

**Oolloo Water Advisory Committee**  
*Meeting Record 1*

*22 August 2016 – 10.30am*  
*Conference Room, Katherine Research Station*

**Members Present**

John Childs	Chair
Kate Peake	Regional Development Australia Northern Territory
Simon Smith	NT Farmers Association representative
Andrew O'Bree	Proxy for Malcom Baker
	TFS Corporation, Water Extraction Licence Holder
Sam McBean	NT Cattleman's Association representative, Water
	Extraction Licence Holder
Warren de With	AFANT Representative
Dick Perry	Community Member, Water Extraction Licence Holder
Eddie Webber	Community Member
Mona Liddy	Wagiman Traditional Owner
Trish Rigby	Proxy for Lorrae McArthur
	Northern Land Council representative
Alison King	Aquatic Ecologist
Peter Marks	Horticulturist, Water Extraction Licence holder
Phil Howie	Community Member, Water Extraction Licence holder
Rob Lindsay	Maddaingya Malak Malak Ranger Program
	Representative

**Members Absent**

Lorrae McArthur	Trish Rigby present as proxy
Malcom Baker	Andrew O'Bree present as proxy

**Advisors Present**

Gabby Yates	Water Planner, DLRM
-------------	---------------------

**Observers**

Joanne Townsend	Executive Director – Water Resources Division, DLRM
Jo Challis	Minutes, DLRM
Tristan Sloan	Executive Officer, AFANT

## 1. OPENING

(John Childs)

Meeting opened at 10.30am

### 1.1. Apologies

### 1.2. Introduction from the Chair

The Chair outlined the Agenda for today's meeting.

Committee members were advised they will have the opportunity to put all issues on the table.

### 1.3. Committee member Introductions

Each member introduced themselves and their interest in the Committee.

## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference outline the Committee's role in this water planning process.

Members were invited to seek clarification or further information on any items contained in the Terms of Reference.

There was discussion about the way the terms of reference described the implementation of the National Water Initiative (NWI), in particular the use of the word practicable. Further discussion highlighted that the Department is committed to implementing the NWI but not all of the recommendations are relevant to the NT, nor can they be implemented right away. The NWI agreement is non-binding.

***ACTION:*** *The Department will provide a summary of its commitments under the NWI for the management of the Ooloo Aquifer.*

To assist the Committee in taking a fresh approach in the development of this Plan, the Chair suggested members raise issues before looking at previous draft documents and also work within the limitations of licences already issued.

There was discussion about the status of review of the *Water Act*. Amendments to the Act have been announced removing the exemption to mining and petroleum activities to licence and permit requirements under the Act. Commencement of these changes is subject to a decision by Government.

There was discussion about proxies attending meetings. Under the Terms of Reference proxies are provided for. It is preferable that the appointed members attend and if they are unable to attend that there is consistency in the proxy nomination.

Please contact Gabby prior to the meeting if you will be nominating a proxy.

### 3. PRESENTATION – RECENT OOLLOO LICENCE ASSESSMENTS (Gabby Yates)

Gabby provided a PowerPoint presentation of the *Reliability Assessment Approach for the Oolloo Aquifer*. The Presentation reference the independent review of the assessment approach, conducted by the Goyder Institute.

The presentation raised the following comments or queries.

- The climate reference period used for the assessment of licence reliability. This question was taken on notice for discussion with the Committee at a later date.
- The choice of gauging stations used in the assessment of licence reliabilities was queried. The meeting was advised that the Department generally uses gauging stations that are in reaches of the river that are proven to be relatively stable and that the flows at these reaches are related to the environmental water requirements that reflect the health of the river, including less stable reaches.
- There was a question about whether the environmental water requirements for the Daly River are valid. It was noted that the National Environmental Science Program is currently funding CDU and DLRM to undertake work on the environmental requirements for the Daly River. However, the findings of this work will not be available for another few years as the project has only just begun.
- There was discussion about whether the Committee can have confidence in the model. It was agreed that the committee would benefit from an expert from the Water Resource Assessment team in the Department coming to talk with them.

### 4. PLANNING OUR WORK

#### 4.1. What issues/topics do we need to address?

Attached is a copy of the issues raised in the session by Committee members.

***ACTION:*** *Members will be provided with the issues raised and will reply to Gabby Yates with any changes and additions to the list, and will nominate the three issues they consider will be most important to deal with.*

#### 4.2. Which issues do we need more information on?

Committee members were invited to comment on which issues they think they need further information about.

Committee members raised the following:

- Licence reliability estimates under an alternative conservative climate reference period (e.g. a 30 year period that is drier relative to the most recent 30 year period).
- An overview of the monitoring undertaken by the Department

- A list of current licence holders
- Summary of NWI commitments and progress
- A summary of the number of licences, entitlement volumes and reported usage from the last 5 years.
- Glossary of terms for reference for future meetings

***ACTION:*** Gabby will provide data for each of the previous 5 years of; licence allocations, annual allocation by security level, usage and number of licences, at the next meeting.

## 5. CHALLENGES

### 5.1. Which issues will be difficult?

A committee member suggested the timeframe will be challenging.

Committee members discussed that they need to find out more about knowledge gaps and what information is and is not currently available.

A Committee member asked whether there are further licence applications for the Ooloo Aquifer lodged with the Department. It was discussed that there are and that the Department's Policy is that no new entitlement can be granted if the overall reliability of existing licences will be reduced by issuing the new entitlement.

There was a question about whether a review of existing licences might occur in the future. It was discussed that if this is requested by the government, a process will be established and legal advice will be sought.

## 6. OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee was asked what their preference is for having minutes made available to the public.

***ACTION:*** Meeting Minutes will be available on the Internet after they have been approved by the Committee at the following meeting.

## 7. NEXT MEETING

It was decided the Committee would meet on a 4-6 week basis. A future schedule of meeting dates (preferably not Monday or Friday) and locations is to be determined at Meeting 2.

The date of the next meeting is to be determined.

The Committee would like the Minister or Controller of Water to attend the next meeting.

**Meeting Closed 2.45pm**