

Addendum to: Managing the Groundwater Resources of the Lower Gascoyne River (Carnarvon) WA – Ground Water Management Strategy (2004).

WRAC Endorsed – March 2005

5.5.7 Pumping of Surface Water

Situation summary

- Pools of surface water occur throughout Basin A during restricted pumping periods.
- These pools can evaporate leaving concentrated salts in the river bed.
- Where appropriate, surface water allocations can be issued additional to groundwater allocations.

Details: During small flow events and after river flows there are a number of areas that have continued access to flowing or ponded surface water. To declare or extend unrestricted pumping periods to meet the needs of licensees in these local areas is inequitable and may damage the water resource as water draw can exceed recharge across Basin A in these situations.

There are periods when licensees may be advantaged by having increased access to use this water. These are;

- During months of restricted pumping;
- When use of this water will prevent localised salinity build up;
- To allow for recovery of deep aquifer groundwater wells.

Licences will be issued for a short time only to allow for the opportunistic use of surface water. This will avoid complications where long term surface water licences may create a perception of increased water allocation and an increased property value.

Issue of a surface water licence can allow growers increased flexibility to manage the water in their prolongation and obtain additional water to their groundwater allocation, without adversely affecting the resource.

5.5.7.1 Management Provisions – surface water usage

- a) Surface water licences can be issued to applicants who have access to surface water outside of unrestricted pumping periods within their prolongation
- b) Only free flowing or standing water is to be drawn under a surface water licence
- c) Draw points are to be uncovered and no more than 1m below the bed of the river
- d) Water extracted under a surface water licence is to be metered separately
- e) Allocations will be up to a maximum of 20,000 kL for a two-month period only.