



## Media Statement

12 March 2018

### Desalination supplies more than half of Perth's water

The Economic Regulation Authority's 2016-17 Water, Sewerage and Irrigation Performance report has found that 51.5 per cent of water sourced for Perth came from desalination in 2016-17. This was the first time that desalination accounted for more than half of Perth's water.

Perth's two desalination plants operated at close to maximum capacity, producing a combined total of 149,823 megalitres.

"The increased use of desalination is the result of the Water Corporation's strategy to source more of Perth's water from sources independent of climate," ERA chair Nicky Cusworth said.

"The record wet summer of 2016-17 meant that unused desalinated water could be stored in dams, for use in future years," she said.

Ms Cusworth said the ERA's report confirmed the link between rainfall patterns and water consumption.

"Western Australia's rainfall in the summer of 2016-17 was the highest on record, which reduced demand for water across the state," she said.

"The total volume of water supplied in Perth decreased by 3.1 per cent (8,136 megalitres), and the volume supplied in regional towns decreased by 2.8 per cent (2,840 megalitres)."

"Average household water consumption was also lower. Perth households used 7.1 per cent (17 kilolitres) less water, and regional households used 6.7 per cent (19 kilolitres) less," she said.

Demand for connections to water and sewerage infrastructure remained strong in Perth.

"The report finds that there were 16,000 new connections to water and sewer mains in 2016-17," Ms Cusworth said.

"The number of connections to water and sewer mains in regional towns also increased in the year."

### Agriculture

There was a substantial reduction in demand for irrigation water in 2016-17.

Harvey Water, which supplies irrigation water to growers and dairy farmers in the South West, decreased its supply volumes by 18.7 per cent.

The volume of water supplied by Ord Irrigation Cooperative to growers in the State's far north decreased by 13 per cent.

The report and supporting infographics are available on the ERA [website](#).

## **ENDS**

### **Background**

- Desalination is potable and non-potable water sourced from marine desalination plants.
- The Water Corporation supplies all but two of the eight water supply schemes in Western Australia. Aqwest-Bunbury Water Corporation supplies the City of Bunbury, and Busselton Water Corporation supplies the City of Busselton.

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