The Water Allocation Plan for the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges Prescribed Water Resources Area expands significantly on the water management arrangements that were previously in place in the region – the Water Allocation Plan for the Angas Bremer Prescribed Wells Area and the Natural Resources Management Plan for the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Region. The introduction of a comprehensive water allocation plan to the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges Prescribed Water Resources Area provides increased planning coverage in the Basin. The expanded coverage provided by the EMLR WAP is no less consistent with the Basin Plan than the Angas Bremer WAP which it replaced, as this coverage provides a more comprehensive consideration of the water resources of the area, and provides a range of management arrangements to assist in their sustainable use and management.

In undertaking the assessment of the EMLR WAP, the MDBA has identified that the underground water consumptive use limit of 6576 ML/year in the Angas Bremer Limestone is 6ML or 0.09% higher than the BDL and SDL for set out in the Basin Plan (6.57 GL/year or 6570 ML/year). This discrepancy is due to an updated estimate of stock and domestic use being included in the overall underground water consumptive use limit.

The original Angas Bremer WAP did not take stock and domestic use into account in the plan limit. The final EMLR WAP has rectified this situation by including stock and domestic demand in the Angas Bremer Limestone in the consumptive use limit. This allows the total volume of water taken for consumptive use to be managed within the underground water consumptive use limit by managing the allocations made available for licenced use. This is a control on growth in use that was not available under the Angas Bremer WAP.

It is our view that when compared to the Angas Bremer WAP, the small discrepancy between the consumptive use limit and the SDL and BDL is outweighed by the increase in consistency gained by including stock and domestic demand in the consumptive use limit, and the overall improvement in the water planning and management arrangements across the EMLR area.

We have been advised that the change to the underground water consumptive use limit will not affect the Commonwealth’s risk liability.
Summary of amendments and no less consistent assessment - plans as made against draft plans

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