

# GREAT ARTESIAN BASIN COORDINATING COMMITTEE

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## CHAIR'S COMMUNIQUÉ No.4

The Great Artesian Basin Coordinating Committee continues to provide advice to governments with responsibilities for the GAB. This advice emphasises efficient, effective and sustainable whole-of-basin management and coordination of activity between stakeholders to that end.

The Committee does not have a resource management or lobbying role. Operational matters for basin management are primarily the responsibility of State/Territory agencies.

The Committee comprises members who represent the Australian, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Northern Territory governments, as well as representatives of communities, industries and other sectors with interests in the Basin.

See the Website [www.gabcc.gov.au](http://www.gabcc.gov.au) for a list of current members and for the Committee's Operating Arrangements.

This Communiqué is intended to encourage communications with all GAB stakeholders and communities. We encourage you to seek further information on any of the items raised, by contacting members of the Committee or the GABCC Facilitator .

### Summary of Meeting Outcomes – GABCC 36, Sydney 20-21 October 2016

#### GAB Strategic Management Plan

The main item for this meeting was once again revision of the Great Artesian Basin (GAB) Strategic Management Plan (SMP). This meeting coincided with the half-way point in drafting, and the majority of the agenda was devoted to discussion of purpose, principles, outcomes and targets, within the issues and challenges faced by Basin stakeholders.

The meeting echoed the importance of adhering to the timeline to complete the SMP, following significant delays in advancing this work, and emphasised the importance of consulting GAB stakeholders.

The Committee recognised divergent expectations for the SMP: on one hand a policy document for governments, to which governments will 'sign up' and be accountable, and on the other a strategic plan for the whole of the Basin which will include community and industry stakeholder views. The meeting developed a series of expectations for the SMP which will guide drafting to incorporate community and industry views.

Aware of divergent views about the need for coordinated whole-of-Basin governance, the meeting developed a set of 'drivers' and incentives for continuation of cooperative and collaborative management, and suggested outcomes for areas of shared concern, including water rights and responsibilities, monitoring and reporting,

Other aspects of the SMP addressed by the Committee included the value of the 'Resource Condition Limit' concept and of jurisdictional plans making a distinct cultural water allocation (for Indigenous cultural and economic purposes).

**GAB Economic Output Report**

An initiative of the GABCC and funded by the GABCC budget, the final report was made available to the public in August 2016, with a summary and background information on the website. The Committee noted its value for reinforcing the case that it is worth caring for the GAB, which will be incorporated in drafting of the SMP.

**GAB Bore Audit report**

The Committee received a near-final draft of the GAB bore audit report (*Summary of past drilling activity within the Great Artesian Basin*), another initiative of the GABCC. When finalised, this will plug a significant knowledge gap and contribute to a sensible approach to long-term asset maintenance.

**GABCC Operating Arrangements update**

The meeting considered a paper regarding a potential update to GABCC Operating Arrangements, to be considered further at the next meeting.

**Next Meeting**

GABCC 37 is scheduled for 14-15 Dec 2016 in Canberra. This will again focus on the SMP at the point close to its finalisation. It will also include a research-focused session which will enable a strategic discussion of the application of science to policy in the context of developing the SMP.

Juanita Hamparsum  
Chair

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