

2024 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Central Victorian Mineral Springs GMA

Groundwater management

The Central Victorian Mineral Springs Groundwater Management Area (GMA) extends from Daylesford and Woodend on the Great Dividing Range in the south, to Cairn Curran Reservoir and Lake Eppalock in the north.

Groundwater in the area is highly valued. It is shared between the environment, domestic and stock users, irrigated agriculture, commercial users and growing urban communities.

The region is unique because of naturally occurring carbonated mineral water springs that have long been valued for health benefits, commercial bottling and tourism.

Groundwater resources in the area are managed under the *Central Victorian Mineral Springs GMA Local Management Plan* (the Plan), which was endorsed by Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) in July 2013.

Groundwater licence volume and use

The total groundwater licence entitlement volume (licence volume) in the GMA in 2023/24 was 5,239.6 megalitres per year (ML/yr) (Table 1), (37.3 ML or 1%) more than the entitlement for 2022/23.

Table 1. Licence volume, use and limits for 2023/24

Management zone	Zone cap/ PCV (ML/yr)	Licence volume (ML/yr)	Recorded licensed use (ML)
Campaspe Zone (1120)	1,150.0	1,135.8	308.4
Coliban Zone (1121)	2,144.0	1,373.8	283.1
Loddon Zone (1122)	2,730.0	2,730.0	562.8
Total	6,024.0	5,239.6	1,054.3

Recorded licensed use in the GMA was 1,054.3 ML in 2023/24, or 20 per cent of the total licence volume. This is 38.3 ML less than the volume used in 2022/23 (Figure 1).

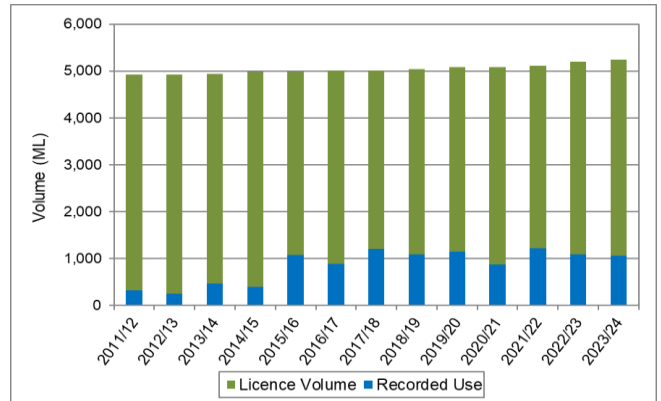


Figure 1. Recorded groundwater extractions

Licence transfers

The Plan allows groundwater licence holders to temporarily or permanently transfer licence volume. Transferring (or trading) enables the development of new opportunities and provides licence holders with greater flexibility to manage production in response to seasonal demands or climatic conditions. The volume of transfers in 2023/24 is shown in Figure 2.

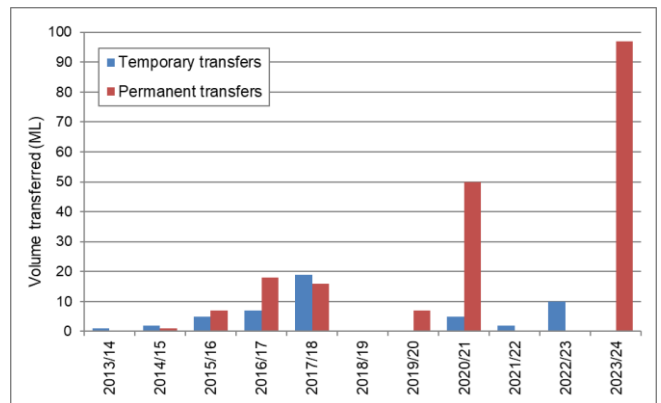


Figure 2. Annual licence transfer activity

Groundwater salinity

Upon request, GMW can supply groundwater users with a groundwater sampling kit (including sample bottle, instructions and reply-paid envelope) so that groundwater salinity can be measured and recorded. There were no requests for sample kits in 2023/24.

Groundwater levels

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), in partnership with GMW, monitor state observation bores located across the GMA.

Hydrographs, which show the change in groundwater level over time, are presented here for key bores in each management zone – refer Figures 3, 4 and 5.

Groundwater monitoring indicates that levels are responsive to climate, i.e., declining during dry periods and recovering during periods of higher rainfall. Pumping from bores can also influence groundwater levels.

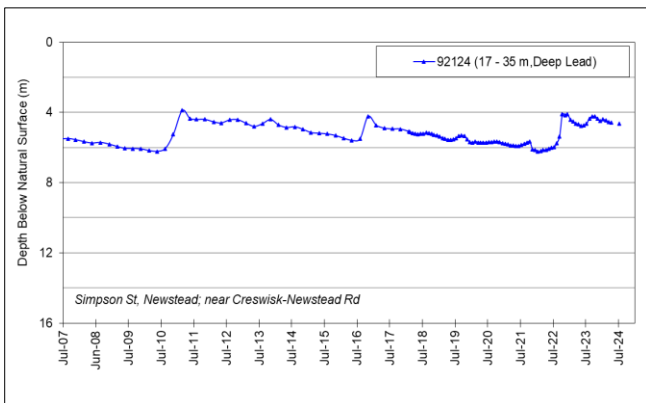


Figure 3. Groundwater level monitoring site in the Loddon Zone, at Newstead

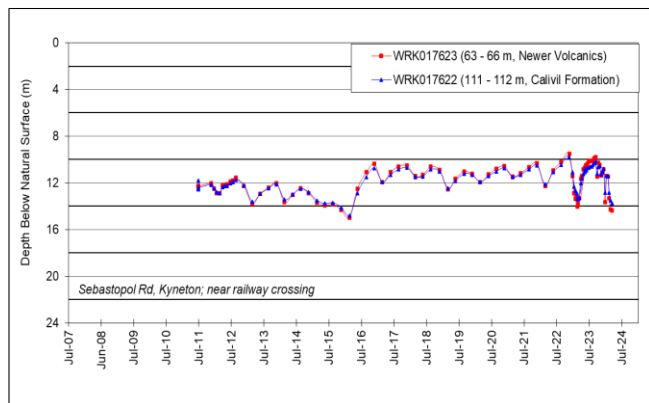


Figure 4. Groundwater level monitoring site in the Campaspe Zone, at Kyneton

GMW will continue groundwater level monitoring to

assist with future resource management decisions.

For all State Observation Bore Network groundwater levels please visit <https://data.water.vic.gov.au/>

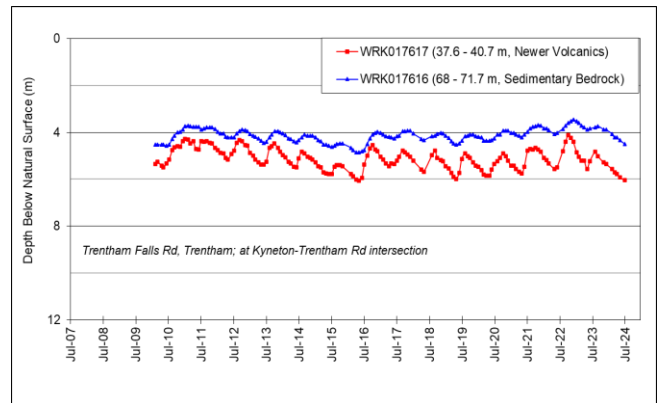


Figure 5. Groundwater level monitoring site in the Coliban Zone, at Trentham

Mineral springs

Mineral springs reserves, including at Hepburn (Figure 6), are maintained by local land managers (e.g., Hepburn Shire Council), not GMW. For more information about the mineral springs, refer to the *Victorian Mineral Springs Strategic Masterplan 2015-2024*.



Figure 6. Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve

Licence compliance

In 2023/24, there were no prosecutions or convictions relating to groundwater matters in the GMA.

GMW has a zero-tolerance approach to unauthorised take of non-urban water. Relevant actions, if required, are taken in accordance with GMW's Risk-Based Compliance and Enforcement Framework.

Please visit www.gmwater.com.au/compliance for more information.

Plan review

Each year, GMW considers the need for any amendments to the Plan. No amendments were considered necessary in 2023/24.

September 2024; A4892032