

# Statement of changes made to the Great Artesian Basin and Other Regional Aquifers Water Management Protocol 2017 – *Water Act 2000*, section 69 (4)

The Great Artesian Basin and Other Regional Aquifers Water Management Protocol 2017 (protocol) commenced on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2017, along with the Water Plan (Great Artesian Basin and Other Regional Aquifers) 2017 (GABORA water plan).

The protocol has been amended and the changes made are described below.

Trade rules were made simpler and more transparent.

- rules were amended that establish the groundwater units and sub-areas that water licences can be seasonally assigned or relocated into.
- attachments 6.1 and 6.2 were replaced with a new Attachment 6
- the focus of Attachment 6 is on the potential buyer or receiver of a relocated water licence or seasonal water assignment. This is different to the replaced Attachments 6.1 and 6.2 that focused on the sellers
- this removes the need to cross-reference between the replaced attachments when determining which groundwater units or sub-areas a licence can be relocated or seasonally assigned into.
- the rules have been made easier to understand, without changing their intent.
- the following aspects of the trade rules remain unchanged:
  - relocations and seasonal water assignments between aquifers are only allowed into deeper, less used aquifers
  - water users in the low use areas can relocate or seasonally assign water licences from the higher use areas – trading is not otherwise an option for them because of the small number of water licences in the low use areas. This can also potentially decrease water use and stress in higher use areas.

Rules were also changed to allow for more seasonal water assignments.

- to be eligible for seasonal water assignment, assignees no longer need to hold a volumetric water licence under the GABORA water plan.
- the following aspects of seasonal water assignment under the protocol remain unchanged:
  - seasonal water assignments are limited to protect water supply for other water bores and groundwater dependent ecosystems
  - water use still needs to be metered, recorded, and readings provided to Department Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.
  - stock and domestic water entitlements cannot be seasonally assigned.

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