

At a glance

Acknowledgement	ii
Accredited text	iv
Accredited Text Table	v
At a glance	lxx
1. Introduction: Victoria implementing the Murray-Darling Basin Plan	2
2. Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	16
3. Landscape, people and economy	24
4. Water resources	32
5. Victoria’s water institutions and functions	52
6. Victoria’s water entitlement framework and trade	68
7. Challenges for water planning, management and use – the risk assessment	100
8. Sustainable diversion limits (SDLs)	134
9. Extreme events and critical human water needs	156
10. Interception	176
11. Aboriginal water values and uses	192
12. Environmental water	296
13. Recreational values	334
14. Managing water quality and salinity	356
15. Measuring and monitoring	366
References	382
Glossary	386
Acronyms and abbreviations	415
Appendix A Wimmera-Mallee Water Quality Management Plan	418
Appendix B Approaches to addressing risk in the Wimmera–Mallee Water Resource Plan surface water and groundwater areas	480
Appendix C Methods Report	660
Appendix D Consultation Report	700

Contents

Acknowledgement	ii
Accredited text	iv
Accredited Text Table	v
1. Introduction: Victoria implementing the Murray-Darling Basin Plan	2
1.1 Objectives of the Basin Plan	5
1.2 Victoria's approach to this water resource plan	6
1.2.1 A 'water source' basis	7
1.2.2 Victoria's core obligation under the Basin Plan	7
1.2.3 Context and purpose	7
1.3 Accreditation and compliance	9
1.4 Consultation	11
1.4.1 Who else is involved?	11
1.4.2 Water security and risk analysis	12
1.5 Water resource plan review process	14
2. Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	16
2.1 Surface water boundaries	18
2.2 Groundwater boundaries	20
3. Landscape, people and economy	24
3.1 Climate and landscape	26
3.2 Traditional Owners	28
3.3 Population and towns	28
3.4 Recreation and community values	31
4. Water resources	32
4.1 Managing water resources: types of water resource supply systems	34
4.1.1 Unregulated surface water systems	34
4.1.2 Regulated surface water systems	35
4.1.3 Groundwater systems	35
4.2 Wimmera-Avon basin	36
4.2.1 Surface water	36
4.2.2 Groundwater resources	37
4.2.3 Salinity and water quality	37
4.3 Avoca basin	38
4.3.1 Surface water	38
4.3.2 Groundwater resources	39
4.3.3 Salinity and water quality	39

4.4	Mallee basin	39
4.4.1	Surface water	39
4.4.2	Groundwater resources	39
4.4.3	Salinity and water quality	40
4.5	Inter-basin transfers	41
4.5.1	Murray system resources	42
4.5.2	Goulburn system resources	42
4.5.3	Glenelg basin resources	42
4.5.4	Inter-basin transfers from the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	42
4.6	Groundwater connection to other water resource plan areas	43
4.7	Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area water supply systems	45
4.7.1	History	45
4.7.2	Murray Northern Mallee Pipeline system	47
4.7.3	Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline system	47
4.7.4	Pyrenees and East Grampians supply system	51
4.7.5	Groundwater-supplied systems	51
5.	Victoria's water institutions and functions	52
5.1	The Minister	55
5.2	Water corporations	55
5.3	Catchment management authorities	59
5.4	Victorian Environmental Water Holder	60
5.5	The storage manager	61
5.6	Issuing authorisations to take water	61
5.6.1	What is an authorisation to take	61
5.6.2	Limits on issuing new entitlements	62
5.7	Compliance and enforcement	63
5.7.1	Metering and monitoring compliance	64
5.7.2	Education programs	64
5.7.3	Compliance and enforcement strategy	65
5.7.4	Complementing MDBA enforcement	65
6.	Victoria's water entitlement framework and trade	68
6.1	Authorisations to take water	71
6.2	Statutory rights	75
6.2.1	Domestic and stock rights under section 8	75
6.2.2	Traditional Owner rights under section 8A	76
6.3	Water entitlements and supply arrangements	76
6.3.1	Bulk and environmental entitlements	77

6.3.2	The storage manager	78
6.3.3	Specific water entitlements in the Wimmera-Mallee supply system	79
6.4	Individual arrangement for access to water	83
6.4.1	Take and use licences	83
6.4.2	Registration licences	84
6.4.3	Water shares	84
6.5	Other supply arrangements	84
6.5.1	Urban water supply	84
6.5.2	Supply by agreement	84
6.6	Above cap and system water	84
6.6.1	Above Cap	85
6.6.2	System water	85
6.7	Specific water access arrangements under entitlements	85
6.7.1	Rosters, bans and restrictions	85
6.7.2	Water allocation	86
6.7.3	Carryover	86
6.8	Certainty of entitlements	87
6.9	Qualification of rights	91
6.10	The Victorian Water Register	91
6.11	Water markets	93
6.12	Basin Plan requirements for trade	93
6.13	Victorian trading policies and rules	93
6.14	Entitlement trade in the Wimmera-Mallee (groundwater) water resource plan area	94
6.14.1	Trades between two locations within a groundwater SDL resource unit	96
6.14.2	Trades between two groundwater SDL resource units	97
6.14.3	Trades between surface water and groundwater SDL resource units	98
7.	Challenges for water planning, management and use – the risk assessment	100
7.1	Water availability	102
7.2	Water resource condition	103
7.3	Water resources for Aboriginal values and uses	103
7.4	Commonwealth Water Act	103
7.5	Basin Plan requirements	104
7.6	Water resource plan requirements	105
7.6.1	Availability and condition of water resources	105
7.6.2	Interception	106
7.6.3	Extreme events	106

7.6.4	Aboriginal objectives	106
7.6.5	Environmental outcomes	106
7.6.6	Priority environmental assets and ecosystem functions	106
7.7	Victoria’s approach to the risk assessment – data and methods used to identity and assess risks (10.41(7))	107
7.7.1	Scope of the risk identification and assessment	107
7.7.2	Temporal and spatial scale	107
7.7.3	Residual risk	108
7.7.4	Data used to identify and assess risks	108
7.8	Risk identification and assessment methodology (10.41)	108
7.9	Identifying risks in the water resource plan area	110
7.9.1	Causes and scenarios	110
7.9.2	Scenarios	111
7.9.3	Threats	117
7.9.4	Use of water	119
7.9.5	Condition	122
7.9.6	Structural form	122
7.10	Risks in the water resource plan area	123
7.10.1	Description of risks	123
7.11	Wimmera-Mallee (surface water) water resource plan area	123
7.11.1	Risks to water availability	126
7.11.2	Risks to water condition	126
7.11.3	Risks to social/recreational and Aboriginal uses of water	126
7.11.4	Risks to rivers and wetlands (structural form/waterway biota)	127
7.12	Wimmera-Mallee (groundwater) water resource plan area	127
7.12.1	Risks to water availability	130
7.12.2	Risks to water condition	130
7.12.3	Risks to social/recreational and Aboriginal uses	130
7.13	Strategies for addressing medium- and higher-level risks	131
7.13.1	Surface water risks	132
7.13.2	Groundwater risks	132
8.	Sustainable diversion limits (SDLs)	134
8.1	Basin Plan requirements	136
8.2	What are baseline diversion limits and sustainable diversion limits?	137
8.2.1	Cap reporting framework	137
8.2.2	Basin Plan reporting framework	137
8.2.3	Baseline diversion limits and sustainable diversion limits for the Wimmera-Mallee Water Resource Plan	138

8.2.4	Modelling for regulated surface water BDL and SDL	139
8.2.5	Accounting for inter-basin transfers	140
8.3	Annual determinations of permitted take	141
8.3.1	Surface water	141
8.3.2	Groundwater	144
8.3.3	Accounting for water availability	145
8.4	Annual determinations of actual take	145
8.4.1	Managing surface water actual take during the accounting period	145
8.4.2	Managing groundwater actual take during the accounting period	148
8.4.3	Determining actual take	149
8.5	Ensuring actual take does not exceed permitted take	152
8.6	Limits on certain forms of take	153
8.6.1	Take under domestic and stock rights	154
8.6.2	Take by runoff dams	154
8.6.3	Net take by commercial plantations	155
9.	Extreme events and critical human water needs	156
9.1	Basin Plan requirements	158
9.2	Extreme events in the risk assessment	159
9.3	Extreme events impacting on critical human water needs	161
9.3.1	Managing a water shortage	161
9.3.2	Management of water resources during extreme dry periods	165
9.3.3	Management of water resources during a water quality event	167
9.3.4	The role of the Environment Protection Authority Victoria	172
9.3.5	Measures to meet critical human needs	173
9.4	New scientific information	173
10.	Interception	176
10.1	Basin Plan requirements	178
10.2	Interception in the risk assessment	179
10.3	Addressing risks to water resources from interception	180
10.3.1	Runoff dams	181
10.3.2	Land use changes	181
10.3.3	Monitoring potential interception activities	181
10.4	Potential interception in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	182
10.4.1	Farm dams in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	185
10.4.2	Land use change	191
10.4.3	Commercial plantations	191

11.	Aboriginal water values and uses	192
11.1	Basin Plan requirements	195
11.2	Traditional Owners in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	196
11.2.1	Working with Traditional Owners	198
11.3	Traditional Owner contributions to the Wimmera-Mallee Water Resource Plan: identifying objectives and outcomes and recognising values and uses	199
11.3.1	Barapa Barapa	200
11.3.2	Dja Dja Wurrung	213
11.3.3	First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee: Nations of Nyeri Nyeri, Ngintait and Latje Latje	231
11.3.4	Martang Pty Ltd	242
11.3.5	Tati Tati Wadi Wadi	243
11.3.6	Wadi Wadi	252
11.3.7	Wamba Wemba	264
11.3.8	Weki Weki	275
11.3.9	Wotjobaluk Peoples (represented by Barnegi Gadjin Land Council)	276
11.4	Having regard to Traditional Owner water values and uses	284
11.4.1	Assessing risk to Traditional Owner values and uses – a precautionary approach	284
11.4.2	Strategies to address risk to Aboriginal water	286
11.4.3	Identifying opportunities to strengthen protection of Aboriginal water values and uses: Victoria’s Aboriginal Water Program	286
11.4.4	Building capacity and understanding	289
11.5	Acknowledging existing legislative rights	290
11.5.1	Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)	291
11.5.2	Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010	291
11.5.3	Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006	292
11.5.4	Statutory rights to access water	292
11.6	Cultural flows	293
11.7	Engagement with Aboriginal communities	295
12.	Environmental water	296
12.1	Victoria’s environmental water management framework	298
12.2	Water that achieves or contributes to environmental outcomes	299
12.2.1	How water is managed differently in regulated and unregulated systems and declared and undeclared systems	299
12.2.2	Held and planned environmental water	300
12.2.3	Other water that contributes to the environment	302
12.2.4	Protection of water that contributes to environmental objectives	304
12.2.5	Shared cultural and social benefits of environmental water	305
12.3	Priority environmental assets and ecosystem functions	305

12.3.1	Priority environmental assets	306
12.3.2	Priority ecosystem functions	310
12.3.3	Ramsar-listed priority environmental assets	310
12.4	How does environmental watering happen?	311
12.4.1	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	311
12.4.2	Victorian Environmental Water Holder	312
12.4.3	Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder	313
12.4.4	Catchment management authorities	313
12.4.5	Rural water corporations	313
12.5	State environmental water planning	313
12.5.1	Overview	313
12.5.2	Integration of state environmental water planning and Basin Plan requirements	314
12.5.3	Basin Plan environmental watering plan	316
12.5.4	Basin-wide environmental watering strategy	316
12.5.5	Annual basin and state watering priorities	317
12.5.6	Victorian Waterway Management Strategy	317
12.5.7	Regional waterway strategies	317
12.5.8	Long-term watering plans	318
12.5.9	Environmental water management plans	318
12.5.10	Seasonal watering proposals	319
12.5.11	Seasonal watering plan	319
12.6	How are Basin Plan environmental watering outcomes achieved?	320
12.6.1	Overview	320
12.6.2	Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and adaptive management	321
12.6.3	Critical complementary measures - also known as complementary measures	322
12.6.4	Coordination	322
12.6.5	Operational arrangements	323
12.6.6	Tools for managing environmental water	323
12.6.7	Managing risks to environmental water delivery	324
12.7	Sustainable use and management for priority environmental watering	325
12.7.1	Surface water	327
12.7.2	Groundwater	327
12.7.3	Salinity and other types of water quality degradation	330
12.7.4	Addressing risks	330
12.7.5	Groundwater-related risks	331
13.	Recreational values	334
13.1	Recreational values in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan	336

13.2	Summary of risks to recreational values	336
13.2.1	Addressing risks to water resources for recreational needs	338
13.3	The benefits of recreational water	339
13.4	Community feedback on the draft Wimmera-Mallee Water Resource Plan	341
13.5	Recreational values in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	341
13.6	Providing for recreational values	344
13.7	Recreation in storages supplying the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline system	345
13.7.1	Managing the recreational water entitlement	346
13.8	Providing shared benefits for recreation	348
13.8.1	Environmental water providing shared recreational benefits	348
13.9	Sidelined waterbodies provide other benefits	349
13.9.1	Pine and Dock lakes	349
13.9.2	Rich-Avon weir pool	349
13.9.3	Lake Batyo Catyo	349
13.10	Costs associated with recreational water management	350
13.11	Recognising recreational values	350
13.12	Opportunities for community involvement in water decision making that affects recreational opportunities	353
13.12.1	Sustainable water strategies	353
13.12.2	Review of Wimmera-Mallee storage management rules	354
14.	Managing water quality and salinity	356
14.1	Water quality through the Basin Plan	358
14.1.1	Wimmera-Mallee Water Resource Plan Risk Assessment	359
14.1.2	Having regard to targets for managing water flows	359
14.1.3	Applying targets for long-term salinity planning and management	359
14.2	Wimmera-Mallee Water Quality Management Plan	359
14.3	Water quality degradation	360
14.4	Water quality management	360
14.5	Measure 1: Implementation of State Environment Protection Policies or equivalent (surface water and groundwater)	361
14.6	Measure 2: Implementation of the Wimmera-Mallee Long-term Watering Plan objective to maintain adequate surface water salinity to enable growth and reproduction of aquatic vegetation (surface water only)	362
14.7	Measure 3: Implementing the South Australian-Victorian Border Groundwaters Agreement (groundwater only)	362
14.8	Victorian water quality management framework complementing the achievements of the measures	363
14.9	Measures for groundwater	364

14.10 Supporting development of measures through identified water quality targets	364
14.10.1 Water resource plan targets for the Wimmera-Mallee WQMP	364
14.11 Water quality target values for groundwater	365
14.12 Impact of water quality management on another state	365
15. Measuring and monitoring	366
15.1 Basin Plan requirements	368
15.2 Measuring and estimating volumes of take	368
15.3 Victorian Water Accounts	368
15.3.1 Surface water accounts	369
15.3.2 Groundwater accounts	369
15.3.3 Estimating evapotranspiration	370
15.3.4 Victorian Water Register	370
15.4 Collecting data for the accounts	370
15.4.1 Bulk entitlements	370
15.4.2 Environmental entitlements	371
15.4.3 Take and use licences	371
15.4.4 Farm dams	372
15.4.5 Basic rights	372
15.5 Information related to take	373
15.6 Improving measuring	374
15.7 Monitoring water resources	375
15.7.1 Current Monitoring to meet Basin Plan requirements	375
15.7.2 Proposed improvements to monitoring	378
References	382
Glossary	386
Acronyms and abbreviations	415
Appendix A Wimmera-Mallee Water Quality Management Plan	418
Appendix B Approaches to addressing risk in the Wimmera-Mallee Water Resource Plan surface water and groundwater areas	480
Appendix C Methods Report	660
Appendix D Consultation Report	700

List of Figures

Figure 1: Wimmera–Mallee (surface water) water resource plan area	19
Figure 2: Wimmera–Mallee (groundwater) water resource plan area	21
Figure 3: Simplified stratigraphy of the Wimmera-Mallee: Sedimentary Plain SDL in northern part of the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	22
Figure 4: Topography of the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	27
Figure 5: Local government boundaries	28
Figure 6: Annual Wimmera River flows 1968–2016 at Glenorchy (site 415201) as at March 2017, with average flow before and after the Millennium Drought	36
Figure 7: Annual Avoca River flows 1968–2016 at Quambatook (site 408203) as at March 2017, with average flow before and after the Millennium Drought	38
Figure 8: Water transfers into and out of the Wimmera–Mallee (surface water) water resource plan area (average water quantities have been taken from the Victorian Water Account)	41
Figure 9: Water supply systems in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area (Source: GWMWater)	46
Figure 10: The Wimmera-Glenelg headworks system	50
Figure 11: Structure of the Victorian water sector	54
Figure 12: Urban water corporations that provide services in the Wimmera–Mallee water resource plan area	57
Figure 13: Rural water corporations that provide services in the Wimmera–Mallee water resource plan area	58
Figure 14: CMAs that deliver services in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	59
Figure 15: How water is used in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	72
Figure 16: Simplified structure of bulk and environmental entitlements	77
Figure 17: Water entitlement framework for the Wimmera-Glenelg headworks system	80
Figure 18: Process in the Victorian Water Act to amend a bulk water entitlement	89
Figure 19: Statutory process requirements for new or major amendments to an environmental entitlements	90
Figure 20: Key attributes of the Victorian Water Register	92
Figure 21: Determining transfer of take and use licences under the Victorian Water Act	95
Figure 22: Changes in runoff to 2065 under a medium climate change scenario	102
Figure 23: Risk assessment matrix	109
Figure 24: Zones for categorising types of dams across the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	186
Figure 25: Representation of Traditional Owner groups in Victoria’s Wimmera Mallee Water Resource Plan areas	197
Figure 26: Uncle Ron Galway doing a Welcome to Country, Barapa Barapa Water for Country project, Treetops Scout Camp, Gunbower.	202
Figure 27: History in the making: Scar tree created at Reedy Lagoon, Gunbower Island, at the 2018 Bark Canoe Event	206
Figure 28: Ngintait Nation Aboriginal Waterway Assessment 2018	232

Figure 29: Water for the future: Lake Cullulleraine community gathering for the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee	234
Figure 30: Cowanna and Brickworks billabongs are nationally significant wetlands at Merbein Common	241
Figure 31: Scar tree near Margooya Lagoon (Tati Tati Wadi Wadi workshop)	244
Figure 32: Wadi Wadi workshop participants on the Murray River in Swan Hill	252
Figure 33: Murray River at Robinvale	253
Figure 34: Culturally significant artefacts	255
Figure 35: <i>River Scene</i> by Aunty Nancy Harrison, painting showing the pathways and Wimmera River coming from a cultural camping area	277
Figure 36: Traditional Owner recognition outcomes and claims in Victoria	292
Figure 37: Priority environmental assets in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	308
Figure 38: Environmental water planning and management framework in Victoria at Basin, state and regional scales	315
Figure 39: Adaptive management cycle	322
Figure 40: Water management opportunities for recreational values	340
Figure 41: Recreational lakes and weirs supplied by the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline	346

List of tables

Table 1: Wimmera-Mallee Water Resource Plan Technical Advisory Group	13
Table 2: Towns that source their water supply from within the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	29
Table 3: Towns and their water supply systems which are sourced outside the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	30
Table 4: Water allocations and entitlements in the Wimmera-Mallee supply system	48
Table 5: Take and use of water in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	74
Table 6: Water entitlements and allocations supplied by the Wimmera-Glenelg headworks system	81
Table 7: Causes and adopted scenarios of risk considered in the risk assessment	112
Table 8: Threat categories assessed	117
Table 9: Beneficial use categories for assessment of surface water availability risk	120
Table 10: Beneficial use categories for assessment of groundwater availability risk	121
Table 11: Beneficial use categories for assessment of surface (water quality) condition risk	122
Table 12: Beneficial use categories for assessment of (structural form) condition risk	122
Table 13: Wimmera-Mallee (surface water) water resource plan area consolidated risk levels	124
Table 14: Wimmera-Mallee (groundwater) water resource plan area consolidated risk levels	128
Table 15: Long-term average surface water diversion limits in the Wimmera-Mallee (surface water) water resource plan area according to form of take specified in the Basin Plan	138
Table 16: Groundwater diversion limits in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area by SDL resource unit	139
Table 17: Methods for determining permitted take – surface water	142
Table 18: Methods for determining permitted take – groundwater	144
Table 19: Approaches to determine actual take for surface water and groundwater (10.15(1) Basin Plan)	150
Table 20: Summary of risks from extreme events in the Wimmera-Mallee (surface water) water resource plan area	159
Table 21: Summary of risks from extreme events in the Wimmera-Mallee (groundwater) water resource plan area	160
Table 22: Storage and asset-specific actions during an extreme water quality event	170
Table 23: Types of interception in the Basin Plan and their related cause in the risk assessment	179
Table 24: Identified medium or higher risks to the availability and condition of surface water from interception of surface water in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	179
Table 25: Identified medium or higher risks to the availability and condition of surface water from groundwater interception in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	180
Table 26: Catchment activities that may affect the volume of water being intercepted	182
Table 27: Volumes of types of dams (ML) across each zone in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	187
Table 28: Calculating take (ML) from runoff dams in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	191

Table 29: Area of commercial plantations in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	191
Table 30: Barapa Barapa objectives and outcomes	203
Table 31: Barapa Barapa flow dependent cultural assets	207
Table 32: Barapa Barapa flow objectives with indicators	210
Table 33: Dja Dja Wurrung - Objectives	217
Table 34: Dja Dja Wurrung - Outcomes	219
Table 35: Dja Dja Wurrung - The association between objectives, outcomes, and values and uses	220
Table 36: Objectives and outcomes for First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee	236
Table 37: Tati Tati Wadi Wadi - Objectives and outcomes	247
Table 38: Wadi Wadi - Values and uses	257
Table 39: Feedback from First Nation Wadi Wadi members	259
Table 40: Wadi Wadi - Risks	260
Table 41: Wadi Wadi - Impacts	261
Table 42: Wadi Wadi - Feedback	261
Table 43: Wadi Wadi - Objectives	262
Table 44: Wadi Wadi - Outcomes	263
Table 45: Wamba Wemba - Organisations and groups	264
Table 46: Wamba Wemba - Objectives and Outcomes	271
Table 47: Objectives for Barengi Gadjin Land Council	278
Table 48: Outcomes for Barengi Gadjin Land Council	279
Table 49: Risks to availability and condition of water to support Aboriginal water values and uses	284
Table 50: Held environmental water in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan	301
Table 51: Priority Environmental Assets in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	306
Table 52: Priority ecosystem functions in the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area	310
Table 53: Identified medium or higher risks to the availability and condition of surface water for recreational/social values	337
Table 54: Identified medium or higher risks to the availability and condition of groundwater for recreational/social values	338
Table 55: Recreational lakes and weirs supplied by the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline	347
Table 56: Roles and responsibilities for recreational proposals at waterways	351
Table 57: Water quality measures and relevant Basin Plan water quality objectives	361
Table 58: Complementary management actions to support water quality outcomes	363
Table 59: Monitoring of water resources of the Wimmera-Mallee water resource plan area that will enable Victoria to fulfil its reporting obligations under section 13.14.	376