

Tintinara Coonalpyn Water Allocation Plan Review Stakeholder Advisory Group Minutes

Meeting No. 1, 19 June 2025, 2:00 – 4:30 pm
Coorong District Council Board Room, Tintinara

Objectives

- Introduction of Group members, LC Landscape Board governing body representatives and staff.
- Set the framework for the review process and purpose of the review.
- Review and endorse key documents for Stakeholder Advisory Group governance.
- Provide a basic introduction to the prescribed wells area and water allocation plan.

Attendees:

Group Attendees – Dr Jonathon Sobels (Chair), Tracey Strugnell (Proxy Chair/Board Member), Campbell Foote, Graham Gates, James De Barro, Jim Rowntree, John Young, Rodney Lush

LC Landscape Board Staff Attendees – Sue Botting, Chelsea Burns, Steve Bourne

Apologies – Adam Zacker

Welcome and agenda check

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

Introductions

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

Purpose of the review

Sue Botting provided an overview of the review process and purpose of the review aligning to the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*.

Discussion:

- The Group discussed that it is important to provide a range of options for members of the community to engage. Some will prefer one-on-one as opposed to open forums. Need to be able to provide written feedback or be able to talk directly with someone. Especially for community members who aren't licence holders.

Roles and responsibilities

Chelsea Burns presented on the roles and responsibilities of contributors in the review process including the Group Terms of Reference, ground rules and review process guiding principles.

Discussion:

- The Group asked about the role of the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) and whether there will be a hydrogeologist at meetings like in previous reviews. Those previously involved in the past have since retired or moved on. LC Landscape Board staff will work closely with the DEW science team who will attend meetings from time to time as needed.
- Based on previous experience of Group members, community engagement really improved the plans. People want to engage in different ways. A number of Group members were part of other organisations such as Lucerne Australia, CTLAP, Council or consultancy that would communicate discussions to those groups.
- Will there be some publicity around the members of the group and people being able to approach them? An email went out to all licence holders after Group members were appointed and all Members are shown on the public project page.
- How can we engage with non-licensees? Group suggested to advertise in merchants etc. The more awareness people have the bigger the net is.
- The Group discussed the representativeness and diversity of the Group and any potential gaps:
 - Stock and Domestic stakeholders were not specifically represented as well as intensive animal keeping. Most people would have both stock and domestic as well as irrigation and most try to get off the pipeline and have other water. Increasing awareness and understanding will be important for stock and domestic users.
 - Intensive animal keeping run off regulated by EPA and has some similarities to other industries in water use.
 - Local government can be a substantial water holder. Can also have impact on the water resource through development and planning or change of land use.
 - First Nations representation not currently on Group. How will this be managed? LC Landscape Board is committed to Walking Together with First Nations and will engage through existing relationships with Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation and SE Aboriginal Focus Group through the review.
- After discussion it was viewed that representation could be managed sufficiently within current Group members and targeted consultation with groups or industry when needed.
- The review process may identify things we don't know much about but need to. Once we know where these areas are we can then go and talk to subject matter experts.
- The Group reviewed the draft Terms of Reference and endorsed with no proposed changes.
- The Group reviewed the draft Ground Rules including Review Process Principles and endorsed with no proposed changes.

Introduction to Tintinara Coonalpyn Prescribed Wells Area

Chelsea Burns provided an introductory overview of the TC Prescribed Wells Area and water allocation plan.

Discussion:

- Previous iterations of the Plan had 'Water development plans'. Some people were very ambitious with them (lots of circles on plans!). Early development flood irrigation through Coombe then pivots came in. A lot of undulation so flood wasn't an option.

- Current dry times means it isn't a good time to be going through a review. It isn't as a result of the conditions but timing of the 10 year statutory review being due. On the flip side it could be a good time as could end up showing that the plan works well and resource is robust. The messaging will be important around this.
- Reduced rainfall / recharge relationship higher in northern part of Prescribed Wells Area (PWA). Northern area more affected by Victoria. Scarp difference is also more pronounced in north.
- The Group members provided their knowledge of the aquifers. Unprescribed areas to the west of the PWA are highly saline. Within PWA increasing salinity trend going east to west in both aquifers. Buccleuch Group known to have lots of holes. Renmark Group needs screening and much sandier. Basement more like a swamp, sloppy / muddy. Confined aquifer flow more towards Murray mouth. Not a lot of extraction from confined in the east of the PWA because unconfined water is good quality.
- Tauragat confined aquifer and sub-aquifers were discussed. Some bores may not be in the correct sub-aquifer as in places there is very little depth change between them and may be some connection between them. Likely introduced to manage drawdown. And ensure sub-aquifers don't affect each other.
- Management area boundaries reflective of the highlands/plains range. Zig zag around Tintinara on purpose to allow for stormwater from Tintinara to be included in Boothby.
- Boothby management area had allocation set aside for 'innovative purposes' due to salinity. If someone came up with innovative idea like desalination then they could access it. Was quite progressive of the Plan at the time.
- Across the Group, majority of management areas were represented. Include unconfined and confined: Tintinara, Coonalpyn, Tauragat and Tolmer. Some Group members had licences in or worked across multiple management areas.
- There was some discussion around bundling/partial unbundling/unbundling of licences and would like to further understand these. Current Plan is fully bundled. Other PWAs currently under amendment (LLC, Padthaway) are proposing partially unbundled. There has been confusion in LLC with transition to mywater as licensees got entitlement notification early but didn't receive notification of their allocation (with carry-over) until very late in the water use year after they'd used it.
- The Group discussed the overview of Target Management Level (TML) allocation and use. Tintinara allocation is above TML but may have something to do with delivery supplement included/excluded from TML or allocation as opposed to reductions not implemented. LC Landscape Board to review this and confirm. Would be interesting to see timing of use and cost of diesel / electricity which may have controlled overuse. Historically some pivots used to go 24 hrs and end up like a swamp. Some challenges with 2024 use data based on DEW transition to mywater.
- Is there currently any higher protection for recreational licences? Not currently but other Plans under amendment such as Lower Limestone Coast are looking at it.
- Is the Delivery Supplement for flood irrigation separate from allocation? Would like to further understand this and an example of how it appears on licences.

Other business

- Presentations from Meeting 1 to be provided to Group members.

Next meeting date

- Next meeting date: Meeting 2 tentatively scheduled for Thursday 21 August 2025. To be confirmed. The afternoon time slot (from 2pm) was generally most preferred.

Close of meeting

Meeting closed at 4.45pm

The Chair thanked the Group members and staff for attending.

Confirmed

Tintinara Coonalpyn Water Allocation Plan review Stakeholder Advisory Group Action Table

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