

Tatiara Water Allocation Plan Amendment Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting Notes

Meeting No. 25, 25 June 2025, 4:00 – 6:00 pm
Limestone Coast Landscape Board Office, Keith

Objectives

- Review and endorse an updated Terms of Reference for the remainder of the amendment process.
- Understand the current status of the amendment process and how a revised Plan will be progressed.
- Revisit the key concepts and changes proposed for the revised Plan.
- Review current groundwater resource condition and start to consider the impacts under the key concepts of the revised Plan.

Attendees:

Group Attendees – Robbie Davis (Chair), Tracey Strugnell (Proxy Chair), Jake Tranter, Paul Leadbeter (via Teams), Richard Halliday, Scott Manser, Simon Sherriff

LC Landscape Board Staff Attendees – Sue Botting, Chelsea Burns

Apologies – Wayne Dodds, Scott Campbell

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked Group members and staff for their attendance.

Introductions and agenda check

The Chair facilitated introductions of all Group members, LC Landscape Board Governing Body representatives and LC Landscape Board staff attendees.

Review of Meeting 24 Summary

Discussion:

- The Group reviewed Meeting 24 summary. The summary was not confirmed due to the time lapsed between meetings and changeover of Group members present at the meeting. The Group was unanimous on the approach for the Meeting 24 summary to remain unconfirmed.
- Update on actions from Meeting 24 are reflected in the action table.

Group Charter / Terms of Reference

The existing Group Charter has been reviewed and an updated Terms of Reference was provided to the Group with the agenda for consideration. The Terms of Reference will replace the existing Group Charter.

Discussion:

- The Group endorsed the draft Terms of Reference with no changes.

Progressing the Plan

Sue Botting facilitated a discussion on the remaining steps in the process to finalise a revised Plan.

Discussion:

- The Group discussed the model post audit and key datasets used that could be updated from 2015-current and monitoring frequency. This could include rainfall data, groundwater levels, Border Zone monitoring and extraction/use data.
- Noted that the observation well network is monitored twice per year – in autumn (winter recovered levels) and spring (extraction impacted levels). Wells in the Border Zone are monitored quarterly.
- The members raised that in 2021 there had been discussion on unused bores being accessed for monitoring under a revised Plan. Unused private bores for monitoring did not go ahead but DEW drilled an additional bore in Shaugh and during the last couple of weeks the LC Landscape Board has drilled new bores in Shaugh, North Pendleton and Cannawigara and South Wirrega.
- The duration of the post audit for the model was discussed. Resourcing is an ongoing challenge for DEW with multiple reviews and amendment processes currently underway. The expected completion date has not been confirmed. LC Landscape Board has advised that progressing the Tatiara post audit is one of its current priorities.
- Anticipate informal community consultation late in 2025 dependent on timing of DEW post audit of the model and progress of the Plan by the Group/LC Landscape Board.
- Some members of the Group recalled that a draft revised Plan had been prepared and discussed at Meeting 24 but was not distributed. The initial draft of the Plan had not yet been reviewed internally or by DEW. Feedback from DEW on the Padthaway revised Plan was also relevant for the Tatiara draft Plan.

Revisit of Key Concepts

Sue Botting presented a refresher of key concepts proposed for a revised Plan.

Discussion:

Water licence instruments

- The Group discussed the main driver for bundled to unbundled or partially unbundled. Primary driver is legislation as well as the National Water Initiative. Unbundled tends to be more facilitative in surface water systems but for groundwater the point of take matters.
- Change to Regulations since the proposed unbundling of the Plan allows for partially unbundled. This is the preferred approach for the revised Plan so will need to consider the

impacts of partial unbundling on proposed concepts such as adaptive management and limitations on bores in Poocher Swamp.

- The Group raised how banks might view unbundled or partially unbundled licences and particularly water access entitlement vs allocation. Understanding from the Group is that bank focus is on entitlement. There was also some discussion on this topic noted in the Meeting 24 summary.
- If there is a transfer, the certificate of title is updated on the licence as part of the licensing process. Temporary transfer of water allocation is only for 12 months. Temporary transfer of water access entitlement with associated allocation can be for up to 5 years.

Classes of water access entitlements

- Class Ta 'Tradeable – Holding' are holding licences that do not have a point of take and would need to make application to transfer from holding licence to a taking licence. Opportunity to review whether it is needed as a separate class based on the introduction of *MyWater* and how these are already being managed.
- The Group discussed the need to review previously proposed classes and the associated acronyms. Review of the Class letter names is required due to current confusion as other Plans (ie Adelaide Plains) use the same acronym but for different purposes.
- The Group discussed if the revised Plan protects critical human need / public water supply. A separate water class for public water supply is up for discussion. SA Water is interested in adaptive management principles around Poocher Swamp and may also investigate access to the confined consumptive pool as a future option. Water quality is important for public water supply particularly dissolved iron and salinity. SA Water is not the only consideration for public water supply /critical human need. Also need to consider impacts on Wolseley where water is supplied by Council through a water licence, as well as domestic bores outside of water supply areas.

Consumptive pools and management zones

- Consumptive pools and changes to management zones remain as previously proposed with no further changes. These were introduced and tested in the previous rounds of community consultation.
- There was discussion concerning the coastal plains and mallee highlands differing in hydrogeological characteristics in the unconfined aquifer. Group members shared that in the coastal plains it can be around 9m depth to water with variable salinity (higher in the west) whereas highlands is around 35m depth to water.

Resource condition limits and triggers

- The Group discussed the proposed removal of salinity as a resource condition limit/trigger. This was specific to Poocher Swamp MZ and found that they could not be implemented effectively. Salinity issues at Poocher are noted to only improve by a recharge event. There is little information on the frequency of recharge events but anecdotally there are no trends or notable timing. The Plan would not have any levers to have any impact on these recharge events. The Australian Drinking Water Guidelines is the reference for salinity levels for SA Water. Generally 900mg/L is the upper limit for 'good' water quality, 900-1200mg/L as 'fair' and above 1200mg/L is not acceptable.
- Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDE) assessment will need to be done as part of progressing the revised Plan, eg Cannawigara Swamp runaway hole which has been raised

previously. Question was asked as to whether Moot Yang Gunya Swamp at Mundulla has a freshwater lens like Poocher Swamp or a GDE.

- There was discussion concerning the monitoring of adaptive management water level limits and triggers. It is based on DEW observation well network monitoring and the water levels which are set in the Plan.
- The Group discussed how the schedule of the adaptive management response is critical. Adaptive management will be revisited in more detail at a future meeting.
- The Group discussed 2015 being the identified reference point for the term of the revised Plan. It was chosen specifically based on feedback of acceptable impact to water levels. There was discussion regarding the possibility of new data in the DEW models resulting in different outcomes. This will be key post audit and whether there is confidence in the model outputs.

Trades and transfers

- A question was raised regarding whether temporary transfer of water allocations is the same as seasonal variability temporary transfer principles. The Group to consider this in more detail at a future meeting when considering trade and transfer, as seasonal variability transfer principles are relied upon by producers due to timeliness and ease of processing for internal transfers/business management.
- The Group discussed that trade across a prescribed wells area boundary is a new consideration based on feedback through the Lower Limestone Coast (LLC) review. Western Flat is a small management area in LLC PWA but forms part of Borderzone Designated Area 7A which is in Tatiara PWA and is therefore limited in opportunities to trade. The Group will consider this in more detail at a future meeting.

Resource condition discussion

Sue Botting presented an overview of current groundwater resource condition trends across the Prescribed Wells Area.

Discussion:

- The Group raised whether there is much use of confined in Tatiara. It is mainly stock and domestic, with some industrial and recreational allocation.

Topics for review

Sue Botting provided an overview of key topics that need to be revisited and revised in more detail at future meetings.

Discussion:

- Managed aquifer recharge (MAR) has been raised and will be discussed in more detail at a future meeting. Managed aquifer recharge is a very prescriptive process for something like desalination of an existing groundwater allocation, as opposed to water draining through runaway holes which is already accounted for as part of the recharge. For example, could housing development surface water run off with a settling pond be managed under MAR?
- Opportunity to review how the recently finalised and adopted Padthaway Plan may relate to Tatiara and how/if the Tatiara draft revised Plan could be simplified.
- Based on meeting discussion, the Group raised that they would like to better understand iron and salinity in Poocher Swamp, and salinity in the PWA more broadly. This could provide an opportunity for DEW hydrogeologists to present on this.

- The Group raised whether the progress to finalise the Plan will be impacted by the state election to be held in March 2026 and would it be put on hold. It is definitely a consideration for all processes. It will largely depend on progress at that point in time and/or if there is a change of Minister.

Summary and next steps

- Next meeting date: Meeting 26 to be scheduled for August 2025. Date to be confirmed.

Close of meeting

Meeting closed at 6.10pm

The Chair thanked the Group members for attending.

**Tatiara WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group
Action Table**

Action	Tatiara WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group Actions	Status	Meeting 25 update
1.2	Positions for Onion and Potato Grower Organisations be held open for members if they are able to become involved as the planning process develops.	Ongoing.	Organisations may be represented at any stage of review.
1.4	Build in engagement of JBS into the Community Engagement Strategy	Ongoing.	Engagement with JBS has been established.
1.7	Set Ground Rules and the Charter as a standing meeting agenda item.	Completed.	Updated Terms of Reference endorsed at Meeting 25.
19.2	LCLB to investigate RCT monitoring options for Poocher.	Ongoing.	Review following determination of Poocher Swamp adaptive management. Need for specific RCTs for Poocher to be informed by discussions with Poocher licensees.
20.2	Prepare draft companion documents for Group review and comment.	Ongoing.	Clarification that draft companion documents include a plain English guide to the WAP. Draft under development.
20.3	Plan engagement activities as discussed: community meeting, radio interview, interactive pdf platform, industry group meetings.	Ongoing.	No update.
23.1	Provide further explanation of the management of the Poocher Zone, including options for how Poocher licensees may use or transfer their water, in the next community consultation.	Ongoing.	No update.
23.2	Check on whether carry-over can be claimed where transfers aren't fully used.	Ongoing.	Check with Licensing how current plan works.
23.4	Follow up with DEW Licencing re position on self-assessment hydro test.	Meeting 24 decision to be confirmed.	DEW advised difficulty in administering. Group decision to remove option (meeting 24).

Action	Tatiara WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group Actions	Status	Meeting 25 update
23.7	LCLB to prepare two RCT / RCL management responses to be included in the draft WAP for DEW to review.	Ongoing.	15% and 30% restrictions modelled. Increased restriction levels recommended to enable recovery. Further review and discussion.
24.1	LC Landscape Board staff to advise Poocher Swamp licensees of changes to proposed management provisions for the Poocher management zone.	Completed.	To be removed.
24.2	Provide meeting presentation to the Group.	Completed.	LCLB to resend via email to Group members after Meeting 25. To be removed.
24.3	Provide draft Plan to the Group following DEW review.	On hold.	Draft Plan to be updated following revisit of key concepts by Group and in consideration of Padthaway Plan, internal review and DEW feedback.
25.1	Provide to Group members: • Link to revised Padthaway Water Allocation Plan • Link to Tatiara WAP project page • Copy of presentation slides from Meeting 25		
25.2	Provide a reference list for acronyms to the Group.		
25.3	Review of proposed principles relating to temporary transfers to manage seasonal variability.		
25.4	Prepare updated allocation and use data for the Group including % public water supply of total allocation.		

**Tatiara WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group
Recommendations Table**

No.	Recommendation	Board Decision
6.1	That the nominations by Mundulla Vignerons Assoc. of David Edwards as member representative and Trent Reilly as observer representative be accepted and approved.	Approved
6.2	That the resignation of David Edwards as observer representative for the District Council of Tatiara be accepted.	Approved
6.3	That the District Council of Tatiara be contacted seeking a nomination for an observer representative to replace David Edwards.	Approved
6.4	That upon the disbandment of the USE NRM Group in February 2018 that the SAG charter be amended by the removal of the USE Group from the stakeholder membership list and that a community stakeholder representative membership position be added to the SAG charter.	Approved
6.5	That upon the disbandment of the USE NRM Group, Wayne Dodd be reappointed to the SAG as the community stakeholder representative member on the SAG.	Approved
6.6	That the final draft version of the principles as endorsed by the SAG be submitted to the Board for approval.	Approved
8.1	That the revised timeline for the Tatiara WAP review be submitted to the Board for endorsement.	Approved
8.2	That the group chair send a letter to the NRM board recommending that the Board provide comment to the Landscapes SA Bill public consultation on unbundling.	Approved
11.1	The amended group charter endorsed by the SAG to be submitted to the Board for approval.	Approved
12.1	The revised Tatiara WAP review and amendment timeline be submitted to the Board for approval.	Approved
13.1	That Michelle Irvine nomination to the group as observer representing SA Water be forwarded to the Board for approval.	Approved
14.1	Final endorsed drafts of all 6 discussion papers be forwarded to Board for approval to release.	Approved
16.1	That the resignation of Trent Reilly (Mundulla Vignerons) as observer be accepted. That the SAG decision to not replace this position be accepted.	

**Tatiara WAP Stakeholder Advisory Group
Members Task Table**

Task No.	Task	Status	Meeting 25 update
21.1	Industry representatives to email organisation's contact person to send a letter requesting a meeting presentation.	Ongoing	No update
23.1	SA Water to provide LCLB with SA Water Resource Assessment and Management Plan and key dot points on limitations of 600 TDS.	Ongoing.	TDS information has been provided by SA Water for LLC. Confirm needs of task with SA Water rep.