

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Water auction to provide stimulus for Great Artesian Basin**

Tuesday 26 May 2009

NSW Water Minister Phil Costa today announced 1,200 million litres of water saved through the State and Commonwealth Government's Cap and Pipe the Bores Program would be auctioned in the Great Artesian Basin next month.

Mr Costa said the auction would make additional water available that would allow for existing businesses to expand their operations, delivering an economic boost to far Western NSW.

"The Government's Cap and Pipe the Bores Program has created significant efficiencies in the Great Artesian Basin allowing more water availability for the region," said Mr Costa.

"Water is the life-blood for many industries in Western NSW.

"Making more water available to sectors such as tourism and mining will drive business investment and expansion creating jobs and economic activity," he said.

Mr Costa said a total of 47,000 megalitres is expected to be saved through the Cap and Pipe Bores Program by the end of this year.

"The savings will be split 70/30 between the aquifer and community in accordance with the Great Artesian Basin Groundwater Sources Water Sharing Plan," he said.

"Leaving the majority of water in the Basin's aquifers will be of benefit to the environment and ensure security of supply for existing users

"It also means that over the life of the program an additional 14,100 million litres of water may become available for users over the next five years.

"The auction in July represents 2.5 per cent of the total savings, with more auctions to follow in the future.

"Proceeds from the auctioned water will be rolled back into the Cap and Pipe the Bores Program," he said.

The Minister also said that auctioned water must remain in the Central, Warrego and Surat groundwater sources.

"The auction will not impact water availability in the Murray-Darling Basin as the Great Artesian Basin aquifers are contained systems – meaning there is very little or no connectivity with surface water sources," he added.

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Information regarding the auction of this water, current volume of licenced entitlement and relevant plan provisions relating to the sale is contained in an information brochure available from the Department of Water and Energy.

The auction will be held in Walgett at the Walgett District Sporting Club, corner of Fox and Montkeila Streets, commencing at 11.00am on 21 July 2009.

A copy of the NSW Great Artesian Basin Controlled Allocation of Water Savings – Information for potential buyers 2009 is available from the Department of Water and Energy website – [www.dwe.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dwe.nsw.gov.au)

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