Other initiatives

• The Department of Water plays an important role in encouraging landholders and rural communities to invest in water supply planning, and to link this to an ongoing review and improvement process based around sustainable industry development.

• The commercial interests of farmers are safeguarded at times of very dry seasonal conditions which cause them to travel unreasonable distances outside the farm gate to cart water for livestock. A water deficiency declaration process available under the Rural Water Plan provides for emergency livestock water to be hauled to central community locations.

The Rural Water Advisory Committee

The Rural Water Advisory Committee advises the Minister for Water Resources and the Department of Water on water supply issues relating to the dryland agricultural zones (identified opposite) and the pastoral regions of the State. The Rural Water Advisory Committee represents landholders and rural communities on issues relating to rural water supplies at the local level, and when appropriate, brings matters to the attention of the Minister.

Members of the community should contact their zone representative (listed below) to discuss any matters of concern or interest relating to community or on-farm water supplies. The activities of the committee are principally concerned with the State’s Agricultural Region, however, input from pastoralists and representative groups is sought when specific issues come before the committee.
The Department of Water, through the Rural Water Plan, aims to provide reliable and good quality farmland water supplies to dryland parts of rural Western Australia. The Department helps safeguard farming businesses against extended periods of low rainfall and improve the quality of life for landholders, their families and local communities. The Rural Water Plan incorporates several water supply initiatives to improve on-farm and community water supplies. The implementation of these initiatives is the responsibility of the Department of Water, delivered through the Rural Water Planning Program.

**Farm Water Grants Scheme**

The scheme encourages farmers to invest in the planning and installation of improved water supplies for domestic, livestock and crop spraying requirements to overcome serious on-farm water deficiencies.

The Farm Water Grants Scheme at a glance
- Since 1995, more than 2800 farm water grants with a combined value of $23.3 million have been awarded to broadacre farmers.
- The maximum grant is $15,000.
- Farmers can claim 50% of expenditure on approved water supply improvement work up to the maximum grant approved.
- Minimum grant available is $1,000.
- Support is available to help farmers determine the best water improvement options for their property.

**Pastoral Water Grants Scheme**

This scheme encourages commercial pastoralists to develop alternative watering points, which will reduce grazing intensity around existing water supplies, and to enhance homestead water supplies.

The Pastoral Water Grants Scheme at a glance
- Since 1999, 75 pastoral water grants with a combined value of $750,000 have been approved.
- The maximum grant is $15,000.
- Pastoralists can claim 50% of expenditure on approved water supply improvement work up to the maximum grant approved.

**Community Water Supply Program**

The program aims to improve the lifestyle of rural communities by providing financial assistance to support the development of reliable off-farm water supplies. The program operates in parts of the State that receive less than 600mm average annual rainfall. It encourages rural local governments and farming communities to plan and install community water supplies where there are limited options for on-farm improvements. The type of projects funded under the program include pipeline services and stand-alone community water supply projects.

Community Water Supply Program at a glance
- The Government has approved almost $27 million in grants since 1995.
- Seventy-four pipeline and non-pipeline projects approved.
- Rural communities have committed $11.2 million.

Livestock can suffer from water shortages.

Solar pump installation on a pastoral station.

Farmers laying Goodlands tank pipeline.