

Lachlan CAG afternoon session – March 2026

Held: Tuesday 24 March 2026 – 1:15pm to 4:30pm

At: Condobolin Agricultural Research & Advisory Station - 152 Fifield Road, Condobolin, New South Wales, 2877

Meeting focus: provide updates on a range of Water Group water infrastructure, policy and planning projects being delivered across the Lachlan region or statewide.

Chaired by: Peter Hansen

Attended

NSW Department Climate, Change, Energy, the Environment and Water:

- Peter Hansen, Engagement Team, Water Group - meeting facilitator
- Jenny Meehan, Senior Communications and Engagement Advisor
- Peter Hyde, Director Inland Water Planning
- Luke Baker, A/Manager Floodplain Planning (online)
- Frances Guest, A/Director Floodplain Management (online)
- David Anderson, Manager Metering Implementation

External stakeholders:

- Lachlan CAG members, Gordon Turner (Chair)
- WaterNSW

Meeting notes

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- **Minimum Inflows:** An update was provided on the management of minimum inflows, the evolution of water sharing plans, and the application of risk management strategies for water availability under variable climate conditions, referencing historical droughts, modelling approaches, and the prioritisation of town water supply and environmental needs.
- **Floodplain Management Plan for Lachlan Valley:** An update was provided on the draft floodplain management plan for the Lachlan Valley, explaining the plan's scope, consultation process, technical modelling, and the integration of community feedback, with participants raising questions about boundary inclusion and compliance.

- **Water Metering Policy and compliance in Lachlan Valley:** An overview of the water metering policy for the Lachlan Valley area was provided, detailing the transition to statewide metering rules, compliance rates, classification of works, and available support for telemetry and meter installation, with participants discussing exemptions, validation, and subsidy program.
- **Consultation and feedback for Water Plans:** The ongoing consultation processes for regulated and unregulated water sharing plans, includes the handling of public submissions, targeted consultations, and the integration of feedback into plan development, with participants discussing the effectiveness and transparency of these processes.
- **Technical modelling and environmental water management:** The use of advanced modelling techniques was discussed, including paleostochastic data and scenario analysis, to inform water sharing plan rules, environmental water accounting, and the management of return flows and losses, with reference to specific valleys and operational practices.

Actions:

- **Modelling data:** Request for modelling, especially for Belubula LTAELs.
- **Floodplain Management Plan Boundary feedback:** Suggestion to review and potentially include the Cowra flood mitigation scheme and its associated banks in the Lachlan Valley Floodplain Management Plan, highlighting concerns about maintenance and the impact of unapproved modifications.
- **Floodplain Management Plan mapping:** Provide maps showing how the rural floodplain management plan boundaries overlap with urban floodplain management plan boundaries and clarify any areas of overlap or jurisdictional limits.
- **Floodplain Management Plan Approved vs Unapproved Works Data:** Provide the indicative number quantifying the difference between all flood works and approved flood works within the base floodplain area, to clarify the extent of unapproved works.
- **Floodplain Management Plan Boundary inclusion review:** Assess whether Cowra and its surrounds should be included in the Lachlan Valley Floodplain Management Plan based on feedback about downstream flood impacts and landholder activities.
- **Floodplain Management Plan individual landholder engagement:** Engage with individual landholders to review property-specific floodway network lines and incorporate their feedback into the final floodway networks and management zones, ensuring local knowledge is reflected in the plan.