

# Burdekin groundwater management area water sharing rules

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by Lyall Hinrinchsen, Acting General Manager Water Allocation and Planning

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## Version history

Version	Date	Comment
1	17/10/2005	Endorsed
1.1	25/06/2008	Update department name. Other minor amendments consistent with recent changes to insertion of common notification section, removal of 'relationship with 'management guidelines'.
2	25/05/2010	Update to water sharing rules due to the commencement of the Water Resource (Burdekin Basin) Plan 2007.

# Policy

## Overview

This policy defines the water sharing rules for the Burdekin groundwater management area as prescribed in section 64 of the Water Regulation 2002 (Water Regulation).

The water sharing rules in this policy establish a framework for holders of licences to take water within the Burdekin groundwater management area, and for the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM), to determine the amount of water that may be taken under a water licence in a water year, and account for and manage this water.

## Water sharing rules

Water sharing rules are the rules prescribed under the Water Regulation for a water licence not managed under a resource operations plan. Water sharing rules describe the management arrangements for access to water within a water management area.

## Purpose of water sharing rules

Water sharing rules establish a framework for water use accounting and as such provide an accountable and auditable trail for the movement of water use within and between water licences.

Water sharing rules also ensure that arrangements for access to water and water use accounting within a water management area are clearly articulated to licence holders to provide them with a stable water use accounting regime.

## Description of the water management area

### Geographical boundaries

The Burdekin groundwater management area extends from the Burdekin River about 15 kilometres upstream of the town of Clare, northwest to the coastal zone near the Haughton River around the township of Giru. The Burdekin groundwater management area also extends east to the Burdekin River in the vicinity of Mt Kelly. The Burdekin groundwater management area occupies the same area as the Burdekin Subartesian Area.

The Burdekin groundwater management area is divided into 13 sub-areas, which are managed separately for management purposes, particularly for determining announced entitlements. The sub-area boundaries are based on local geology and existing hydro-geological conditions, such as transmissivity, storage capacity and proximity to the risk of salt water intrusion. The sub-areas can be described as follows:

- Clare
- Giru Coastal
- Giru Benefited Area\*
- Haughton
- Horseshoe Lagoon
- Ironbark
- Jardine
- Mona Park
- Mulgrave

- Northcote
- Selkirk
- Selkirk Coastal
- Woodhouse.

\*Note: Water in an aquifer under a watercourse or under land adjacent to a watercourse, in the Giru Benefited Area, is declared to be water in the watercourse under section 7 of the Water Resource (Burdekin Basin) Plan 2007. These water sharing rules do not apply to water declared to be water in a watercourse in the Giru Benefited Groundwater Area, which is managed by SunWater.

## ***Water to which the water sharing rules apply***

The Burdekin groundwater management area water sharing rules apply to the groundwater in the Burdekin River, Barratta Creek and Haughton River alluviums within the Burdekin groundwater management area.

## **Map of the water management area**

Attachment 1 shows the extent of the sub-areas of the Burdekin groundwater management area.

Note: The attached map is indicative only and is not the legally recognised map of the area under the provisions of the Water Regulation. The area and the exact location of the boundaries of the water management area are held in digital electronic form by the department and may be inspected at the department's Ayr office.

## ***Water year***

The water year for the Burdekin Groundwater Management Area is the twelve month period of 1 July to 30 June.

The 'water year' for a water licence, is defined as the accounting period prescribed under a regulation for the licence; or until a period is prescribed under a regulation, it is the accounting period stated in the licence for taking water under the licence.

## ***Nominal entitlement***

'Nominal entitlement' is the volume of water authorised to be taken during a water year, as specified on the water licence. The volume of water that an entitlement holder may use during a particular water year may be varied by an announced entitlement.

## ***Stock or domestic allowance***

A stock or domestic allowance may be stipulated on a water licence that has a volumetric entitlement. (If there is no stock or domestic allowance specified on the front of the water licence, then an allowance may be established under departmental policy.) This allowance is the volume of water authorised to be taken for stock or domestic purposes.

The stock or domestic allowance is separate from the nominal entitlement associated with the water licence. Water authorised to be taken under a stock or domestic allowance is not managed under these water sharing rules, that is a stock or domestic allowance is not affected by the announced entitlement.

Where a stock or domestic allowance has been established, the first volume of water taken under the water licence in a water year is taken to be the volume of water authorised to be taken under the stock or domestic

allowance.

## ***Announced entitlement: overview***

The chief executive must decide an announced entitlement for the Burdekin groundwater management area.

'Announced entitlement' is expressed as a percentage of the entitlement holder's nominal entitlement. It is the percentage of the nominal entitlement that an entitlement holder may take in a water year.

The announced entitlement will be decided before the start of the water year to which the announced entitlement relates.

The announced entitlement may be increased during the water year.

## ***Announced entitlement: considerations***

The chief executive must undertake the considerations specified in section 66(3) of the Water Regulation when deciding the announced entitlement. That is, the chief executive must consider the following to the extent appropriate for the area:

- trends in underground water levels
- long term average sustainable yield
- historical water use
- anticipated water use
- water available to supplement water licences in the area
- weather conditions, including weather forecasts.

In addition to the considerations specified in section 66(3) of the Water Regulation, the chief executive will also consider:

- trends in ground water quality
- for sub-areas near the coast—the risk of saltwater intrusion
- recommendations made by the Burdekin Haughton Water Supply Scheme Advisory Committee.

## ***Announced entitlement: notification***

The chief executive must either:

- give notice of the announced entitlement to the holders of the water licences to which the entitlement relates or
- publish the announced entitlement in the Ayr Advocate and the Home Hill Observer or
- publish the announced entitlement on the department's web site on the internet.

Notification of the initial announced entitlement for a water year will be made within 10 business days prior to the start of that water year.

For subsequent variations to the announced entitlement, the chief executive will endeavour to provide notification of the revised announced entitlement within 10 business days of its commencement.

## ***Annual entitlement***

'Annual entitlement' is the volume of water able to be taken by an entitlement holder for that water year. As stated in section 67(1) of the Water Regulation the annual entitlement is calculated by multiplying the

nominal entitlement for the water licence by the announced entitlement.

Annual entitlement for a particular entitlement can be calculated using the following formula:

$$AE = NE \times ANE$$

Where:

1. AE = annual entitlement
2. NE = nominal entitlement
3. ANE = announced entitlement (expressed as a decimal)

## ***Annual entitlement: example***

The following provides an example of annual entitlement calculations.

Nominal entitlement = 100ML

Date	Description	Annual entitlement calculation	Annual entitlement	Available entitlement*
1 Jul 2004	Announced entitlement for 2004/2005 water year is 80%	NE x ANE i.e. 100ML x 0.8	80ML	80ML
31 March 2005	Total metered use for 2004/2005 water year is 50ML			30ML
1 Jul 2005	Announced entitlement for 2004/2005 water year is 70%	NE x ANE i.e. 100ML x 0.7	70ML	70ML

\* Available entitlement is the volume of water that a licensee is authorised to take during the remainder of the current water year (i.e. it is the unused volume of annual entitlement).

## ***Carry over***

Licence holders in the Burdekin groundwater management area are not authorised to carry over unused announced entitlement from the previous water year. 'Carry over' is the unused component of an announced entitlement that an entitlement holder may access in the water year following the water year for which the announced entitlement was available.

## ***Forward draw***

Licence holders in the Burdekin groundwater management area are not authorised to forward draw from the following year's nominal entitlement in advance. ('Forward draw' is the volume, expressed as a percentage, of the licensee's nominal entitlement for the following water year, which the licensee may take during the current water year.)

## ***Seasonal water assignment***

Licence holders in the Burdekin groundwater management area may not make an application for seasonal water assignment of their entitlement. (Seasonal water assignment' for a water licence, means the assignment by the holder of a seasonal water assignment notice or a water licence of the benefit under the notice or licence to another person, for a water year, of all or part of the water that may be taken under the notice or licence.)

## ***Irrigation water permit: overview***

Should a licence holder want to take a volume of water additional to their annual entitlement for irrigation purposes, they would need to do so under the authority of a water permit. Sections 237-242 of the *Water Act 2000* (Qld) relate to the application and approval for water permits.

The irrigation water permit is a water sharing option available in the Burdekin groundwater management area to allow licensees to take water that is unable to be permanently allocated. It is unable to be permanently allocated as it would allow access to groundwater supplies, which assessment has indicated might not be sustainably extracted in the long-term.

An application for a water permit will be decided using similar considerations to those used for determining the announced entitlement, in addition to the criteria specified in section 239 of the *Water Act 2000* (Qld). Generally, a water permit will only be granted for the period remaining of the current water year. Additionally, an application for a water permit will generally be granted only in sub-areas where there is a need to mitigate the impacts of rising groundwater tables.

Irrigation water permits are an interim measure to manage the groundwater resource until a Water Resource Plan is completed for the area.

## ***Irrigation water permit: application***

An application is required to obtain an irrigation water permit under Chapter 2, Part 6, Division 4 of the Water Act.

The application must:

- be made to Senior Natural Resource Officer, Little Drysdale St, PO Box 591, Ayr Qld 4807
- be made on the approved form W2F007 Application for permit to take water
- supported by sufficient information to enable the chief executive to decide the application
- be accompanied by the fee prescribed under the Water Regulation.

If an application for an irrigation water permit is:

- in accordance with the irrigation water permit rules:
  - and the chief executive is:
    - satisfied that the application should be granted, or granted in part, the chief executive must:
      - grant all or part of the application for a stated period, with or without conditions
      - give the applicant an information notice and a water permit, within 30 business days after granting the application
    - not satisfied that the application should be granted, the chief executive must:
      - refuse the application
      - give the applicant an information notice within 30 business days after refusing the application

- not in accordance with the irrigation water permit rules:
  - refuse the application
  - give the applicant an information notice within 30 business days after refusing the application.

## ***Irrigation water permit: rules***

Particular rules for applying for an irrigation water permit in the Burdekin groundwater management area are:

- An application for an irrigation water permit is allowed only if an application for an irrigation water permit has not been previously been made within the current water year that relates to the same location or locations.
- An application for an irrigation water permit is allowed only if the applicant has authorised operational works to take the water, to which a meter is attached.
- An application for an irrigation water permit is allowed only in sub-areas where the chief executive considers that there is a need to manage rising groundwater tables.
- An application for an irrigation water permit is allowed only if it is to take water for existing farming practices. That is, an application for an irrigation water permit is not allowed if it is to take water for new development.
- An application for an irrigation water permit is allowed only if the applicant has a current water licence to take water from within the Burdekin groundwater management area for irrigation purposes.

## ***Irrigation water permit: approval***

A water permit has effect from the day the information notice is given to the applicant.

The granting of an irrigation water permit in one water year does not imply that a similar irrigation water permit will be granted in subsequent years, due to possible changing hydrological conditions.

Note: Irrigation water permits will not be granted retrospectively to cover excess water use. Any excess use is an offence under the *Water Act 2000* (Qld) and may result in prosecution.

## ***Irrigation water permit: conditions***

The water permit that is granted is subject to the conditions:

- prescribed under a regulation
- that the chief executive decides to impose for the particular water permit.

## ***Water accounting***

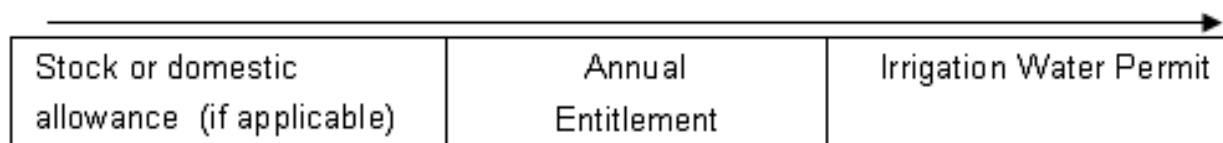
For each water year, water use will be accounted for in the following order:

1. Stock or domestic allowance (if applicable)
2. Announced entitlement
3. Irrigation water permit (subject to approval)

(Note: seasonal water assignments, carry overs and forward draws are not permitted in the Burdekin groundwater management area.)

Start of water year

End of water year



## ***Water charges***

Water charges are based upon the number of water meters through which a licensee takes water under a licence for any part of the water year. The charge is unaffected by actual take of water.

## ***Meter readings***

### **Departmental meter readings**

The take of water from bores for all purposes, other than stock or domestic, (e.g. purposes such as irrigation, industrial and urban), is required to be metered.

Water meters will be read four times per water year, usually at or about the end of September, December, March and June.

As it is not feasible to read all the meters in a management area on the last day of the water year, the meter readings will normally be taken within a 10-day window, i.e. five days before and five days after that day. This meter reading will be deemed to be the final meter reading for end of the water year for that meter for water accounting purposes.

### **Licence holder supplied meter readings**

The licence holder may provide an alternative acceptable meter reading to the department's final meter reading. This meter reading should be provided to the department within 10 business days of the end of the water year. In exceptional circumstances, a meter reading provided by a licence holder may be accepted up to 12 months after the end of the water year.

If a licence holder wishes to provide the department with an exact final meter reading for the end of the water year, they may submit this information:

- within 10 business days of the end of the water year—in writing, to the department. See Contact details
- after 10 business days (but within 12 months) of the end of the water year—in a statutory declaration to the 'contact' listed in the section below. Supporting evidence (such as a diary or meter book) must accompany the statutory declaration. The licence holder must also provide a reason for not submitting the reading within the 10 business days following the end of the year.

Information that is required to accompany the meter reading includes:

- date of reading
- licence reference
- works reference
- meter serial number.

It can be arranged for the department to read the water meter if the licence holder does not want to supply meter readings in the event of sale of a property. A charge will be levied for these readings and details of the

charges are described in schedule 16 of the Water Regulation.

## Quality check of readings

Meter readings supplied by the licence holder are subject to a quality check to ensure that the supplied meter reading is accurate. For example:

- it must be equal to or more than the previous reading
- the supplied meter reading must correspond with the sequence of meter readings recorded for that meter by the department.

## Meter malfunction

Meter malfunctioning or breakdown must be reported to the department as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made to repair or replace the water meter. During the period between reporting the incident and the repair/replacement of the meter, the licensee must complete a 'Water use assessment report' to account for water use during this time. A 'Water use assessment report' is provided in Attachment 2 and is also available from your local departmental office.

## Contact details

For enquiries relating to any aspect of water management within the Burdekin Groundwater Management Area, please contact:

Position: Senior Natural Resource Officer

Street address: Little Drysdale Street, Ayr QLD 4807

Postal address: PO Box 591, Ayr QLD 4807

Telephone: (07) 4761 2223

Facsimile: (07) 4761 2211

## Responsibilities

Licence holders within the Burdekin groundwater management area:

- must ensure that water is taken in accordance with the conditions of the licence and consistent with the water sharing rules.

The department:

- to provide notification of the announced entitlement prior to the commencement of the water year and prior to the commencement of any subsequent variations to the announced entitlement.

## Legislation

*Water Act 2000 (Qld)*

Water Regulation 2002

Water Resource (Burdekin Basin) Plan 2007

## Attachments

Attachment 1 Burdekin Groundwater management area key map <attachments/cas1605-01v1.pdf>

Attachment 2 Water use assessment report <attachments/water-use-assess-report.pdf>

Attachment 3 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 2)  
<attachments/cas1605-02v1.pdf>

Attachment 4 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 3)  
<attachments/cas1605-03v1.pdf>

Attachment 5 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 4)  
<attachments/cas1605-04v1.pdf>

Attachment 6 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 5)  
<attachments/cas1605-05v1.pdf>

Attachment 7 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 6)  
<attachments/cas1605-06v1.pdf>

Attachment 8 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 7)  
<attachments/cas1605-07v1.pdf>

Attachment 9 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 8)  
<attachments/cas1605-08v1.pdf>

Attachment 10 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 9)  
<attachments/cas1605-09v1.pdf>

Attachment 11 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 10)  
<attachments/cas1605-10v1.pdf>

Attachment 12 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 11)  
<attachments/cas1605-11v1.pdf>

Attachment 13 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 12)  
<attachments/cas1605-12v1.pdf>

Attachment 14 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 13)  
<attachments/cas1605-13v1.pdf>

Attachment 15 Burdekin Groundwater management area - sub areas (map 14)  
<attachments/cas1605-14v1.pdf>