

Warrion WSPA Groundwater Management Plan

Annual Report 2020-21

Foreword

This report is submitted to the Minister for Water and the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority in accordance with s32C *Water Act 1989*. A copy of this report is available by contacting Southern Rural Water at srw@srw.com.au or by calling 1300 139 510. A notice of report availability will be published as required by s32D of the *Water Act 1989*.

The purpose of this report is to detail Southern Rural Water activities implementing the groundwater management plan along with documenting information that is required to be reported under the Plan.

Area Summary

Area	Warrion Water Supply Protection Area
Segment	Groundwater
Area Declared	August 2000
Plan Approved	30 August 2010
Allocation Limit (Permissible Consumptive Volume)	13,836 ML
Scheduled Plan Review	A review was completed in 2018. Further reviews will be done on an as needs basis.
Implementation Authority	Southern Rural Water
Relevant CMA	Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
Report Period	1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021

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1 Executive Summary

The Warrion Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) was prepared under Division 3 Part 3 of the *Water Act 1989* for the Warrion Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA) and relates to the groundwater resources of the protection area. The Warrion GMP was approved by the Minister for Water in August 2010.

The objective of the management plan is to make sure that the water resources of the area are managed in an equitable manner and to ensure the long-term sustainability of those resources.

Southern Rural Water (SRW) is the authority responsible for managing and administering the plan, which includes the preparation of an annual report to demonstrate compliance. The annual report summarises licence information, metered usage and monitoring data collected for the reporting period in accordance with the recommendations given in the Warrion GMP.

The Warrion GMP Annual Report for 2020-21 demonstrates that SRW has complied with the requirements of the plan.

Monitoring and metering indicate no significant changes in the condition of the resource or water usage patterns. The water resource is being managed in accordance with the plan and the resource condition is consistent with the objectives of the plan. As confirmed by the 2018 review, no changes to the plan are considered necessary at this time.



Bryce Morden
Manager Groundwater & Rivers

2 Introduction

This report summarises the licence information, metered usage and monitoring data collected for the period 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021 in accordance with the Warrion GMP.

The groundwater of the Warrion WSPA encompasses the Quaternary aquifer and the Upper Tertiary Basalts. The principal aquifer in the Warrion WSPA is unconfined and is predominantly composed of fractured basalt and scoria material occurring around the eruption centres of Warrion Hill, the Red Rock Complex and Robertson's Hill. The basalts are relatively thin and generally less than 30 metres thick. The Hanson Plains Sand aquifer underlies the volcanic material, and although it is limited in extent, it may be hydraulically connected.

Groundwater in the Warrion WSPA is used for irrigation, commercial and domestic & stock purposes. The dairy industry is the dominant water dependant farming enterprise within the Warrion WSPA with water used for fodder irrigation, dairy shed water and stock requirements.

The objective of the management plan as set out in the *Water Act 1989* is to make sure that *"the water resources of the area are managed in an equitable manner so as to ensure the long-term sustainability of those resources."*

The plan requires SRW to:

- Coordinate groundwater level monitoring and metering programs;
- Review monitoring and metering data;
- Administer groundwater licensing in accordance with the prescriptions of the plan;
- Review and report annually to the Minister administering the Water Act 1989 on the implementation of the plan; and
- Seek review of the plan and if, in its opinion, amendments are necessary or desirable, make recommendations to the Minister accordingly.

The success of the Warrion GMP is measured through a number of licensing, metering and monitoring objectives and outcomes.

- All consumptive use to be metered and recorded in line with both State Government and Corporation metering policies;
- Groundwater usage is to be maintained within licence volumes;
- Water levels and water quality (salinity) is to be monitored to maintain acceptable levels and to ensure the long term sustainable use of the aquifer(s);
- Transfers of existing licences occurs in accordance with all relevant provisions of the Water Act 1989 and/or any supplementary rules adopted for the Warrion WSPA documented in the Groundwater Management Plan; and
- No new groundwater licences will be issued if the total of all groundwater licence entitlements would exceed the PCV declared for the Warrion WSPA, unless in accordance with prescriptions 5 & 6 of the GMP.

Further information can be obtained from the *Warrion WSPA Groundwater Management Plan*. A copy can be found on Southern Rural Water's website: www.srw.com.au.

3 Key Observations

3.1 Rainfall

Rainfall during the reporting period was 643mm (measured at Colac airport). Rainfall in this reporting period was approximately 50mm higher than the long-term average of 592mm.

3.2 Water Levels

Groundwater levels are monitored in ten (10) observation bores, targeting the Shallow Alluvial, Newer Volcanics and Dilwyn aquifers (see figure 1). Groundwater levels in many bores have returned to normal seasonal variation over the past few years, with bores showing a seasonal variance of about 1 meter.

Figure 1: Location map of Warrion WSPA showing State Observation Bores



All hydrographs are presented in appendix 6.2. Figure 2 shows an example hydrograph from Bore BHID 142689 within the Warrion WSPA.

The groundwater data indicates that water levels in most bores are stable and are at or above the long-term average groundwater level. Above average rainfall during the year and reduced usage has contributed to the healthy resource condition by reducing demand and supporting recharge.

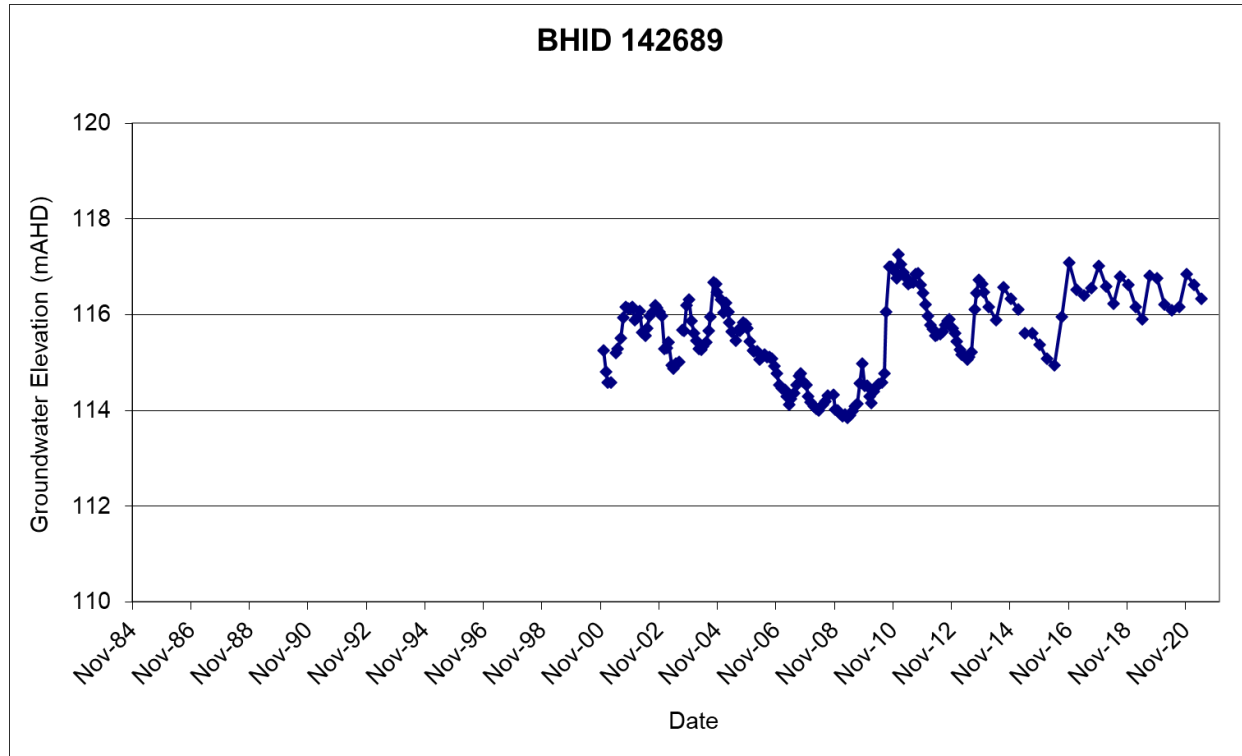


Figure 1: Example hydrograph using data from Bore BHIS 142689

3.3 Groundwater salinity

Water quality monitoring is carried out on observation bores near Lake Corangamite to determine if saline water below the lake is moving towards the Warrion WSPA. Salinity has been measured intermittently in the area since 1988, but it has only been regularly measured since September 2008.

Salinity is regularly measured in five of the State Observation Bores in the Warrion WSPA, and the results from two of these bores can be seen in Figure 3. As shown in Figure 1, these two bores are located on the edge of Lake Corangamite, with the bores collecting data from different levels in the aquifer, with the higher salinity readings being from the deeper bore.

Salinity has remained stable over the past 12 months and measurements are within historical ranges. All salinity graphs can be found in appendix 6.3.

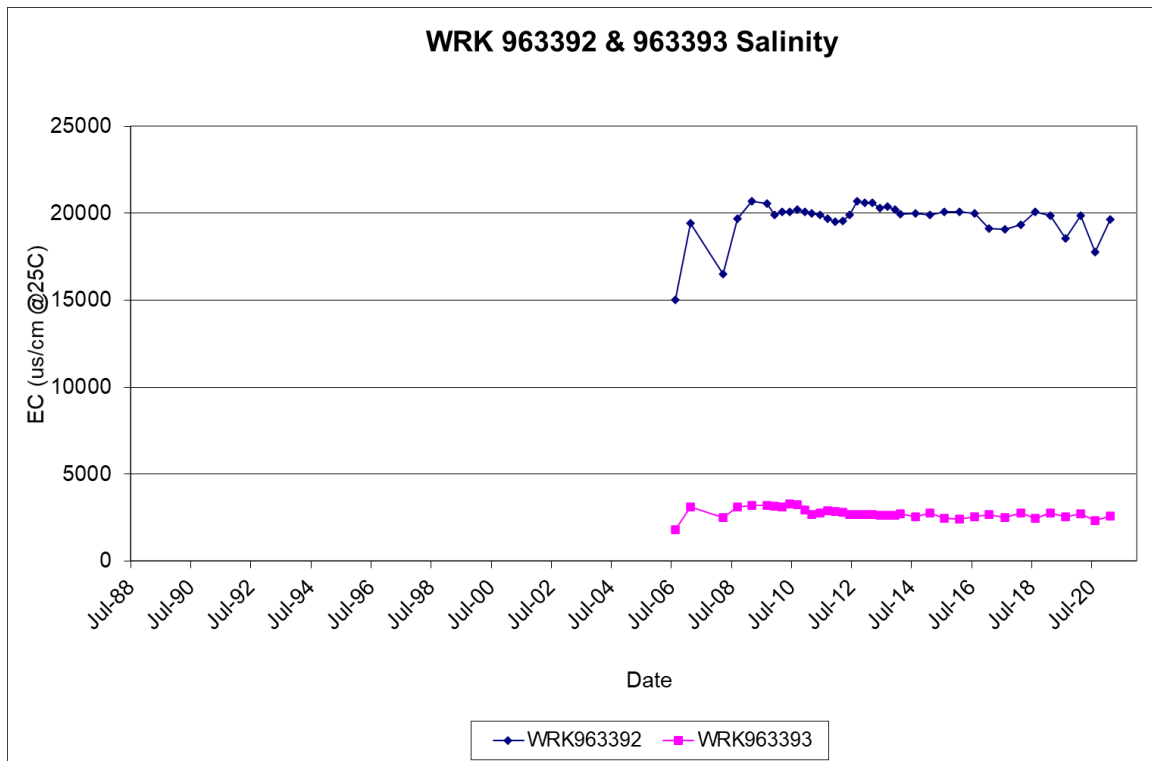


Figure 3: Example salinity graph from Warrior WSPA.

EC (electrical conductivity) units are microSiemens per centimeter ($\mu\text{S/cm}$)

3.4 Water Use

Table 1 and Figure 4 provides details on water use in the 2020-21 year as compared to four previous years. The total number of licences has reduced over time due to customers amalgamating multiple licences held into one licence.

Table 1: Water use and total resource summary for the past five years

At 30 June	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
No. of licences	132	131	131	131	130
Total entitlement volume (ML)	14,078	14,075.4	14,075.4	14,075.4	14,075.4
No. of metered licences	86	85	84	87	87
Total volume metered (ML)	12,097	12,096.2	12,086.6	11,913.6	12,033.6
Metered volume used (ML)	3,702	3,466.4	3,853.8	2,912.9	2,586.3
Metered Use % of entitlement	26%	25%	27%	21%	18%
No. of licences with unauthorised take ¹ at 30 June 2021 (refer to section 3.5)	0	1	4	2	0
Permissible Consumptive Volume (PCV)	14,086	14,086	14,086	14,086	14,086
Metered Use as a % of PCV	26%	25%	27%	21%	18%
No. of D&S bores ²	265	261	261	237	118
D & S bores estimated use ²	398	392	392	356	117
Estimated D & S use from licensed bores ³	198	177	197	197	195

¹ Unauthorised Take of Non-Urban Water

² Taken from the Victorian State Water Accounts

³ Estimated 1.5ML per licence 2013 onwards

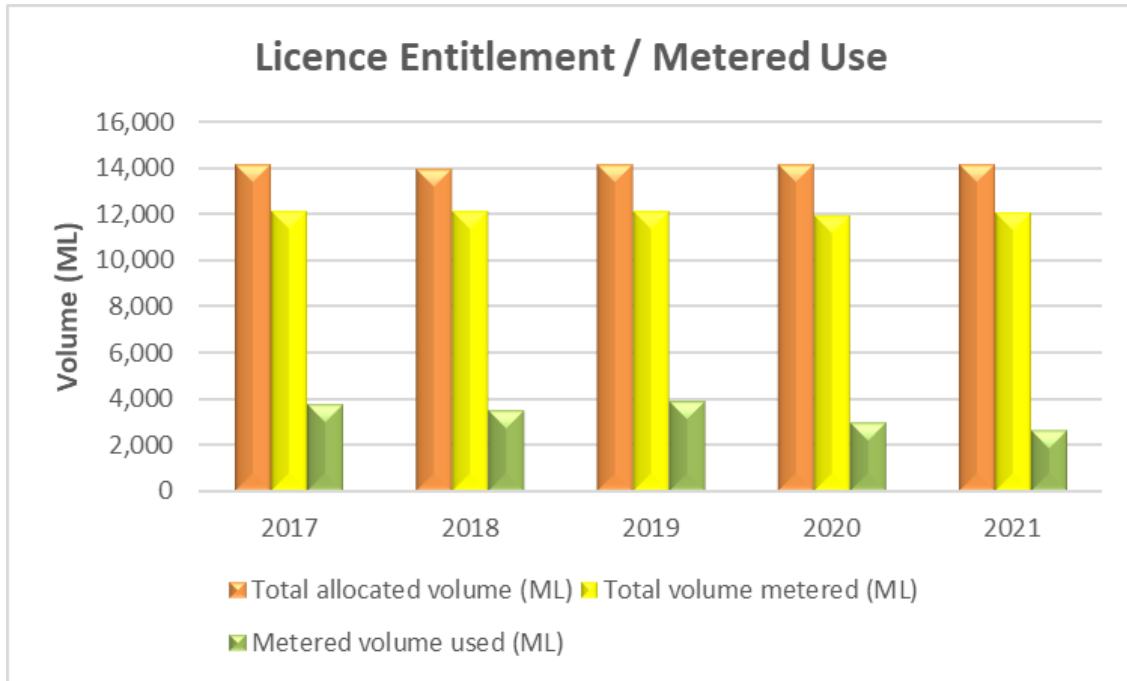


Figure 4: Licence entitlement compared to metered volume and usage.

3.5 Non-compliance

The Victorian Government and SRW have a zero-tolerance approach to unauthorised take of non-urban water. SRW is responsible for ensuring water users in southern Victoria comply with their licence conditions.

Further information regarding Southern Rural Water and State Governments approach to compliance is provided in appendix 6.4

SRW investigates all compliance issues and considers several factors such as the seriousness of the breach and impact on the resource and other users, prior to deciding on the most appropriate action. The action taken by SRW can include the use of direction notices, warning letters and prosecution.

No compliance issues were identified in the Warrion GMP during the 2020-21 season.

3.6 Groundwater dependent ecosystems

Several lakes in the area have been identified as having some likely connection to groundwater (see GMP for further details). No issues have been identified during the year regarding the impact of groundwater extraction on groundwater dependent ecosystems.

4 Plan Implementation

4.1 Monitoring

4.1.1 Prescriptions

The following table details the requirements of the management plan in relation to monitoring.

Table 2 < monitoring plan prescriptions >

Plan Requirement:	Activity / Reference	Complies
11. The Department must ensure that monitoring bores are properly maintained and replaced if necessary; and	The monitoring bores are owned and managed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).	Yes
12. The Department and the Corporation must ensure that data collected from monitoring bores are entered into the groundwater management system, within 60 days of them being received.	All bores have minor maintenance carried out annually which includes site clearance, rust removal, painting, and ensuring the bore is secure and safe.	Yes
13. The Department and the Corporation must ensure that water level monitoring is carried out at appropriate locations throughout the Protection Area to:	The DELWP carries out targeted maintenance on bores that have been identified as needing maintenance following field inspection.	Yes
a) assess annual and long-term impact on water levels from groundwater pumping;	SRW works closely with the DELWP to ensure that the monitoring program meets the requirements of the Plan.	
b) monitor regional and local seasonal drawdown; and	SRW regularly reviews the groundwater level monitoring program and data. All 10 bores are currently monitored monthly.	
c) provide information for future resource assessments.	If SRW identifies bores of particular interest, monitoring may be undertaken in addition to the DELWP's monitoring program.	
14. The Corporation must ensure that water quality monitoring is carried out at appropriate locations throughout the Protection Area to provide information that allows the necessary assessment of any changes in the salinity of the groundwater.	Salinity measurements are currently being taken in 5 of the 10 observation bores on a biannual basis. The program and data are regularly reviewed.	Yes

4.2 Metering

4.2.1 Prescriptions

The following table details the requirements of the management plan in relation to metering.

Table 3 <Metering prescriptions>

Prescription	Activity	Complies
8. All meters will comply with the national standards as adopted in State Government and Corporation metering policy.	SRW has completed a Metering Action Plan that outlines how our metering fleet will comply with the required metering standards. A number of meters have been identified as requiring investigation and potential replacement.	Yes
9. The Corporation must: a) ensure all meters within the Protection Area are read twice per year, in or around January and June; b) determine the volume of water extracted from the bore since the meter was last read; and c) within 30 days after the meter is read, record the amount of water used on a database.	All meters were manually read twice, with ongoing works to install Automated Meter Reading (AMR) technology on all metered bores. This will provide customers and SRW with access to near-real time meter readings. Meter readings and usage data are recorded and stored in SRW's metering system. Usage is also recorded in the Victorian Water Register.	Yes
10. The Corporation may request the Licensee to read a meter and to provide Corporation with the meter reading: a) the Licensee must comply with the request; and b) For the purposes of this clause the Corporation must provide a phone number, email address, pre-paid mail or similar method for the licensee to lodge the meter read.	SRW did not request any licensees to read their meter and provide the meter reading.	Yes

4.2.2 Metering activities

Meters are installed on active licences greater than 10ML.

Table 4 Summary of meter details for season 2020-21 and overall

	Year to 30 June 2021	Total for WSPA at 30 June 2021
Number of licences issued	0	130
Number of meters installed	0	127
Meters requiring maintenance	0	4

Meters replaced	0	1 3 removed
Meters read (1 – date)	Jan/Feb 2021	
Meters read (2 – date)	June 2021	
Number of estimated readings	0	
Meters fitted with Taggle		100

4.3 Restrictions on Licensing and Licence Transfers

4.3.1 Prescriptions

The following table details the requirements of the management plan in relation to licensing

Table 5 <Prescriptions from GMP>

Plan Requirement:	Activity/Reference	Complies
1. All groundwater licences in the Protection Area will be migrated to the Victorian Water Register within 6 months of ministerial approval of the Management Plan.	All licences are recorded in the Water Register.	Yes
2. No new groundwater licences will be issued except as described in Prescriptions 4, 5 and 6.	No new licences were issued	Yes
3. The total licence entitlement in the Protection Area must not exceed 14,086ML (PCV Increased. Ref Gazette G32 8 Aug 2013) or any volume adjusted in accordance with Prescriptions 4, 5 and 6.	Licence entitlements total 14,075.4 ML	Yes
4. If a groundwater licence is surrendered, revoked or not renewed the total entitlement in Prescription 3 will be reduced by that licence volume and capped until such time as a review of the management plan and sustainable yield is undertaken. After which, the PCV will be reduced accordingly, or the volume will be available through a public process.	No licence has been surrendered or revoked in the period.	Yes
5. The Corporation may issue a licence which may lead to the total groundwater licence entitlement in Prescription 3 being exceeded to overcome an administrative oversight or other anomaly, provided it does not exceed the PCV (increased to 14,086ML Ref Gazette G32 8 Aug 2013)	No licences issued under this clause for the period.	Yes
6. The Corporation may issue or amend a groundwater licence in accordance with any state-wide policy. The volume described in Prescription 3 and the PCV (by application to the Minister) will be adjusted accordingly.	No new licences. All amendments have been in line with policy and no additional entitlement volume allocated.	Yes
7. The Corporation must report the details of any licence referred to in Prescriptions 4 to 6 in the annual report.	Refer to appendices for licence details.	Yes

4.3.2 Compliance and Exceptions

Activities undertaken during the reporting period comply with the requirements of the Plan.

4.3.3 Issues Affecting Implementation

No issues to report.

4.4 Licensing Activities

Table 5 provides details of licensing activities. As highlighted in section 3.4, there has been a reduction in the number of licences over the past 12 months predominantly due to customers amalgamating multiple licences held into one licence.

Table 6 Licensing activities 2020-21

Year to 30 June 2021	No.	Volume ML
New licences issued (created as part of a trade, no additional volume allocated)	0	0
Additional volumes on existing licences	0	0
Licences revoked	0	0
Permanent transfers	1	20
Temporary transfers	0	0
D&S Bores notifying use	0	0

4.4.1 Issues Affecting Implementation

No issues to report.

5 Conclusions

The objective of the management plan as set out in the Water Act 1989 is to make sure that *the water resources of the area are managed in an equitable manner so as to ensure the long-term sustainability of those resources*.

Monitoring and metering indicate no significant changes in the condition of the resource or water usage patterns. Therefore, it is considered that the groundwater resources of the Warrion WSPA are being managed sustainably.

Implementation of the plan, including the absence of special zones indicates that the resource is shared equitably with trade permissible across the Warrion WSPA subject to site conditions including consideration of other users including the environment.

The Warrion GMP Annual Report for 2020-21 demonstrates that SRW has complied with the requirements of the plan.

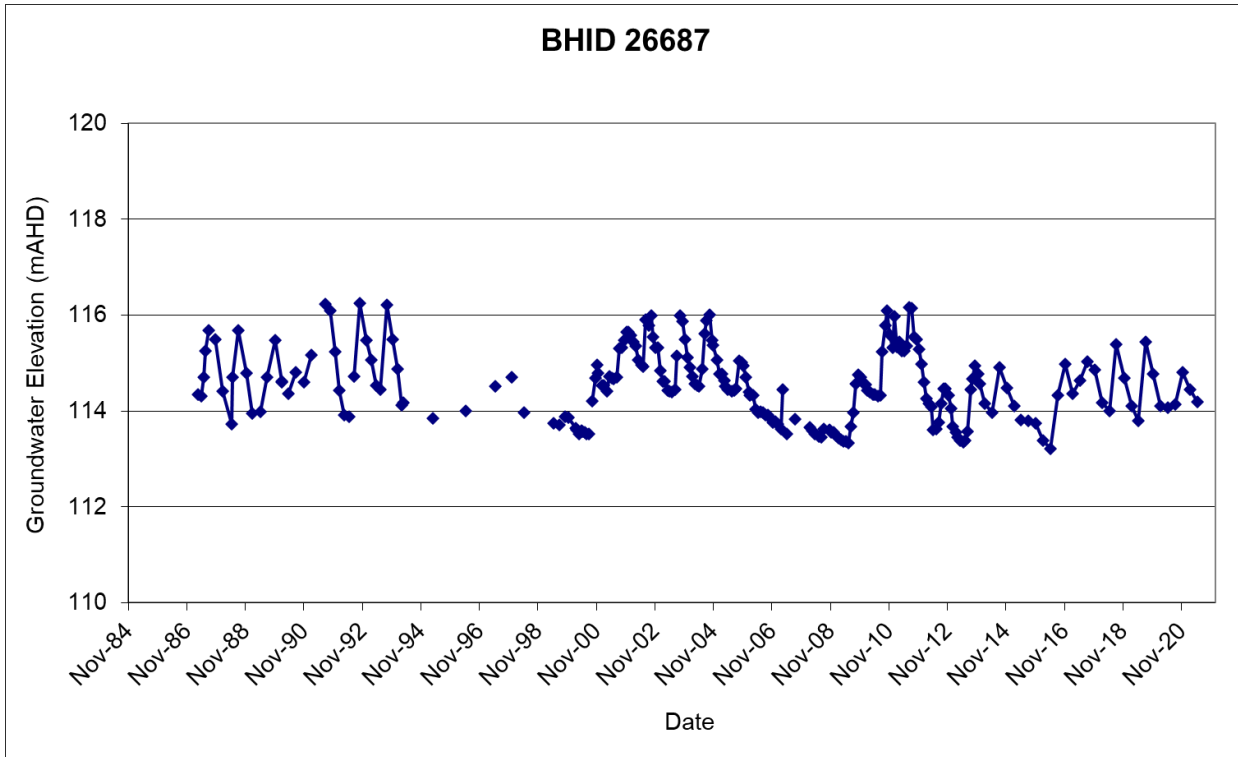
6 Appendices

6.1 Licence Details

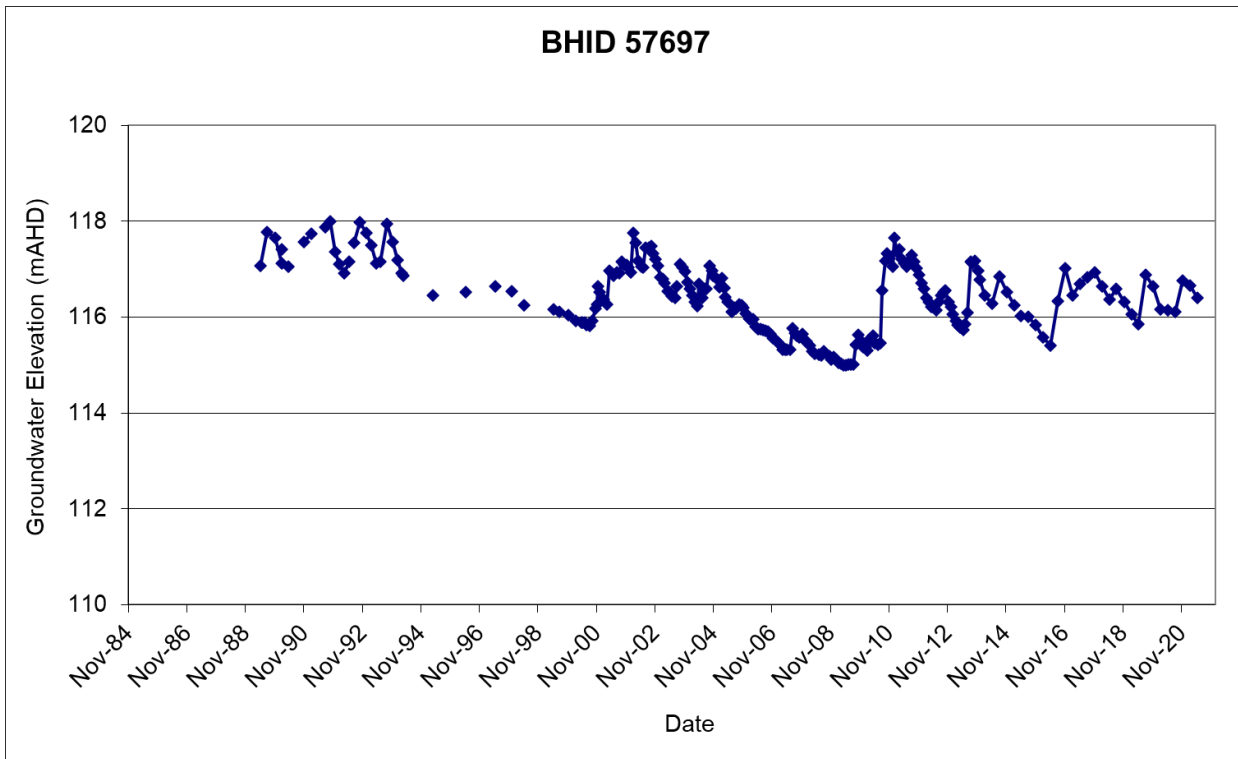
Water Trade details for the 2020-21 season can be found at:

<http://waterregister.vic.gov.au/water-trading/take-and-use-licence-trading>

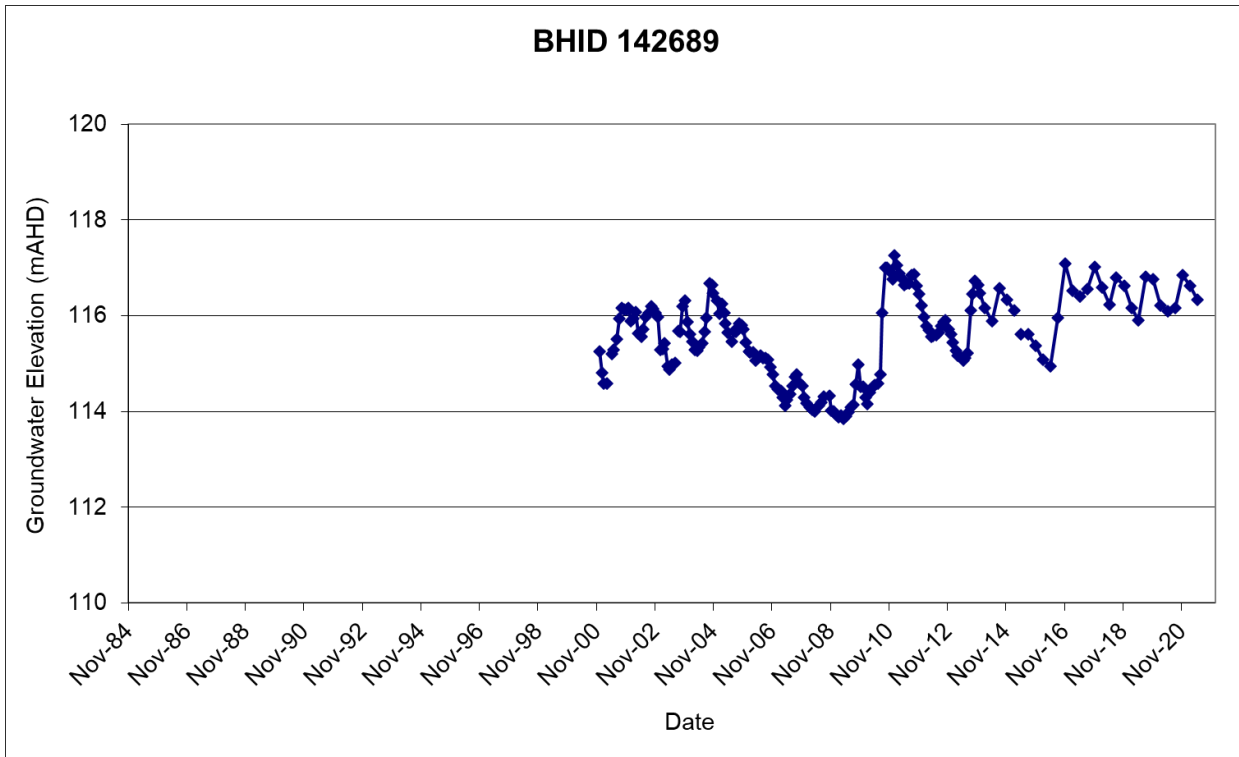
6.2 Hydrographs



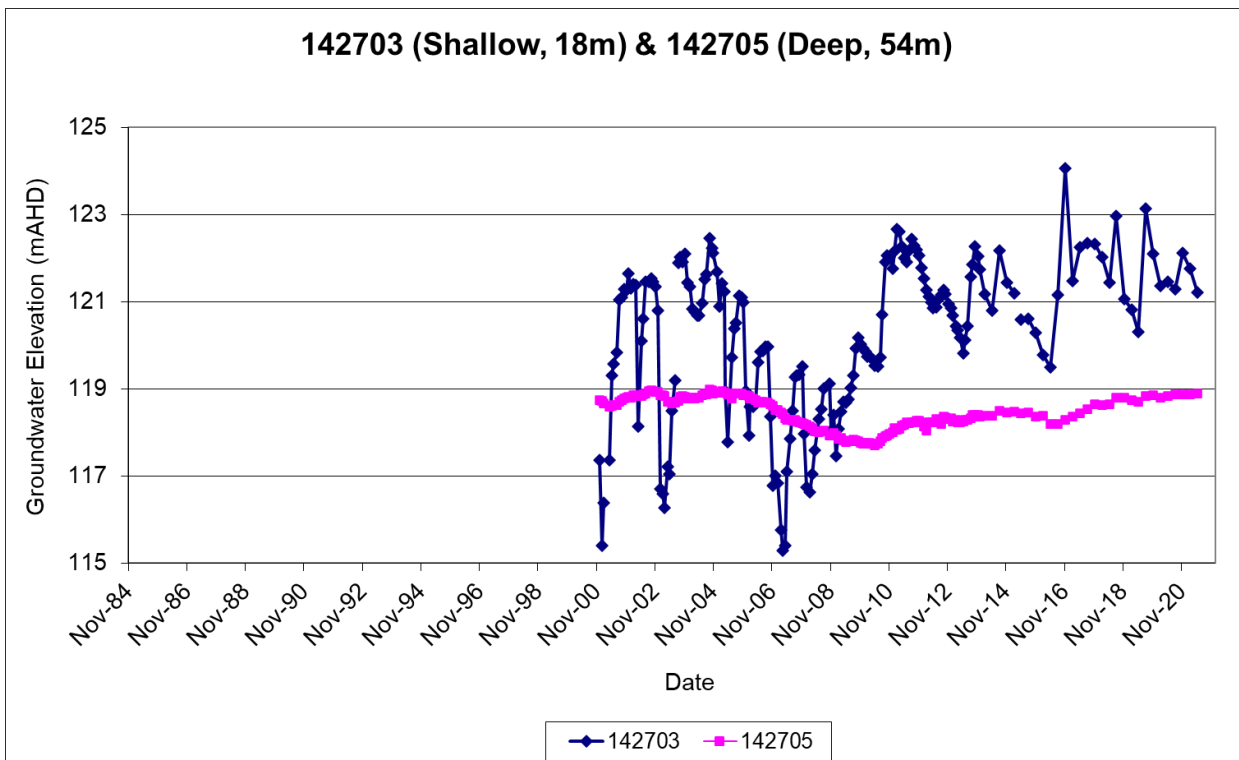
This bore monitors the alluvium



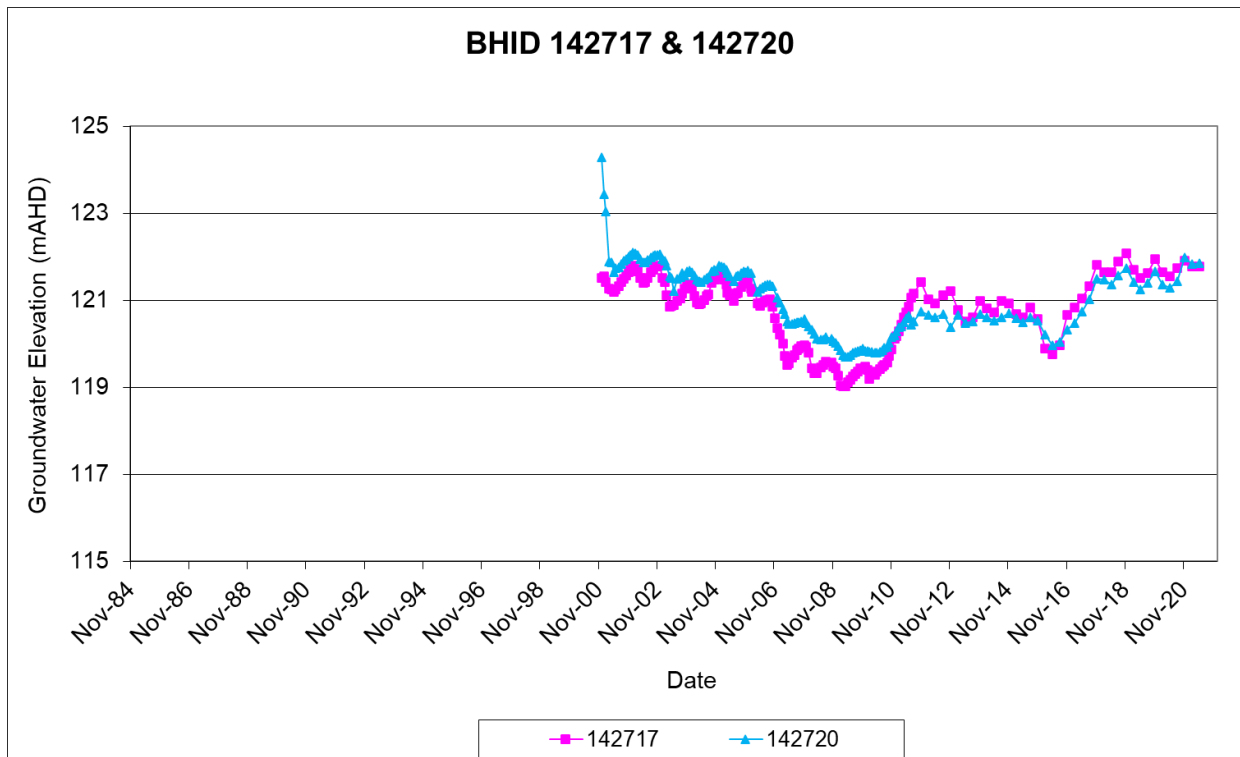
This bore monitors the Newer Volcanics



This bore monitors the Newer Volcanics



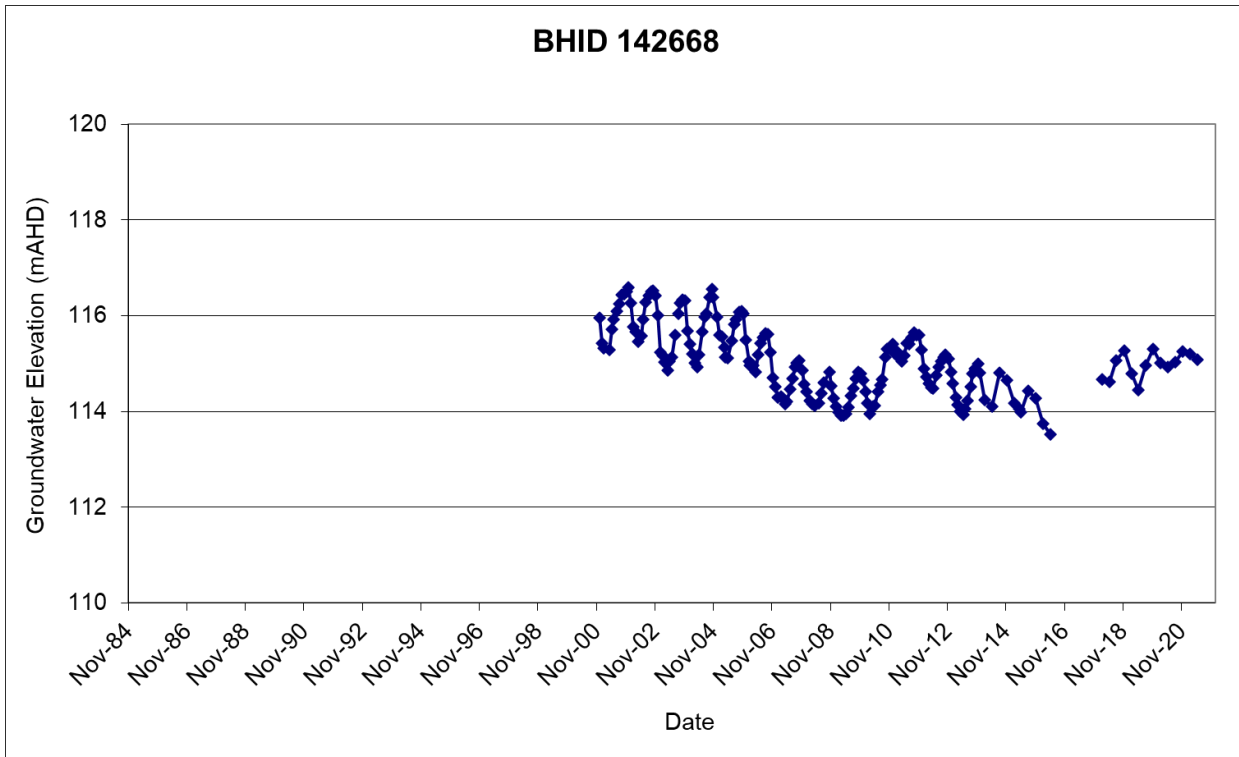
These bores monitor the Newer Volcanics



142717 monitors the Newer Volcanics; 142720 monitors the Dilwyn formation

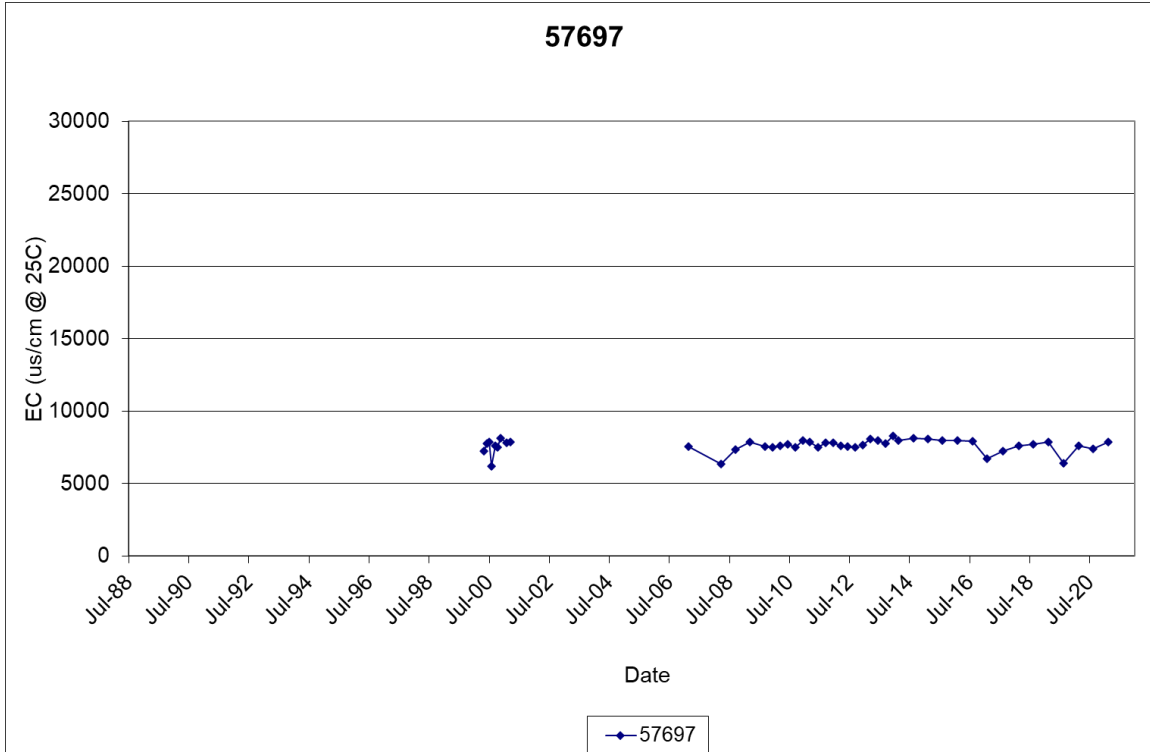
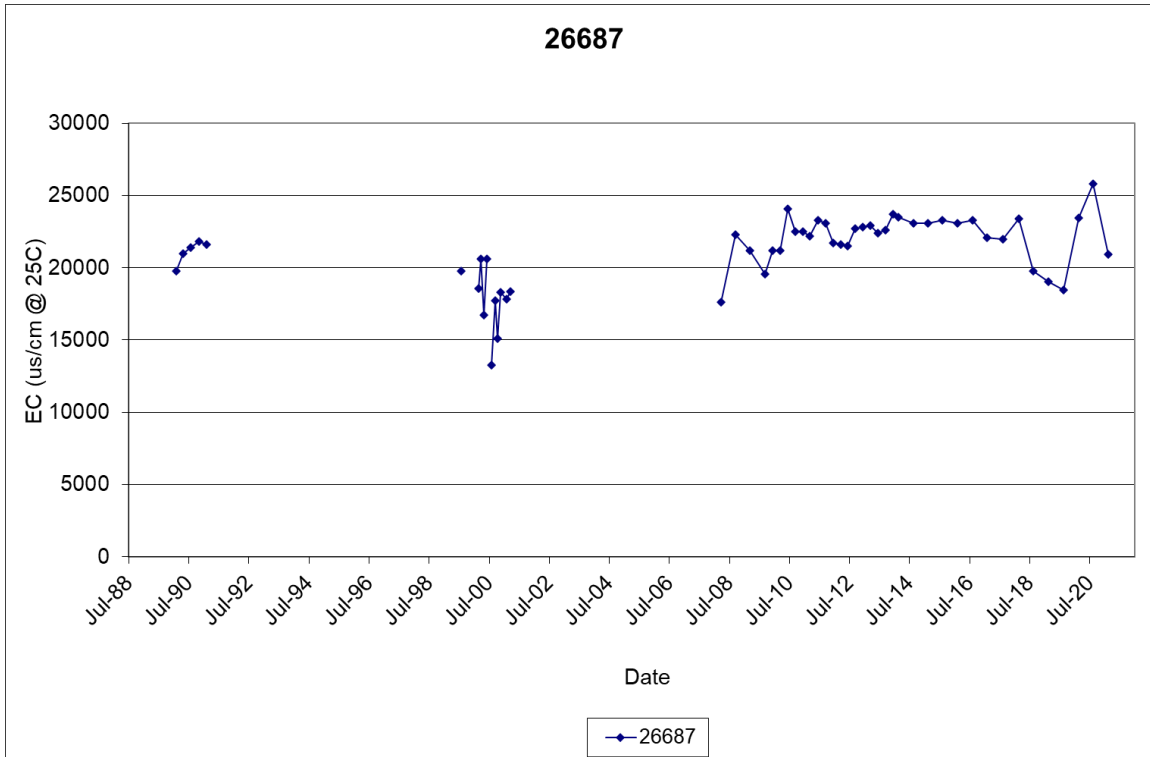


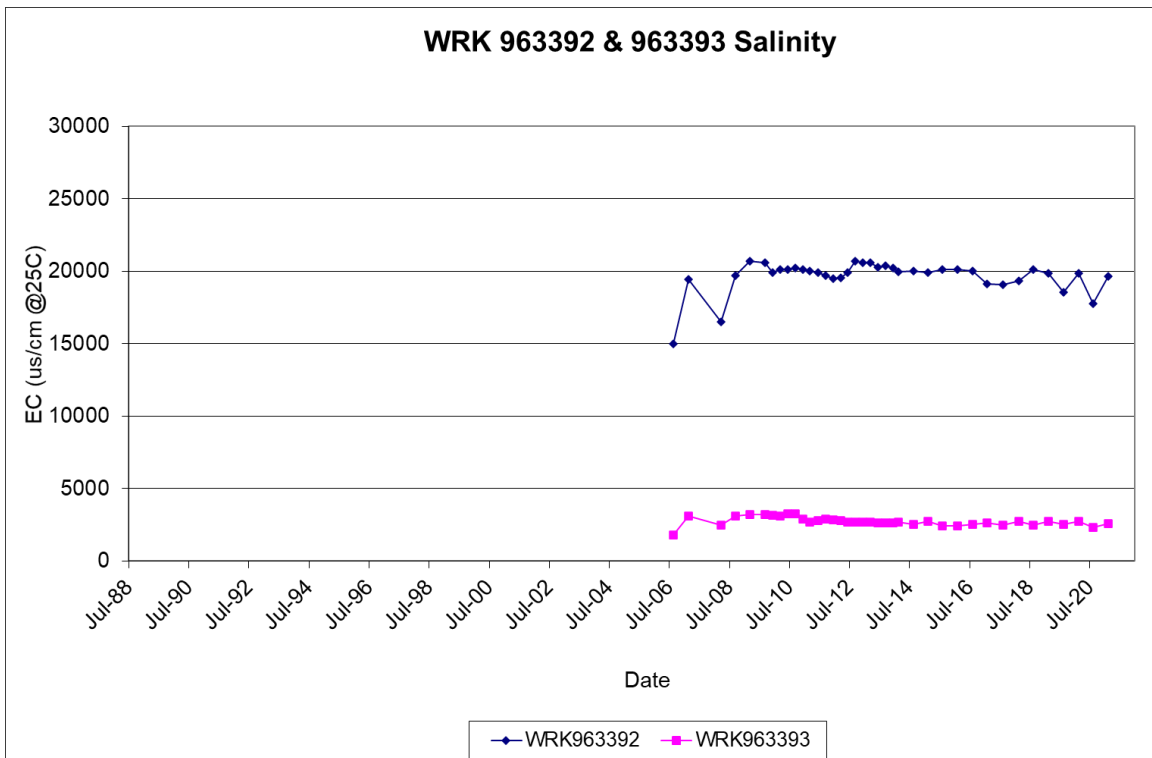
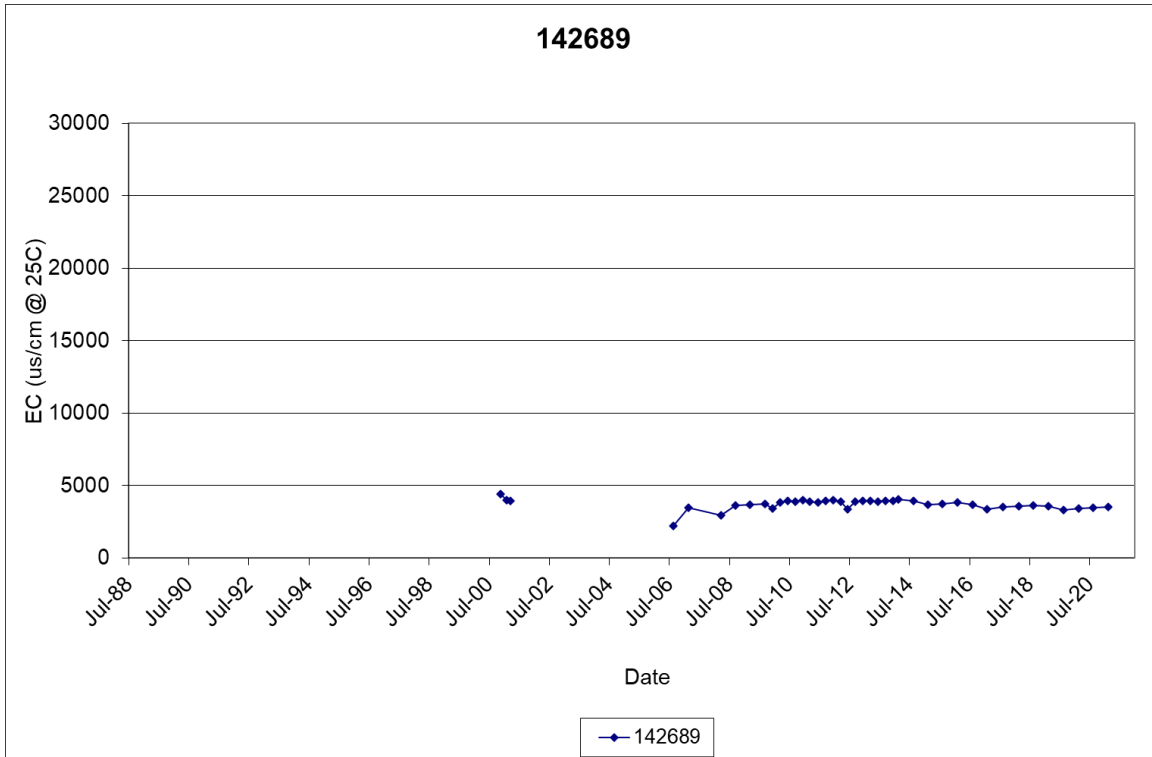
These bores monitor the Newer Volcanics



This bore monitors the Newer Volcanics

6.3 Salinity





6.4 Links for Compliance

[Zero Tolerance To Water Theft In Victoria | Premier of Victoria](#)

[Compliance | Southern Rural Water \(srw.com.au\)](#)

[Non-urban water compliance and enforcement in Victoria](#)