agricultural Alliance (Darkan), Southern Dirt (Kojonup), Merredin and Districts Farm Improvement Group (Merredin), and the Fitzgerald Biosphere Group (Jerramungup). Innovative growers host 12 at-scale demonstration sites that showcase options for increasing runoff into dams and keeping water in dams. Solutions are practical, regional-appropriate, and fit for purpose. Farm water planning tools are being co-designed by the end-users.

Interagency collaboration: The collaboration includes partnerships with Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) rural water planning team, Water Corporation (farm desalination, high-performance catchments, electro chlorination to lower farm dam turbidity, and evaporation reduction). The broader WaterSmart Farms collaboration (DPIRD-led) brings in Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS, geophysics water targeting).

Regional Capacity Building, Adoption and Drought Resilience: WaterSmart Dams and WaterSmart Farms is enhancing skills and knowledge in farm water security across key agencies, grower groups and research institutes in Western Australia to meet the future challenges of a drying climate. It is equipping growers with demonstration sites that showcase options at the scale of adoption. Grower groups and demonstrate site hosts are leading field days, using our on-farm experimentation model that is bottom-up and grower-led.

UWA is co-designing a new farm water tool with growers to ensure that knowledge gained from the demonstration sites is translated into accessible information and planning tools that lead to new on-farm water investments, creating more drought-resilient farm businesses that are less or not dependent on State Government support during dry years.



Visual Briefing Note- WaterSmart Dams Demonstration Sites



Figure 1: Recycled CBH Tarp Catchment at Jacup- increasing run-off into the dam.



Figure 2: Left-Daisy Dam Cover at Kojonup exploring options for reducing evaporation. Right- Farm water planning with growers.



Figure 3: Dam at Kojonup exploring the role of vegetation in reducing evaporation. Right- Exploring subsurface drains as a win-win way to increase crop production (reduce waterlogging) and harvest more water into dams.

----- briefing note ends -----

Rural Water Council of WA (Inc)

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
 FOR PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2023 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**

	Actual For Year	Estimate For Year
RECEIPTS		
Membership		
Associations (16 @ \$300)	0.00	4,800
Individuals (3 @ \$150)	0.00	450
Interest Earned	0.00	0
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$0.00	5,250
PAYMENTS		
Meeting Expenses	0.00	200
Secretarial Service	2,080.91	5,500
TOTAL PAYMENTS	\$2,080.91	5,700
CASH SUMMARY		
Opening Balance	6,250.43	6,250
Plus Receipts	0.00	5,250
	6,250.43	11,500
Less Payments	2,080.91	5,700
Closing Balance	\$4,169.52	5,800
BANK RECONCILIATION		
Cheque Account Balance (as at 29/9/2023) (Westpac)	4,169.52	
Plus Deposits made but not shown on Statement	0.00	
	4,169.52	
Less Cheques issued but not shown on Statement	0.00	
Balance as per Cash Book	\$4,169.52	



.....
 Robert Dew
 EXECUTIVE OFFICER