



ANNUAL REPORT

2010-2011

DRINKING WATER SUPPLY



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1. Introduction

This report is the 2010 – 2011 Annual Report for the Provision of Drinking Water by the Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board (ARMB). It has been prepared in accordance with Section 26 (1) and Section 26 (2) of the Safe Drinking Water Act 2003; Regulation 15 of the Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2005, and the 2010 - 2011 Department of Health annual report format Drinking Water Regulation Guidance Note No.12 June 2011.

The aim of the report is to provide information on the issues relating to the quality of drinking water and regulated water that are specified by the Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2005. The report is provided to the secretary of the Department of Health and is made available to the public via the ARMB website www.mtbuller.com.au.

Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resorts

The ARMB is a State Government Agency established in accordance with the Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1998 and is responsible for the management of the Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resorts. The ARMB is responsible for providing a wide range of services to the resorts including drinking water treatment. Prior to 2003, there was no formal recognition of the ARMB as a water authority. The Safe Drinking Water Act 2003 recognised the role of the ARMB as a drinking water provider and defined the ARMB as a water supplier.

The Mount Buller Alpine Resort is a well developed Alpine Resort located approximately 220km from Melbourne and centred on Mount Buller. Within the resort is the Mount Buller Alpine Village, positioned at 1,500m elevation (snow line is 1,200m) and with a bed capacity of approx 8000. During the snow season (Queen's Birthday long weekend to the first weekend in October), there is a base population within the village of approximately 1,600. These people are generally resort workers and are considered as semi-permanent residents. The remaining bed spaces are occupied by transient visitors or are owned by non-residents who generally visit the resort during holiday periods or on weekends. Average visitation to the resort during the snow season is in the order of 500,000 visitor days¹. Peak visitation during the snow season occurs during school holidays and on weekends. The maximum number of people within the resort during any one day is in the order of 17,000 people.

In contrast, the non-snow season population of Mount Buller is very low. There are approximately 100 - 150 people who live in the Village during summer, these are made up of ARMB and lift company staff, builders and construction workers and a small base of truly permanent residents (approximately 30). There are a number of activities held during the summer months that attract visitors. Generally there are approximately 200,000 visitor days during the non-snow season.

Mount Stirling Alpine Resort has a common boundary (the Delatite River) with the Mount Buller Alpine Resort and is located to the northeast of the Mount Buller Alpine Resort. The resorts share Mirimbah as a common entrance point. In contrast to the Mount Buller Alpine Resort, the Mount Stirling Alpine Resort is a nature based resort and has no permanent population or accommodation. Development on Mount Stirling consists of a small office space for ARMB staff, a cross country ski outlet, a small food premises, a small shed,

1. A visitor day is the number of days a visitor stays within the resort. One visitor staying two days is two visitor days.

several shelters / toilet blocks, two of which are privately owned but are accessible and used by the public. Visitation to Mount Stirling Alpine Resort is generally by people seeking a nature based experience. During the snow season, visitors cross country ski and/or snow camp. Organised visits by school groups are common. Visitation is in the order of 7,000 visitor days during the snow season. During the non-snow season, particularly during the December to February period, there are a significant number of visitors who pass through the Mount Stirling Alpine Resort in four wheel drive vehicles to access the nearby attractions, 'Craig's Hut', neighbouring state forests or the Alpine National Park. Camping within the resort is common. Traffic counts of vehicles entering the resort indicate that approximately 13,000 vehicles enter the resort during the non-snow season.

The ARMB provides drinking water at 4 separate locations. They are as follows:

1. The Mount Buller Village Low Level System;
2. The Mount Buller Village High Level System;
3. The Mirimbah picnic area, traffic control and store and
4. The Mount Stirling Ski Patrol and store known as Telephone Box Junction (TBJ).

1.1 Characterisation of the Systems

a) Mount Buller High and Low Level Systems

Water for the Mt Buller Alpine Village reticulation system is drawn from up to 3 sources, Boggy Creek, the 'Head waters' and the 'Catchment Weirs'. The ARMB has a licence to draw up to 700ML of water per year, the source of the water is determined by the time of year. During winter months when the demand is greatest all sources are available for use.

Boggy Creek. The Boggy Creek catchment is the northeast aspect of Mt Buller and is bounded by two spur lines running north (McLaughlan Shoulder and Burnt Hut Spur). The catchment is above 1,250m elevation and is mainly covered in snow during the snow season. During the snow season, the water sourced from the catchment is either snowmelt, or groundwater. During summer the majority of water is ground water.



Figure 1 - Boggy Creek Catchment

Figure 1 gives a good indication of the nature of the catchment from which the Mount Buller Alpine Village drinking water is sourced. The topography is steep and vegetated. The catchment lies in montane, sub alpine and alpine areas. There are few weeds or other exotic flora. Fauna consists of deer, wombat, wallabies and a range of bird life. The catchment is relatively inaccessible and is an area where vehicle access is controlled. There are several walking paths through the catchment, and camping is not permitted.

Headwaters. The Headwaters are sourced from a side hill trench across the northeast aspect of Mount Buller. The trench is approximately 60m long and at an elevation of approximately 1,780m. The trench collects water that has originated from alpine bogs.

Catchment Weirs. There are a number of small gullies within the vicinity of the catchment. These have small weirs across them and water is taken off to the reticulation system.

The Headwaters provide raw water at a higher elevation than Boggy Creek and are used when appropriate to minimise pumping costs. The capacity of the headwaters is significantly less than Boggy Creek. If there is sufficient capacity and raw water quality (primarily turbidity) is appropriate, the Headwaters are used preferentially to Boggy Creek.

b) Mirimbah

The water supply for Mirimbah comes from Buller Creek approximately 300m from the junction with the Delatite River, at an elevation approximately 620m (below the snow line). Buller Creek is perennial and considered reliable.

c) Mount Stirling

The water supply for Mount Stirling comes from Baldy Creek adjacent to the TBJ building. The Creek is perennial and considered reliable.

Water Sampling Locality	Source of Water	Storage	Treatment Plant	Added Substances	Population Supplied
Mount Buller Low Level System	Boggy Creek	Burnt Hut Res Concrete Lined Open Storage (4ML)	UV and Hypochlorite	Chlorine	Seasonal (100 – 5000)
Mount Buller High Level System	Boggy Creek via Burnt Hut Res	Baldy Covered Concrete Tank (1ML)	UV and Hypochlorite	Chlorine	Seasonal (50 – 3000)
Mirimbah	Buller Creek	22,750L Plastic Tank	Hypochlorite and Cartridge Filter	Chlorine	No permanent population. <5 Seasonal Staff
Mount Stirling	Baldy Creek	5000L Plastic Tank	Hypochlorite and Cartridge Filter	Chlorine	No permanent population or accommodation.

Table 1.1 Source Waters

1.1.2 The Reticulation Systems

a) Mount Buller High and Low Level Systems

The key factor that has influenced the development of the Mount Buller Alpine Village drinking water reticulation system is the elevation variation (approximately 100m) within the Mount Buller Alpine Village. This change in elevation means that the reticulation within the village must be divided into two, and fed from reservoirs at different levels in order to keep the maximum water pressure within the reticulation below 1,000KPa.

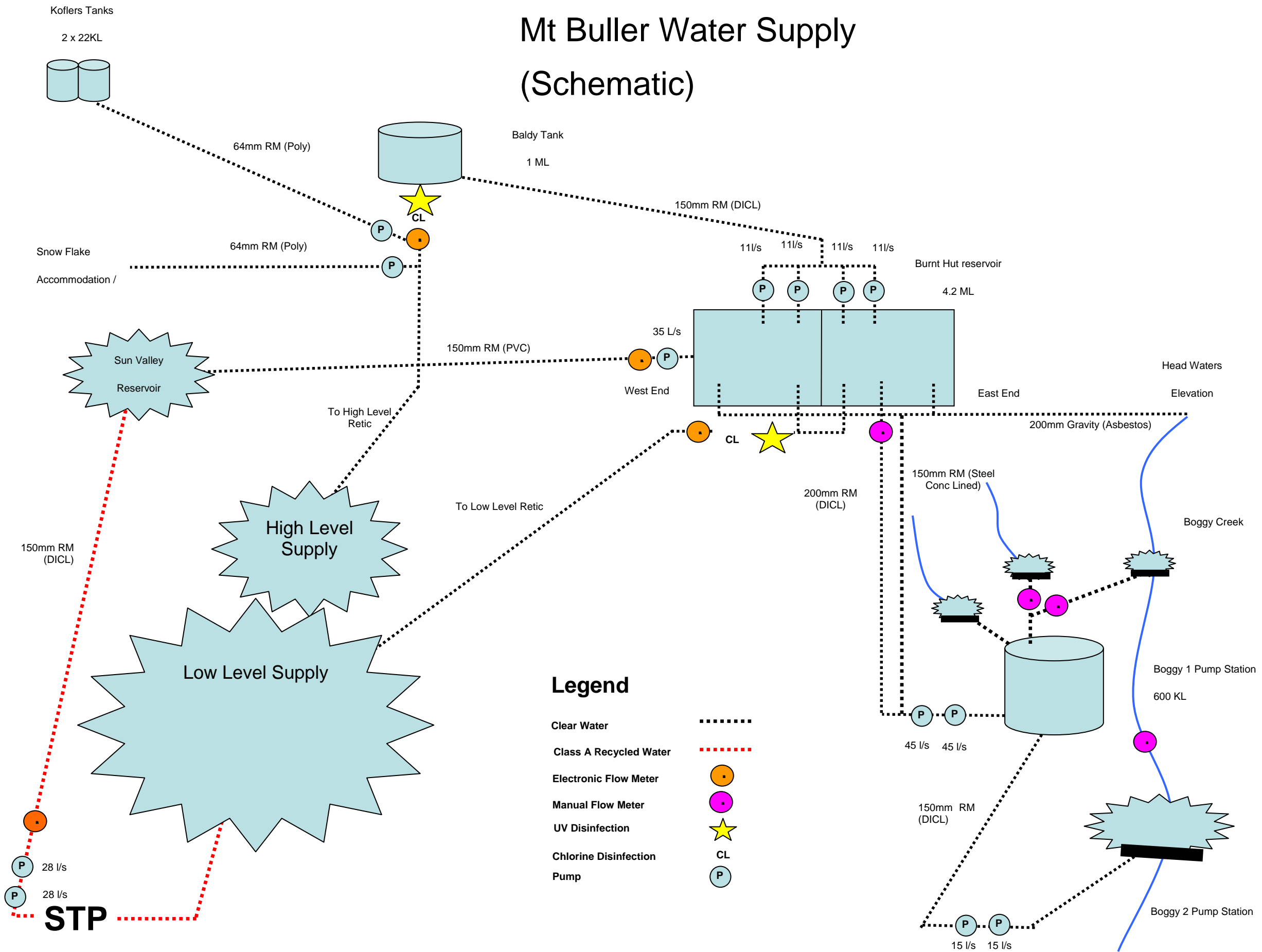
Raw water is drawn from a weir on Boggy Creek and pumped (Boggy 2 pump station) to an open 600KL holding tank. Raw water from the Catchment Weirs is gravity fed into the same tank. The raw water is then pumped (Boggy 1 pump) into the 4.2ML trapezoidal section open reservoir known as 'Burnt Hut Spur' reservoir. Water from the Headwork's is also gravity fed into the Burnt Hut Spur reservoir. This reservoir serves the low level reticulation within the Mount Buller Alpine Village. Water is drawn from the reservoir, irradiated with UV radiation and dosed with hypochlorite before being reticulated throughout the lower two thirds of the village.

Water is pumped from Burnt Hut Spur reservoir to an underground 1ML concrete tank reservoir known as 'Baldy reservoir'. Water from this reservoir is irradiated with UV radiation and dosed with hypochlorite, distributed (gravity fed) to the upper third of the Mount Buller Alpine Village, to Buller Ski Lifts Ltd (BSL) work shop facilities, to a public toilet located near the Sun Valley snow making dam and to 'Koffler's Hutte', a food

premise located in the ski field. The workshops are served by a rising main while Koffler's Hutte is served through a rising main to two storage tanks then gravity fed to the Hutte. The two storage tanks are half of a cluster of four tanks.

The ARMB provides non-drinking water to BSL for use as feedstock water for snow making. This water is pumped from Burnt Hut Spur reservoir to the Sun Valley snow making dam through a rising main. This water is not for drinking and is not treated. Sun Valley dam has no public access and is sign posted as unfit for drinking.

Mt Buller Water Supply (Schematic)



Legend

- Clear Water
- Class A Recycled Water
- Electronic Flow Meter
- Manual Flow Meter
- ★ UV Disinfection
- CL Chlorine Disinfection
- P Pump

b) Mirimbah

The ARMB reticulates water sourced from Buller Creek near Mirimbah Park to a toilet block located within the park, the Traffic Control (ticket office) building, a small chain hire/service station and to an accommodation building used by Mount Stirling Ski Patrol staff.

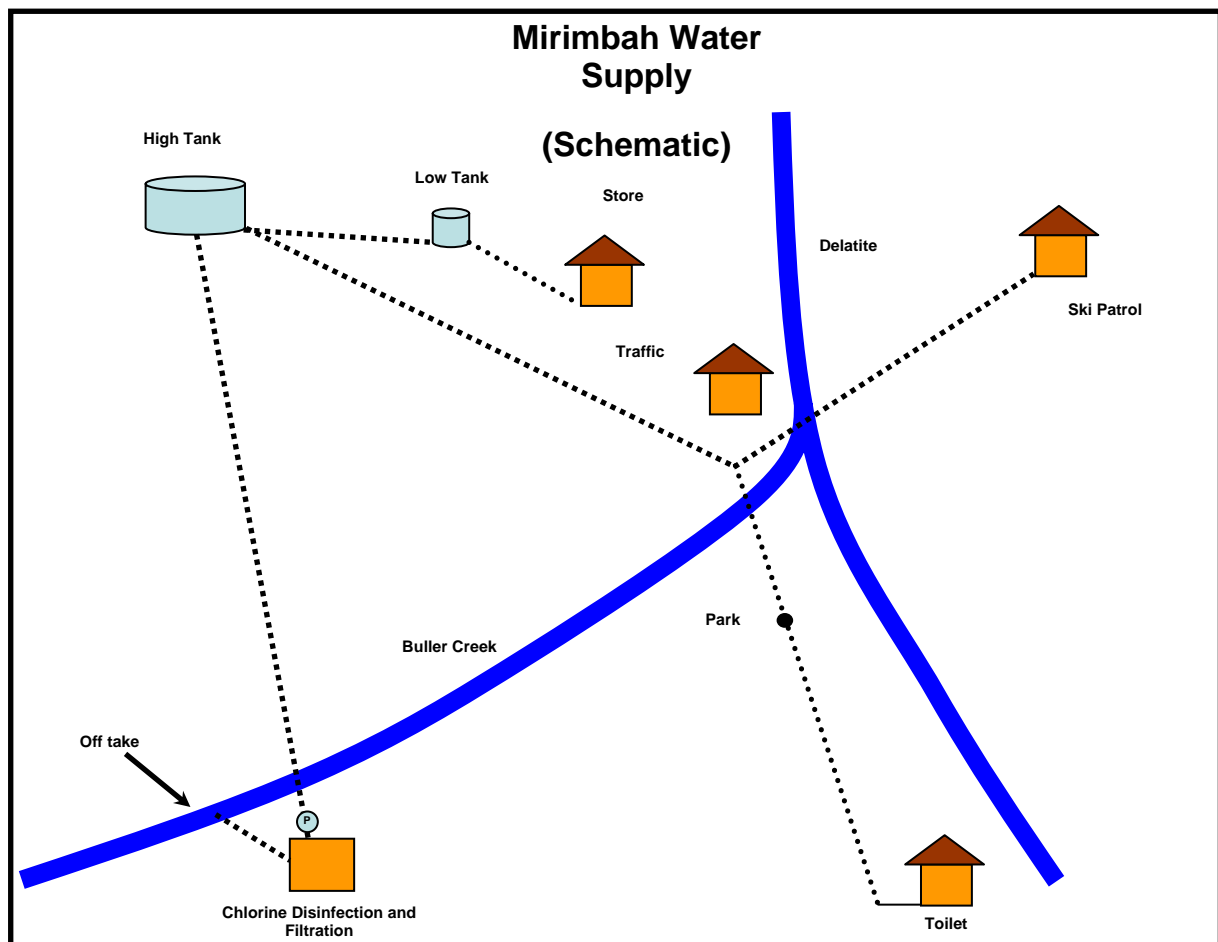
Water is collected from the river in a small pool and pumped into a shed for treatment. The collection point is adjacent to the parking area for staff vehicles and the picnic area.

The treatment is performed using a system consisting of the following:

- 56L per minute capacity water pump;
- 0.5L per hour hypochlorite dosing pump and
- Filter;

After dosing, the water is pumped to a 22,750L elevated holding tank (approximately 60m higher than the Creek). Water is then gravity fed to the ski patrol accommodation (under the old bridge over the Delatite River), the ARMB traffic control building, public toilet block and a second 10,000L tank approximately 25m lower.

The second tank provides water to the chain hire / service station.

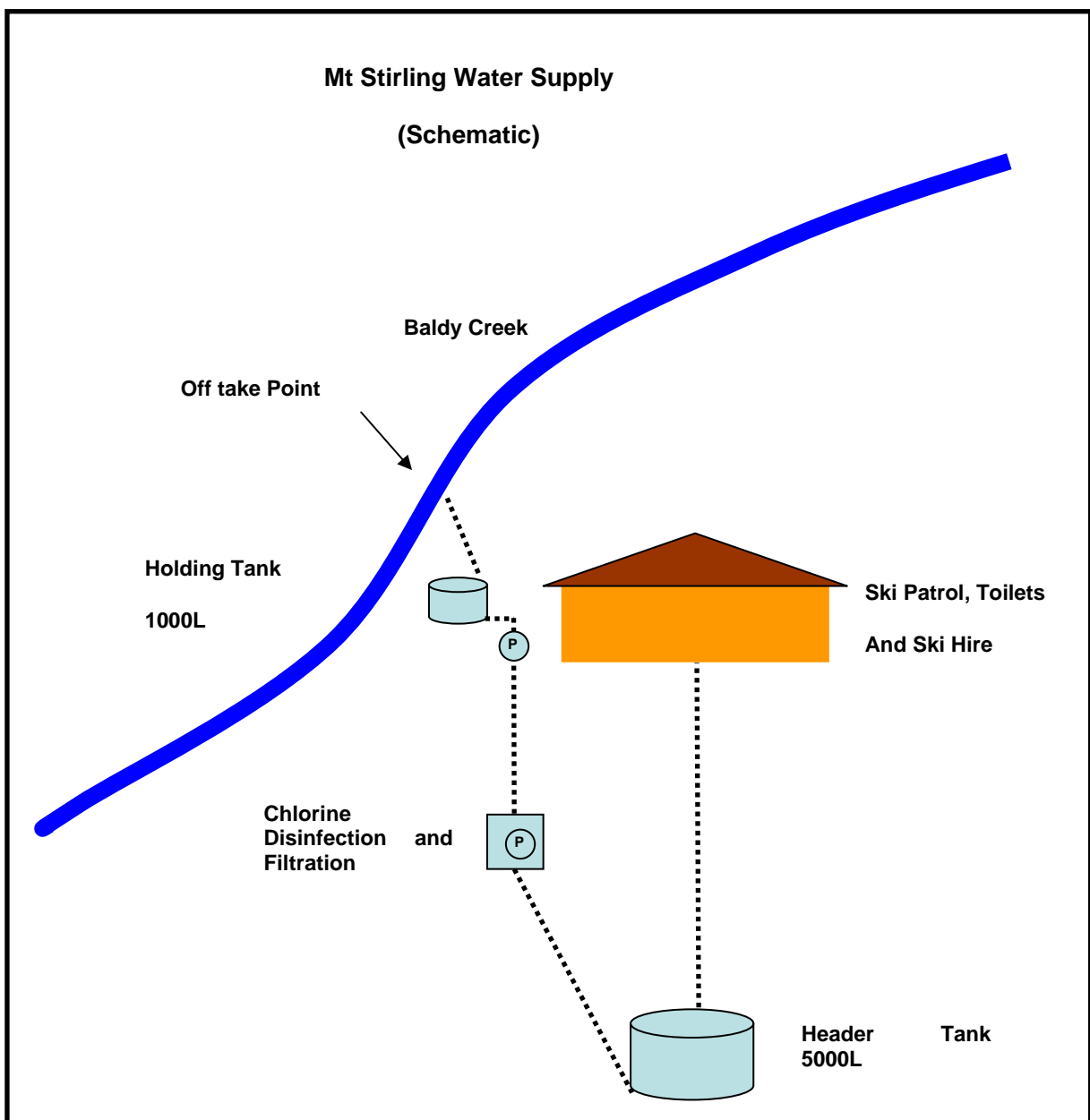


c) Mount Stirling

The ARMB reticulates water to a toilet block, small ski hire and bistro and the ARMB ski patrol base.

Water from the creek is pumped into a small 1000L tank. The water is then pumped through a filter and dosed with hypochlorite before being pumped to a 5000L header tank. The water is then gravity fed through the small reticulation system. The dosing is performed using a skid mounted package consisting of the following:

- 56L per minute capacity water pump;
- 0.5L per hour dosing pump;
- 200 micron mesh bag filter and
- Filter.



2. Water Treatment and Quality Management Systems

Water Sampling Location	Treatment Process	Added substance(s)
Mount Buller Low Level System	UV and Chlorine	Chlorine
Mount Buller High Level System	UV and Chlorine	Chlorine
Mirimbah	Filtration and Chlorine	Chlorine
Mount Stirling	Filtration and Chlorine	Chlorine

Table 2.1 Water Treatment

a) Mount Buller

The Mount Buller Alpine Village drinking water supply is disinfected using UV Irradiation at two sites, Burnt Hut Spur reservoir and Baldy tank. The UV systems are manufactured by Wedeco and are in line pressure systems. Each system has back up UV lamps in the reactor chamber, and a control system to manage the changeover to the back up lamp, if the intensity of the first lamp falls below a nominated break point. Both systems are dosed with Chlorine using a flow based system with residual trim. Both systems were installed and are maintained by C-Tech Services. The chlorine residual is monitored daily via a telemetry based system.

The power supply on Mount Buller is provided by a line main. The line is above ground until the boundary of the resort, and then is duplicated with a set of aerial lines, and below ground lines. The supply is susceptible to interruption caused by falling trees and similar environmental factors. Within the resort there are several large users of power, particularly the snow making system. Start up of the snow making system results in significant voltage drops. Each of the UV systems is fitted with a power conditioner designed to remove voltage spikes and drops, and a backup power supply (diesel generators).

Management

The ARMB operates a cyclic maintenance program for the reservoirs and reticulation. Every second summer, the reservoirs are emptied and silts removed. At least twice a year the reticulation is flushed to remove film build-ups. The UV lamps are replaced every 8000 hours and the units fully serviced every two years. The Chlorine dosing systems are serviced annually.

Aesthetic Characteristics

The raw water used for Mount Buller drinking supply is of a high standard and is monitored as an adjunct to the mandated weekly monitoring program. Retention in the Burnt Hut Spur and Baldy tank provides an opportunity for suspended solids to settle out of the water before use.

Testing to date has identified that the water does not require treatment to meet the aesthetic standards. An online turbidity meter and logger monitors turbidity levels. So far turbidity levels have remained low.

Issues

There are currently no issues associated with the Mount Buller High and Low Level Systems.

b) Mirimbah

The Mirimbah water supply system is dosed with chlorine by using a 0.5L per hour pump into the pumping line between the creek and the storage tank.

Management

The ARMB operates a cyclic maintenance program where the storage tanks are emptied and cleaned to remove any built up silt. The off take point from the creek is inspected weekly in summer and every second day in winter and cleaned when needed. The systems reticulated pipes are also flushed yearly.

Aesthetic Characteristics

The raw water used for the Mirimbah drinking supply is of a high standard and is monitored as an adjunct to the mandated weekly monitoring program.

Issues

There are currently no issues associated with the Mirimbah Water Supply System

c) Mount Stirling

The TBJ water supply system is dosed with chlorine by using a 0.5L per hour pump into the pumping line between the creek and the storage tank.

Management

The ARMB operates a cyclic maintenance program where the storage tanks are emptied and cleaned to remove any built up silt. The off take point from the creek is inspected weekly and cleaned when needed. The systems reticulated pipes are also flushed yearly.

Aesthetic Characteristics

The raw water used for the TBJ drinking supply is monitored as an adjunct to the mandated weekly monitoring program.

Issues

There are currently no issues associated with the Mount Stirling Water Supply System.

3. Quality of Drinking Water 2010/11

Testing Process

The contracted testing laboratory for water samples is ALS Water Resources Group. Briefly the sampling process is as follows:

- Water is sampled on Tuesdays and placed in an insulated container with a freezer block. All taps and samples points are heated with a blow torch to prevent any contamination or to kill any pathogens.
- Samples couriered to the laboratory within 24 hours.
- Water tested. *E. Coli*, 37 deg plate and coliform counts reported by fax to the ARMB as soon as possible.
- Turbidity, coliform and 37 deg plate counts reported when known.
- Results confirmed by follow up email and letter.

a) Mount Buller

As described in 'Characterisation of the System', the reticulation system within the Mount Buller Alpine Village is divided into two (known as the 'High Level reticulation' and the 'Low Level reticulation') in order to take into account the difference in elevation across the village. The snow fall within the village makes it impractical to sample from dedicated sample points located directly on the reticulation. Consequently, the sample points are all located in buildings. During the reporting period, the ARMB sampled from four sample points per reticulation level. Lodge and building closure during the non-snow season months means that not all sample points are available year round.

b) Mirimbah

The process for collection of water samples and delivery for testing is the same as that of Mount Buller Low and High Level reticulation systems. Water samples during the reporting period were taken from three differing locations throughout the Mirimbah area.

c) Mount Stirling

The process for collection of water samples and delivery for testing is the same as that of Mount Buller Low and High Level reticulation systems. Water samples during the reporting period were taken from the tap within the Ski Patrol base at Telephone Box Junction.

3.1 Escherichia Coli

3.1.1 Results

Water Sampling Locality	Sampling Frequency	No. of Samples	No. of samples containing E.coli	Maximum Results (orgs/100ml)	% Samples with no E.coli*	Complying (Yes / No)
Mount Buller Low Level System	Weekly	51	0	0	100.0%	Yes
Mount Buller High Level System	Weekly	51	0	0	100.0%	Yes
Mirimbah	Weekly	51	1	3	98.0%	Yes
Mount Stirling	Weekly	51	1	1	98.0%	Yes

Table 3.1 Summary of E. Coli testing

* 97.5% and above is compliant. 97.4% and below is non compliant.

202 out of the 204 samples taken by the Resorts complied with the Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2005.

During the preparations of this Annual Report for 2010 – 2011 it was discovered that a change of seasonal sampling procedures (i.e summer to winter rostered collection days) caused one week of samples to be missed. The result of this human error means the total number of samples for each location is 51.

3.1.2 Actions in relation to non-compliance

A non compliant E.coli reading was recorded at Mt Stirling on March 22 2011. The cause of the non compliance was believed to be due to the chlorine dosing system running out of chlorine. The chlorine was topped up and the system flushed. A further sample was taken and found to be compliant. The Standard Operating Procedure's (SPO) have been reviewed and changed requiring the chlorine storage drum be maintained at a higher volume.

A second non compliant E.coli reading was recorded at Mirimbah on June 28 2011. The cause of the non compliance was at first thought to be due to a worn chlorine dosing line caused by pulsating of the dosing pump. Further investigations have found that the hole in the dosing line was caused by rodents. Other rubber components in the shed were also found to be damaged. A baiting program has since been implemented to attempt to prevent the issue reoccurring.

A section 22 notification was submitted to the Department of Health in relation to each of the non compliances.

3.2 Chlorine Based Disinfection By-product Chemicals

3.2.1 Chlorine was dosed into all four systems. Testing for chlorine based by products was carried out as required by the Safe Drinking Water Regulations Results

Water Sampling Locality	Sampling Frequency	No. of Samples	No. of Non-complying samples	Max mg/L	Complying (Yes / No)
Mount Buller Low Level System	Monthly	12	0	0.02	Yes
Mount Buller High Level System	Monthly	12	0	0.042	Yes
Mirimbah	Monthly	12	0	0.037	Yes
Mount Stirling	Monthly	11*	0	0.049	Yes

Table 3.2.1 Chlorine based disinfection by-product chemicals – dichloroacetic acid

Water Sampling Locality	Sampling Frequency	No. of Samples	No. of Non-complying samples	Max mg/L	Complying (Yes / No)
Mount Buller Low Level System	Monthly	12	0	<0.005	Yes
Mount Buller High Level System	Monthly	12	0	<0.005	Yes
Mirimbah	Monthly	12	0	<0.005	Yes
Mount Stirling	Monthly	11*	0	<0.005	Yes

Table 3.2.2 Chlorine based disinfection by-product chemicals – chloroacetic acid

Water Sampling Locality	Sampling Frequency	No. of Samples	No. of Non-complying samples	Max mg/L	Complying (Yes / No)
Mount Buller Low Level System	Monthly	12	0	0.033	Yes
Mount Buller High Level System	Monthly	12	0	0.026	Yes
Mirimbah	Monthly	12	0	0.067	Yes
Mount Stirling	Monthly	11*	0	0.074	Yes

Table 3.2.3 Chlorine based disinfection by-product chemicals – trichloroacetic acid

Water Sampling Locality	Sampling Frequency	No. of Samples	No. of Non-complying samples	Max mg/L	Complying (Yes / No)
Mount Buller Low Level System	Monthly	12	0	0.11	Yes
Mount Buller High Level System	Monthly	12	0	0.09	Yes
Mirimbah	Monthly	12	0	0.052	Yes
Mount Stirling	Monthly	12	0	0.074	Yes

Table 3.2.4 Chlorine based disinfection by-product chemicals – trihalomethanes

*The Chlorine based disinfection by-product chemicals - dichloroacetic acid, chloroacetic acid, and trichloroacetic acid samples for July 2010 was missing from the Mt Stirling results which caused the ARMB to undertake a series of investigations. The contracted testing laboratory informed the ARMB that the samples had been misplaced. Improved measures to ensure timely information is received, and a more thorough checking process and communication stream is to be put in place to prevent a reoccurrence in the future. Department of Health was notified of this occurrence.

3.2.2 Actions in Relation to Non-compliance

During the reporting period all samples taken from the Mount Buller and Mount Stirling

reticulation systems were found to be compliant.

3.3 Ozone Based Chemicals

Ozone was not used during the reporting period to disinfect water within any of the supplies thus, ozone disinfection by-products are not monitored.

3.4 Aluminium

Aluminium based compounds ('Alum') were not used as part of the treatment process within any of the supplies and thus is not monitored.

3.5 Turbidity

3.5.1 Results

Water Sampling Locality	Sampling Frequency	No. of Samples	Max NTU	95% UCL of mean*	Complying (Yes / No)
Mount Buller Low Level System	Weekly	51	1.7	0.722	Yes
Mount Buller High Level System	Weekly	51	1.3	0.571	Yes
Mirimbah	Weekly	51	6.8	1.138	Yes
Mount Stirling	Weekly	51	1.3	0.64	Yes

Table 3.5 Turbidity Results

* 95% UCL results of 5.0 NTU and greater are non compliant, 95% UCL results of 5.0 and less are compliant.

All turbidity results complied with the Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2005.

During the preparations of this Annual Report for 2010 – 2011 it was discovered that a change of seasonal sampling procedures (i.e summer to winter rostered collection days) caused one week of samples to be missed. The result of this human error means the total number of samples for each location is 51.

3.6 Fluoride

Fluoride is not dosed into any of the supplies.

3.7 Other Algae, Pathogen, Chemical, Radiological or Substance Not Specified Above That May Pose a Risk to Human Health

3.7.1 Results

No testing for other substances was carried out during the reporting period. The raw water for Mount Buller, Mirimbah and Mount Stirling is sourced from a mainly isolated region. It is considered to be very unlikely that any of the systems would be subject to contamination from chemical due to industrial fall out or farming practices. This was verified via a risk assessment that was carried out on the system.

3.8 Aesthetics

Subsequent to previous years, there were some taste issues in the Mt Buller High Level reticulation. This is believed to be because of high pH levels caused by water sitting in concrete storage tanks and pipes for long period of time during low usage.

To alleviate this we have worked on systems to lower storage volumes and thus turn over more water during low usage periods.

We continue to monitor pH weekly and times of storage turn over.

3.9 Analysis of Results

3.9.1 Escherichia Coli (% of samples with no e.coli)

Year	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11
Mount Buller Low Level	98.1	100	100	100	100
Mount Buller High Level	96.2	98.1	100	100	100
Mirimbah	97.8	98.1	98.1	98.1	98.1
Mount Stirling	100	100	100	100	98.1

Table 3.9.1 - 5 Year Escherichia Coli Results

Table 3.9.1 shows an upward trend in the percentage of results with no e.coli readings. Only 1 site (Mount Stirling) during the recording period had a result worst than its 5 year best.

3.9.2 Turbidity (95% UCL of mean)

Year	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11
Mount Buller Low Level	1.42	0.99	1.19	0.90	0.72
Mount Buller High Level	1.38	0.87	0.67	0.55	0.57
Mirimbah	2.28	1.15	1.46	2.19	1.14
Mount Stirling	1.77	0.97	0.50	0.62	0.64

Table 3.9.2 - 5 Year Turbidity Results

Table 3.8.2 shows an upward trend in the turbidity results for the four sampling areas. Two of the sampling areas had their best result in the past 5 years during the reporting period.

4 Emergency / Incident Management

The ARMB has developed and implemented an emergency callout procedure. The procedure includes actions to be taken in case of interruption of supply, contamination or suspected contamination of the drinking water, and receipt of reports of poor quality water. In addition, the Resort Emergency Management Plan includes a risk assessment for either contamination or suspected contamination of water, and/or malicious sabotage of the water supply. The Department of Health were notified of any E.coli readings during the reporting period. Details of this can be found in section 3.1.2 of this report.

5 Complaints Relation to Water Quality Issues

During the reporting period there were no complaints received regarding any facet of the water supply or quality.

6 Findings of the Most Recent Risk Management Plan Audit

There were no audits undertaken during the reporting period. The next audit is due in early 2012.

7 Undertakings Under Section 30 of The Act

No undertakings have been committed to during the reporting period.

8 Water Quality Improvements

The ARMB continues to monitor and strive to improve water quality in the four distribution zones. Improvements include;

- Increased flushing;
- Increased sampling for free and total chlorine, pH and turbidity;
- Increased frequency of storage cleaning;
- Improvements in telemetry systems and
- Increased staff knowledge relating to water disinfection.

9 Further Information

Section 23 of the Safe Drinking Water Act 2003 requires that the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board make available for inspection by the public the results of any water quality monitoring program that is conducted on any drinking water supplied by us. Customers and members of the public may access drinking water quality data by contacting the Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board on the details provided below:

Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board

**Level 5
Mount Buller Community Centre
Mount Buller VIC 3723
Ph: (03) 5777 6077**