

**Submission on Sunwater's proposal
Barker Barambah Irrigator Advisory Committee
29 February 2024**

QCA Water pricing Submission 2024.

I would like to raise concerns that the reliability of the Barker Barambah Scheme is below an acceptable level.

1) The hydrological model used to determine the scheme reliability looks at the total water balance for the catchment but fails to recognise the timings of water use - in that the irrigators are not using the water during the main flows of the Barambah Creek due to that coinciding with rain events. There are no significant storages on the Barambah Creek, so the majority of this water is rendered inaccessible. Thus, the model is not fully fit for purpose for the way this scheme operates.

2) The allocations for this scheme are roughly divided in half with approx 16300megs allocation derived from each of the 2 main creek systems - Barkers Creek and Barambah Creek.* **
The Announced Allocation formula is only cognisant of Barker Creek derived water - that which is stored in the Bjelke - Petersen Dam. When the AA is below 100%, all customers have their reliability eroded by not being able to access their Allocation that is derived from the Barambah catchment. In extreme cases, there can be a zero or very low Announced Allocation (because B-P Dam is low) with a large flow down the Barambah Creek, and customers are unable to access any of this water that should be supplying Allocation (simply because the formula for AA only looks at what is held in B-P Dam...)

Issues with the reliability of this scheme are well known and have been documented since at least 1998 ***

I think that there should be a plan to face and rectify these known issues before the ongoing relentless push for increasing fees is entertained.

The overwhelming feedback from the recent studies done by the North and South Burnett Water Assesment and by the Bundaberg and Burnett Regional Water Assesment BBRWA will show that water supply reliability is the number 1 obstacle in irrigated farm investment in this area. Thank you for your consideration and please contact me for further information or clarification.
Stuart Nicholson.

* (Queensland DPI, Barker-Barambah Irrigation Project Dec 1979 pg 5-4)

** (Barker -Barambah Creeks Water Resource Investigation 1977)

***(DNR Upper Barambah Proposal 24/98DNR Volume 1 Jan 1999)