



## Securing general reserve GAB water

The Great Artesian Basin (GAB) has unallocated general reserves of water and the Department of Natural Resources and Water (NRW) intends to make this available.

### Availability of water

The map below shows where general reserve unallocated water has been identified and the respective volumes for each area.

The exact location of boundaries is held in digital electronic form by NRW. Contact the NRW Service Centre in Toowoomba on (07) 4688 1000 to view.

### Release of water

The water will be made available by granting water licences to take water under the *Water Resource (Great Artesian Basin) Plan 2006 (WRP)*. The current release process is confined to the Surat, Surat East and Surat North management areas as indicated on the map.

Water may be granted, as far as practicable from the management units outlined in Schedule 5 of the WRP.

Primary considerations in determining volumetric limits will be the protection of springs sourced from aquifers and the security of existing entitlements. Overall volume will be controlled by the size of the general reserve unallocated water release.

Anyone eligible to apply for a water licence under section 206 of the *Water Act 2000*, is urged to register their interest. Contact the NRW Service Centre in Toowoomba on (07) 4688 1000 for an application form or to obtain additional information.

### Registration

Applications to register interest must be submitted in the approved form and accompanied by a non-refundable application fee. Please refer to the public notice available at [www.nrw.qld.gov.au/wrp/gab](http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/wrp/gab) for more details of fees and submission dates.

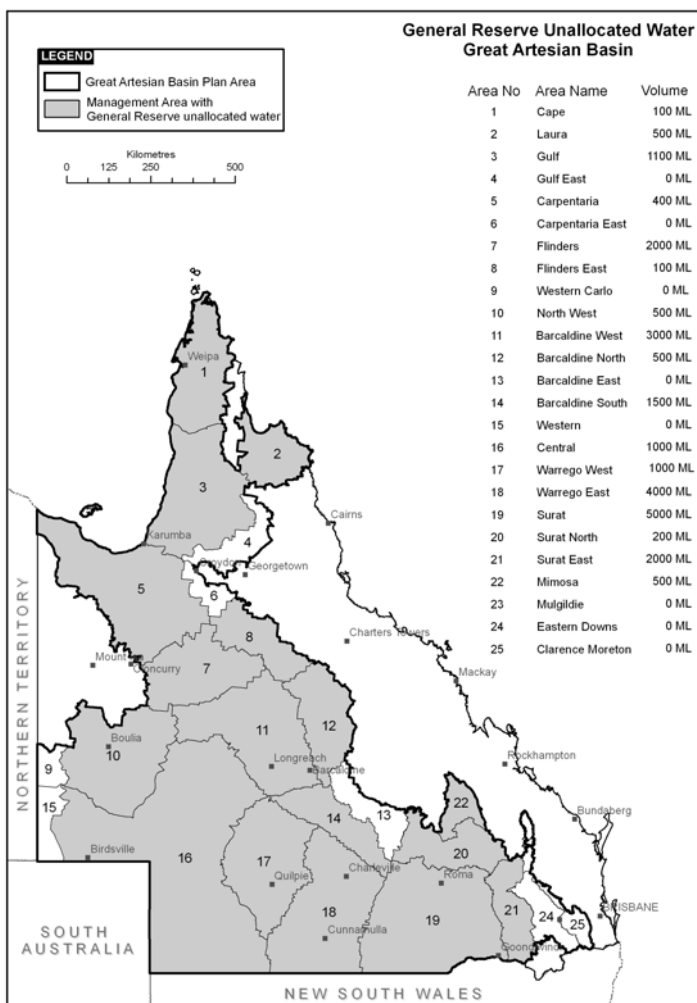
There is no restriction on the number of water licences that may be attached to a particular parcel of land; therefore existing water licence holders may register interest for a water licence. Landholders' rights to access stock and domestic water are not affected by these provisions, although you will need a licence.

Those interested in registering interest for unallocated water are not bound to be part of any subsequent release of unallocated water through either a tender or fixed price process.

However, to be eligible to apply for unallocated water that may be released through a tender process it is mandatory to register interest for general reserve unallocated water.

### Release process

Demand will determine if water is released at a fixed price or through tender, and how licences will be volumetrically limited. If demand is insufficient, then the chief executive may choose not to release the water and this will be announced by public notice.





If the fixed price process is adopted, applicants can apply for water at the stated price until applications close.

Under the tender process, submissions will be invited only from those who have previously registered.

Although the sale by tender model will involve competitive bidding, Great Artesian Basin Resource Operations Plan 2006 (ROP) criteria will ensure submissions are also considered against their merits

Under either arrangement, applications must satisfy criteria set out in the ROP.

An approved land and water management plan (LWMP) will also be required before water can be taken for the purpose of irrigation under the water licence. New LWMPs will be required for new uses.

Existing LWMPs must be updated for any increased usage made possible through the acquisition of unallocated water, unless the additional volume was anticipated in the existing plan.

Draft water licences will be publicly notified for successful applicants who have decided to proceed with their applications.

Following consideration and recommendations by an independent referral panel, the chief executive will make the final decision on licence applications.

Approved applications will be released as water licences. Applicants for granted licences will have to pay for their entitlements.

Please refer to the public notice available at <[www.nrw.qld.gov.au/wrp/gab](http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/wrp/gab)> for more details.

## Fees and charges

Fees and charges will apply in three stages as the process progresses.

**Stage 1**—a non-refundable application fee (specified on the application form) must be paid for all applications (registration of interest, fixed price and tenders).

**Stage 2**—a per megalitre price for the volume of water granted under a licence. Fixed prices will be advised and tenders will be as stated by the applicant in their bid.

**Stage 3**—a nominal annual resource management charge may apply, once a licence is granted.

The chief executive may choose to set a reserve price for water based on various criteria including any market based information on the value of water in the area.

## Future releases

Not all of the general unallocated water reserve will be released or acquired during the 10 year life of the WRP.

The possibility of additional unallocated water being made available throughout the WRP and greater area would occur through future phases of the planning cycle.

NRW may also choose to make water available from licences that are not renewed.

If sufficient demand arises, future releases will be considered in other areas where general reserve unallocated water exists.

To assist identify demand levels/trends landholders outside the Surat Basin should advise NRW if they are interested in accessing this water.

## Further information

To obtain an application form or additional information please contact Adrian McKay on (07) 4688 1000 or visit the NRW Service Centre in Toowoomba, 203 Tor Street.

Download copies of the ROP, WRP and public notice at <[www.nrw.qld.gov.au/wrp/gab](http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/wrp/gab)>.

Download copies of the LWMP guidelines at <[www.nrw.qld.gov.au/land/managment/lwmp](http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/land/managment/lwmp)>.

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For further information phone 13 13 04