



## The Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative— environment and heritage

The Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative (GABSI) promotes and encourages sustainable use of GAB water through the elimination of ground water wastage. The Initiative aims to ensure that the greatest amount of pressure recovery and water savings can be achieved in conjunction with land management and social benefits. To conserve water and restore pressure, bores are being rehabilitated and bore drains replaced with pipelines.

As part of this commitment to preservation and conservation, GABSI has developed processes to ensure activities within the GAB are undertaken in an environmentally and culturally responsible and sustainable manner.

### Heritage and Environmental Management Plan

The Heritage and Environmental Management Plan (HEMP) is a management plan that includes control measures to lessen the impact of projects/activities upon heritage and environmental features of the GAB. The HEMP ensures that practices relating to the operation of GAB projects will achieve the following objectives:

- ensuring high-quality stewardship of GAB resources
- minimising disturbances to GAB resources
- complying with Commonwealth and State statutory requirements
- protecting of cultural and heritage sites (both European and Aboriginal)
- rehabilitating to an acceptable and agreed post-disturbance land use and land capability
- preserving and improving GAB resources.

The HEMP covers all on-ground works within the QLD portion of the GAB. It includes all bore rehabilitation, piping works and monitoring projects to assess GAB elements.

During the planning stages for properties involved in GABSI, a review of environmental, cultural and heritage factors is undertaken for each property as part of the HEMP.

### Cultural Heritage

GABSI aims to recognise, protect and conserve Aboriginal Cultural Heritage as defined under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*.

In the planning stages of a GABSI project, a search of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Register is undertaken for each property involved. The landholder is informed of the results of the search, along with an explanation of obligations and GABSI activities pertaining to the Act.

The Act states that a person who carries out an activity (in GABSI, these activities include the clearing and ripping of lines for pipe installation) must take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that the activity does not harm Aboriginal cultural heritage (the 'cultural heritage duty of care').

### Vegetation Management

To address the requirements of the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*, GABSI has implemented a process ensuring areas of concern are identified and clearing permits are applied for where necessary.

In the planning stages of a GABSI project, the type and status of vegetation on each property involved is assessed. The need for a clearing permit is determined by GABSI engineers following the preliminary pipeline design.

If a permit is required, the landholder is asked to fill in an application form and return it to the GABSI offices. Once received, the application goes through an assessment process and if the application is approved, the landholder receives the permit in the mail and is then able to clear the pipeline route.

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For further information phone 13 13 04

