



Wentworth community

In interpreting this information, it is important to understand that there are many drivers of the socio-economic trends reflected in the data. Therefore, the socioeconomic changes outlined here cannot simply be attributed to the Basin Plan – it is just one of a number of factors that affect communities.

This information should be read in conjunction with *Understanding change in Basin communities* on the Southern Basin community profiles page at mdba.gov.au.

Total surface water entitlements available in Wentworth prior to Basin Plan water recovery was 35.5 GL. 4.1 GL (11.5% of available water) was recovered up to October 2016. 3.9 GL was recovered through purchase (of which 45% was purchased up to June 2011). 0.2 GL was recovered through on-farm infrastructure investment. The net reduction in water available for production is 3.9 GL (11% of available water).

Trends in social and economic conditions

AREA POPULATION

Decreased from 1,728 to 1,474 persons (14.7%) between 2001 and 2016

- Half the decrease occurred between 2001 and 2006

WORKFORCE

Total area workforce

Decreased from 557 to 383 FTE (31.2%) between 2001 and 2016

- All the decrease occurred between 2011 and 2016
- Workforce participation fell from 32.3 to 26 FTE per 100 persons

Agricultural workforce

Decreased 30.2% (71 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Decrease was relatively constant across the period
- Employment in irrigated production decreased 56.6% (27.6% between 2006 and 2011)

Agricultural manufacturing workforce

Decreased 88.1% (30 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Over half the decrease occurred between 2006 and 2011

Non-agriculture private workforce

Decreased 42.8% (86 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Mostly between 2011 and 2016

Government services workforce

Decreased 3.6% (3 FTE) between 2001 and 2016

- Increasing 31.4% between 2001 and 2011, decreasing 35% between 2011 and 2016

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

Percentage FTE in key sectors:

- **2001:** 42% agriculture, 36% non-agriculture private, 16% government services
- **2016:** 43% agriculture, 30% non-agriculture private, 22% government services

TOWN POPULATION

Decreased from 1,431 to 1,224 persons (14.5%) between 2001 and 2016

- Half the decrease occurred between 2001 and 2006

66% of the town population was 45 and over in 2016, up from 48% in 2001

- 17% increase in 45 years and over, 44% decrease in under 45s

EMPLOYMENT

Full-time employment

16% of town population in 2016
down from 22% in 2001

Part-time employment

Varied around 10% to 13% of
town population

Unemployment in the town

Varied around 2% to 4% of town
population

SEIFA FOR TOWN: (DECILE RANKINGS)

- **2001:** disadvantage = 4, advantage/disadvantage = 4, wealth = 3, education = 5
- **2016:** disadvantage = 2, advantage/disadvantage = 2, wealth = 2, education = 3

Land use



Water recovery programs

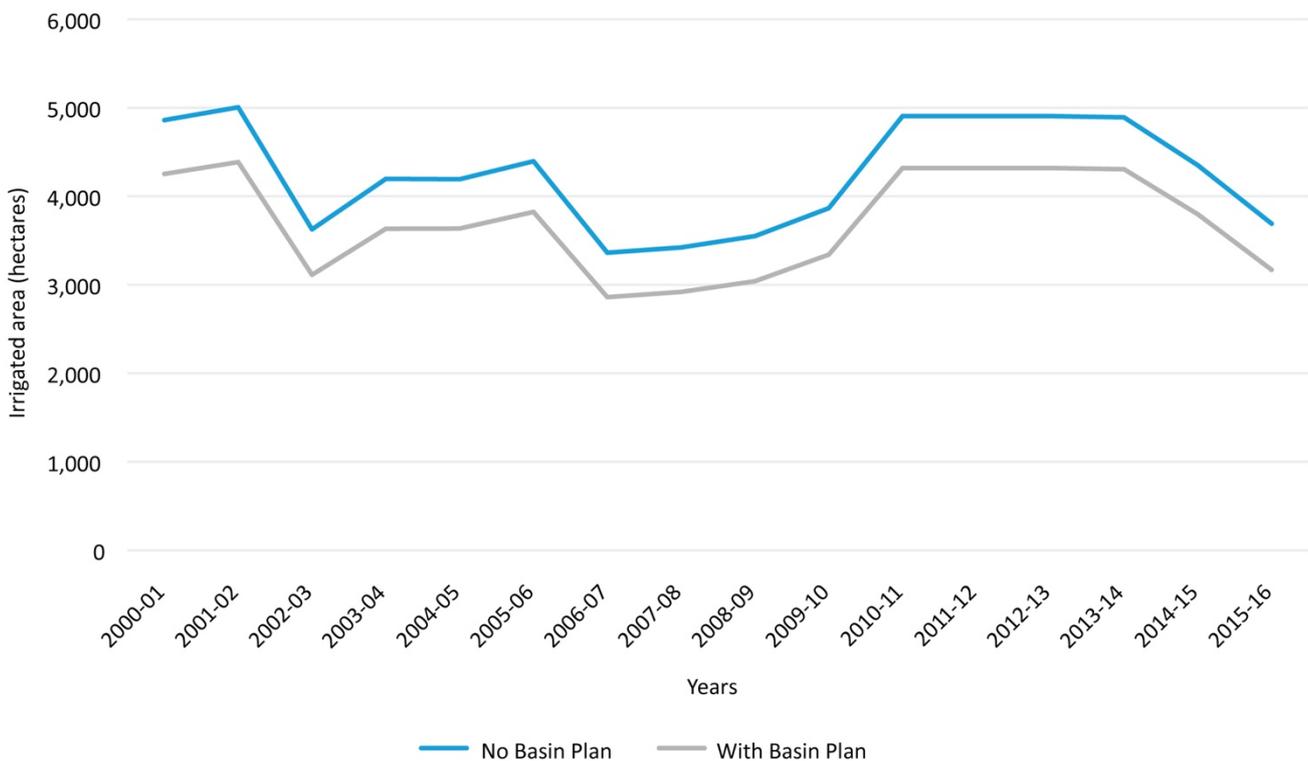
Water recovery was primarily through purchase across 2009 and 2010.

Basin Plan impact on irrigated agriculture

The main irrigated crops grown are grapes and citrus, with some production of vegetables and fruit plus annual cropping in years of high water availability. Basin Plan water recovery has led to the area of irrigated production falling by approximately 12% to 14%. Water recovery has affected the area of irrigation in each of the sectors.

In undertaking the field work to support this analysis, irrigation and dryland farmers raised concerns regarding the potential implications and effectiveness of the Basin Plan. For irrigators, concerns relate to their ability to access sufficient water in recent years to keep their permanent crops alive. Dryland farmers identified a major challenge in being able to access stock and domestic water. While climate has been the key driver of water availability across the period examined, the MDBA Compliance Review and the New South Wales Matthew's Review both emphasize the importance of effective compliance regimes. New South Wales and Commonwealth agencies are seeking to ensure the compliance requirements are met. It is reasonable to expect, in future, additional flows in the Lower Darling will arise as a consequence of the overall Basin Plan outcomes with the potential for these flows to be influenced by the final form of the Menindee Lakes SDL adjustment project.

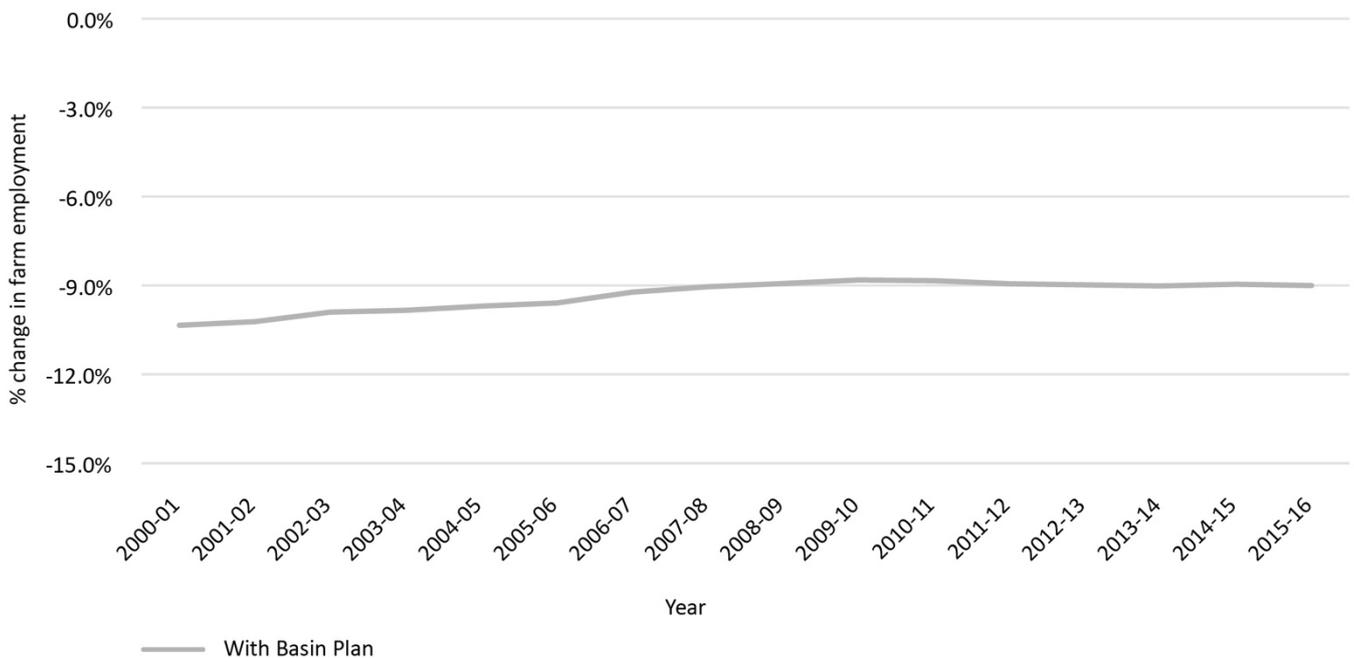
Area of irrigated production (hectares) 2001–16



Basin Plan impact on farm sector

In 2001, farm employment was approximately 200 FTE (including seasonal workers). Farm employment fell by around 57% between 2001–16. Non-Basin Plan factors led to 47% of this change, while Basin Plan water recovery is estimated to have contributed the remaining 10%.

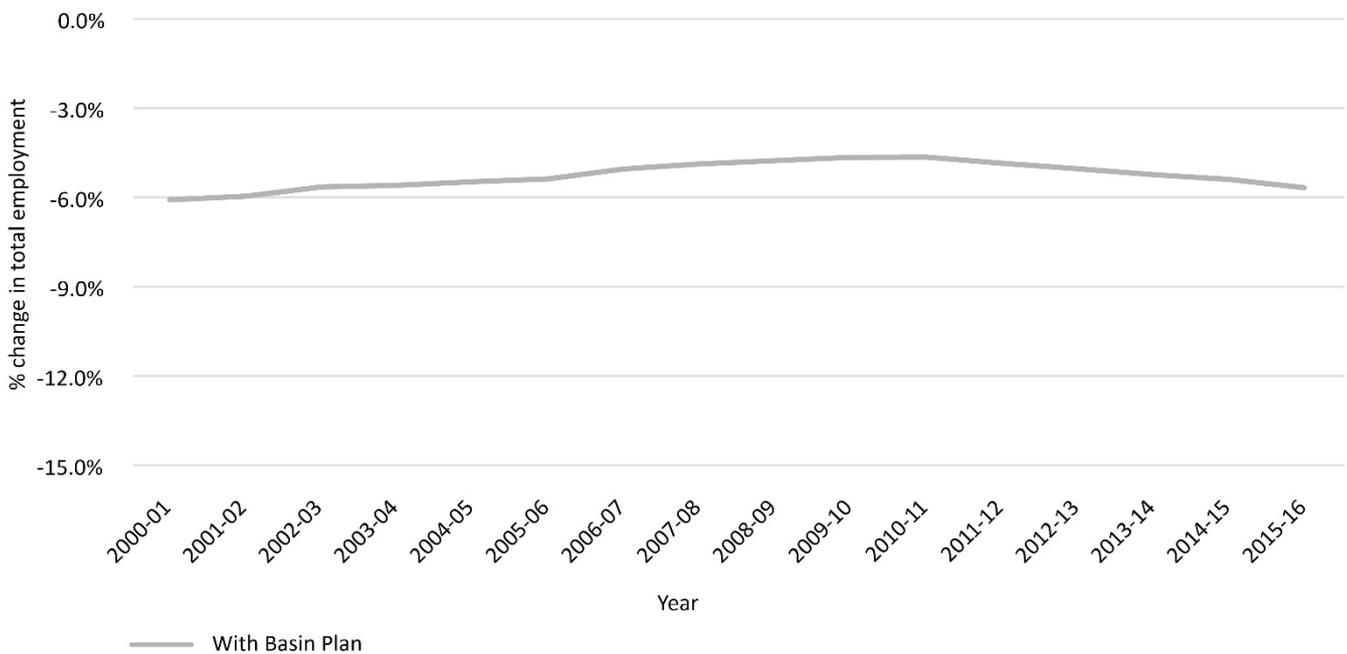
Effect of Basin Plan on farm employment 2001–16



Basin Plan impact on total employment

In 2001, total employment was approximately 640 FTE (including seasonal workers). Total employment fell by around 31% between 2001–16. Non-Basin Plan factors led to 26% of this change, while Basin Plan water recovery is estimated to have contributed the remaining 5%. Given the prevailing social and economic conditions at the time of the water recovery and the trends of social and economic change affecting the community, it is possible the modelling results might under-estimate the effect of Basin Plan water recovery.

Effect of Basin Plan on total employment 2001–16



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