



Namoi Water

Policy Title:	Aquifer Interference
Policy Number:	004
Date Effective:	12.9.12

AQUIFER INTERFERENCE POLICY

1.	Purpose	To outline Namoi Water's position on Aquifer Interference
2.	Scope	Surface Water, Groundwater, Unregulated and Supplementary
3.	Definitions	<p>For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:</p> <p>NW : Namoi Water NSWIC: New South Wales Irrigators Council SPP : State Priority Project NOW : New South Wales Office of Water AI : Aquifer Interference SAL: Strategic Agricultural Land</p>
4.	Policy Guidelines	<p>The Aquifer Interference policy developed by government relates to all land within the catchment. Any development that interacts with more than one aquifer is required to demonstrate that no damage, pollution or other adverse impact will occur.</p> <p>The Aquifer Interference policy applies to extractive industries, irrigation abstraction is highly regulated through the WSP process and via NOW monitoring of the alluvial and surface water hydrology.</p> <p>AI approval must be an application process for extractive industries prior to exploration occurring. The AI policy must stand alone as a separate approval process. NSW Office of Water to consider and determine impact and provide advice to Minister of Department of Primary Industries.</p> <p>The AI policy must apply to all water sources regardless of whether it falls under the SAL criteria.</p> <p>Aquifer Interference policy must apply retrospectively to all existing mining and coal seam gas operations. The risk to the resource of the policy not being retrospective is substantial.</p> <p>All mining and CSG activity must be captured within the legislative framework that allows for the assessment of their impact on water resources.</p> <p>There must be sufficient regulation during the exploration stage, the draft AI policy does not apply to exploration and this is a major flaw that needs to be corrected.</p>

		<p>All returned water must be of a quality equal to or higher than independently assessed benchmark data of the resource being returned into. The use of high flows to dilute pollution of waste water from mines and CSG activities is an easy out. Water must be treated via Reverse Osmosis and must include treatment for all parameters not just EC and salt content.</p> <p>The AI policy must consider the potential impact on draw down, creation of connectivity and impact on surface water similar to WSP planning process.</p> <p>Any minimal harm criteria must include surface water including stringent protection for primary rivers and conditions for stream protection.</p>
5.	References	<p>http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/Water-management/Law-and-policy/Legal-reform/default.aspx</p>
6.	Appendices	NA
7.	Approval	<p>Developed by Jon Baker Approved by : Chairman : Jono Phelps Approved by : Vice Chair: Matt Norrie</p>
8.	Approval Dates	<p>This policy was approved on: 12.9.12 This version takes effect from: 12.9.12 This policy will be reviewed by: 12.8.13</p>
9.	Policy Owner	<p>Namoi Water is the peak industry group for irrigated agriculture in the Peel, Upper Namoi and Lower Namoi Valleys in the North West of NSW.</p> <p>We are a non-profit, non-political organisation supporting our members to achieve a sustainable irrigation industry that meets the environmental, economic and social needs of our local communities.</p> <p>Contact: Jon-Maree Baker PO Box 548 Narrabri NSW 2390</p> <p>Mb: 0488 925222 Ph: 02 67925222 E: eo@namoiwater.com.au W: www.namoiwater.com.au</p>