October 2026

Water Baron Policy:

When Customers Hold BIL Water But No Longer Have Their Own Primary Production

This Policy applies to all existing BIL customers.

Background

A 'water baron' is a BIL customer that has a Customer Contract but no direct use for the water and instead could or would trade the water with other customers for financial gain and / or hold the water in anticipation of an increase in its value.

At the scheme's inception, applicants were limited to a particular volume per hectare of vineyard to ensure water was not hoarded and then used to profit from other growers.

While the volume limits are no longer enforced, the Board confirms that the principle remains valid today: BIL water is primarily for productive use by the customer.

Policy

BIL will not allow customers acting as water barons to remain a customer.

An existing BIL customer can seek Board approval to retain ownership of BIL water entitlements if they no longer have their own primary production provided the Board is convinced the Customer will not seek to profit from this.

The Board has absolute discretion.

The Board may consider, but is not limited to, the following:

- The volume intended to be retained
- The reason for retaining these volumes
- The timeframe for retaining the water
- The intention while retaining the water

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