

# *Australian Water Information Advisory Council*

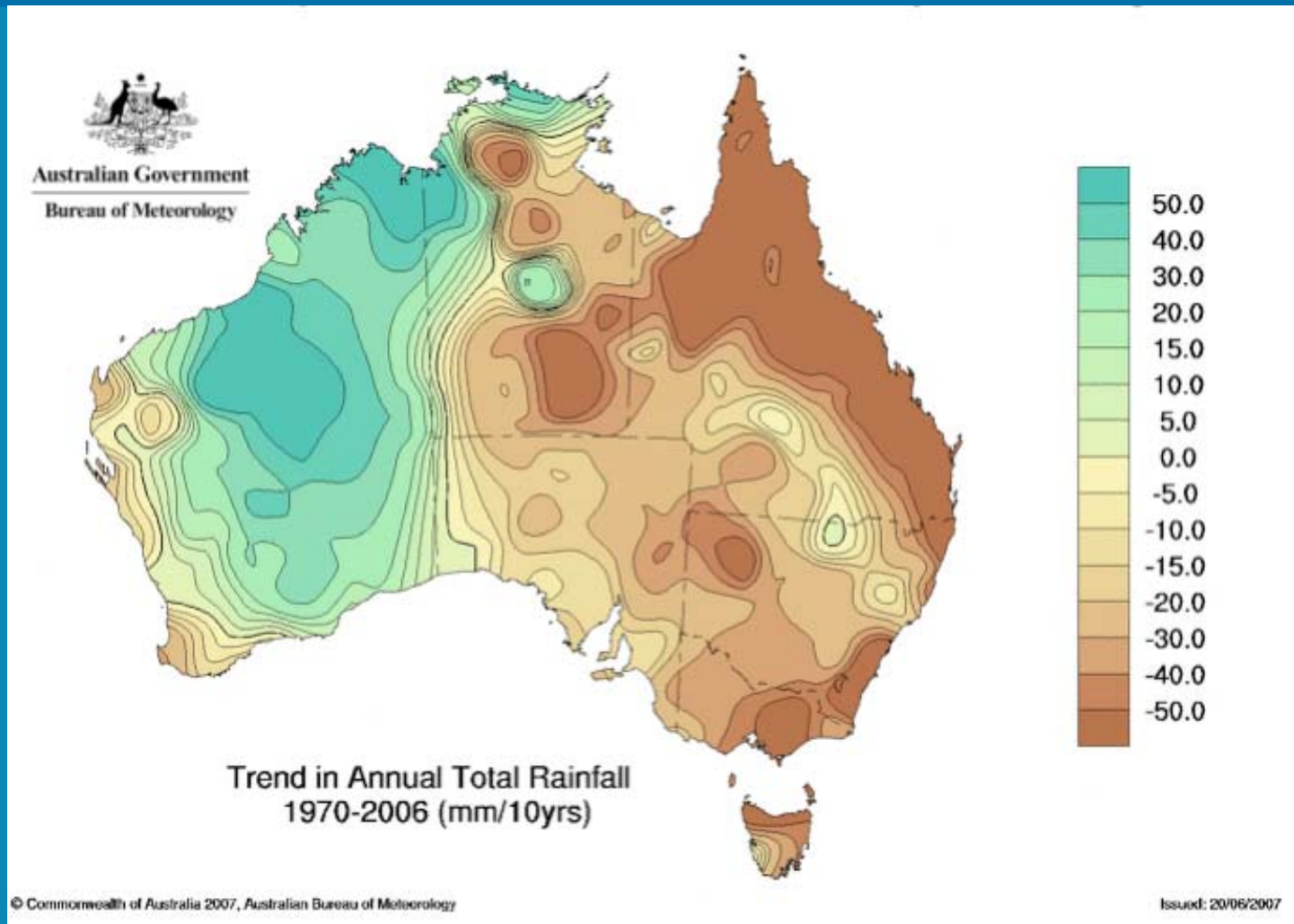
## *The importance of water information to national water reform*

Warwick Watkins, member  
Australian Water Information Advisory Council

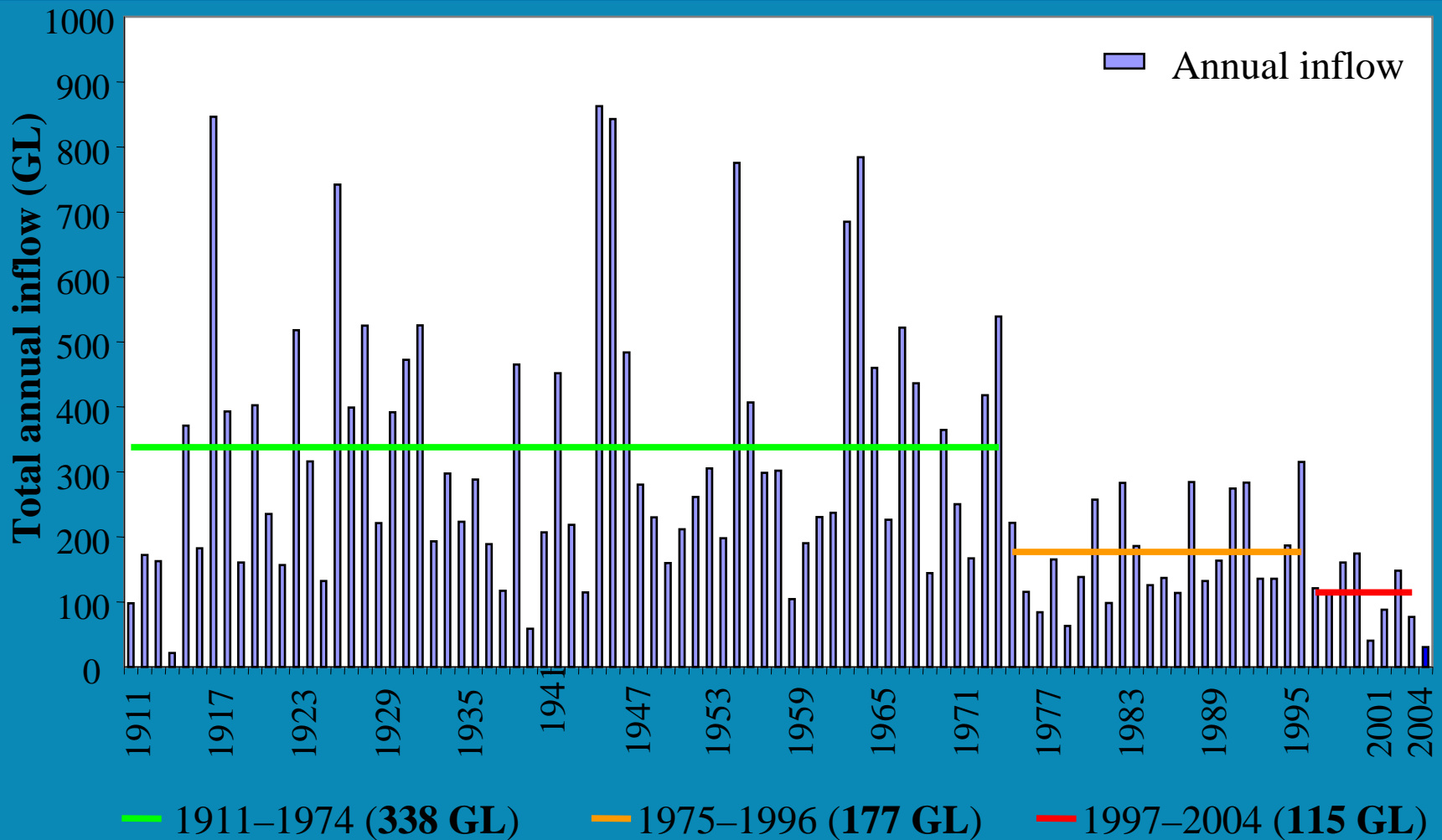
**water** *information*

*Data ↪ Information ↪ Insight*

# Trend in annual rainfall across Australia.



# Declining annual inflows to Perth's dams.



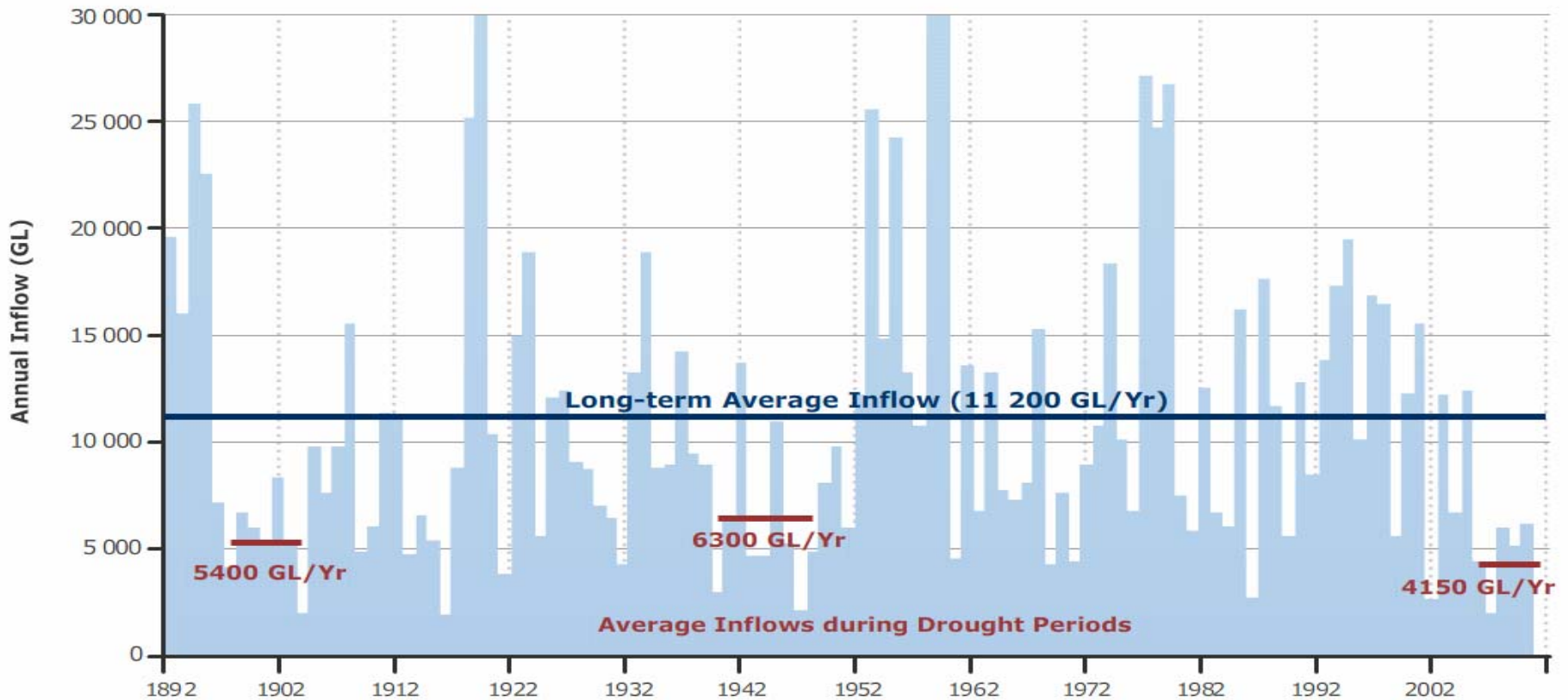
1911–1974 (338 GL)

1975–1996 (177 GL)

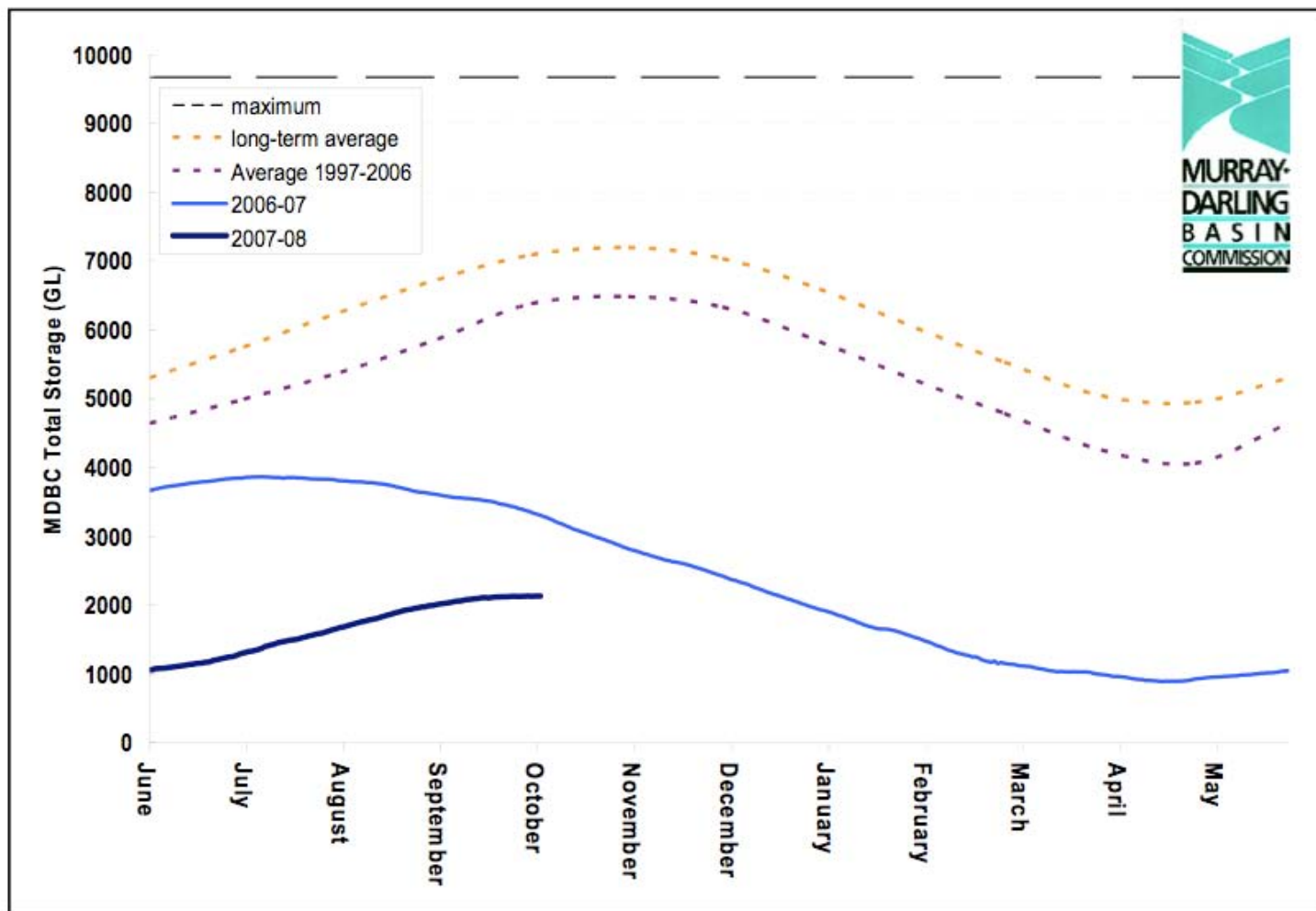
1997–2004 (115 GL)

# Historic sequence of MDB system inflows.

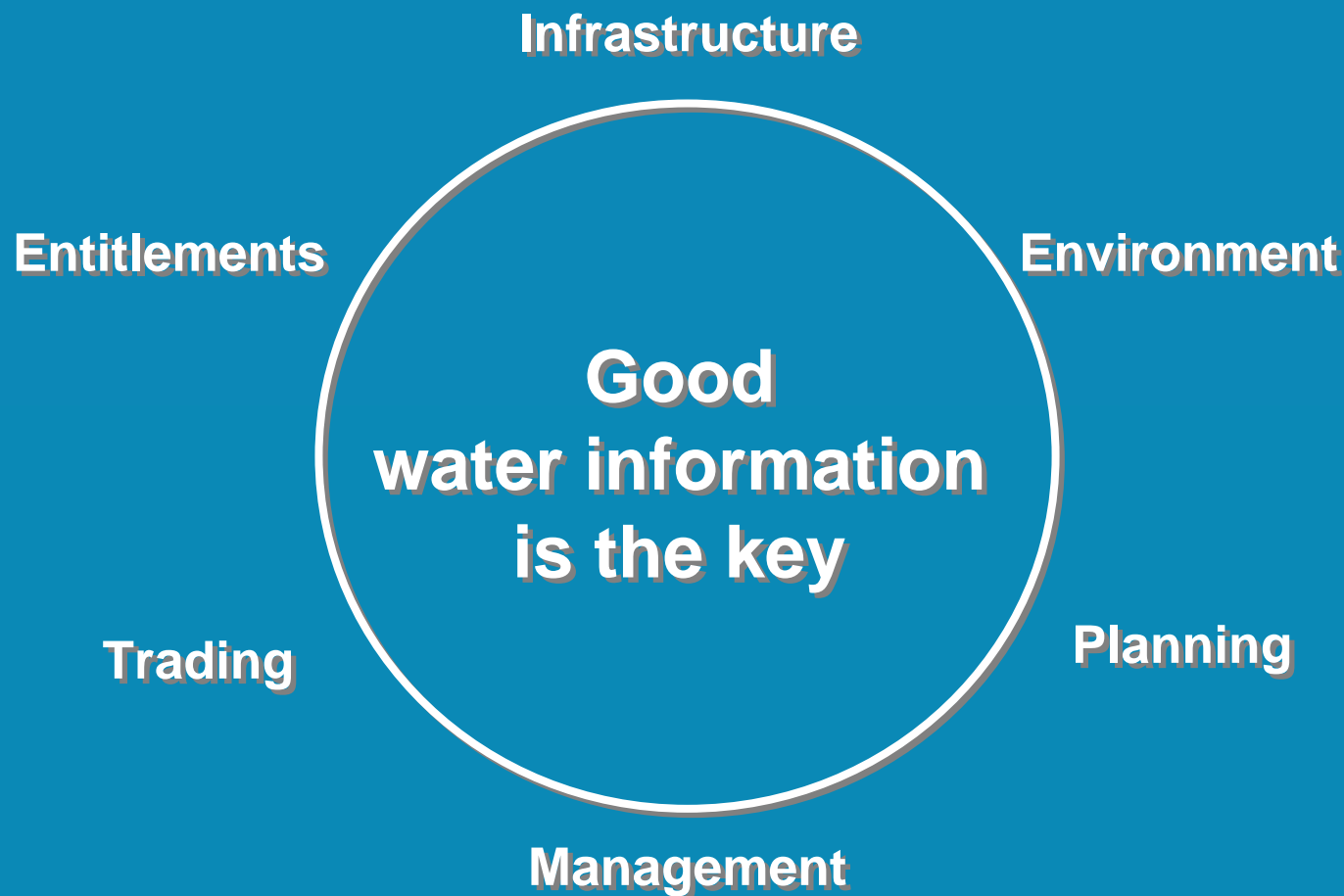
Modelled Annual Inflows - current conditions



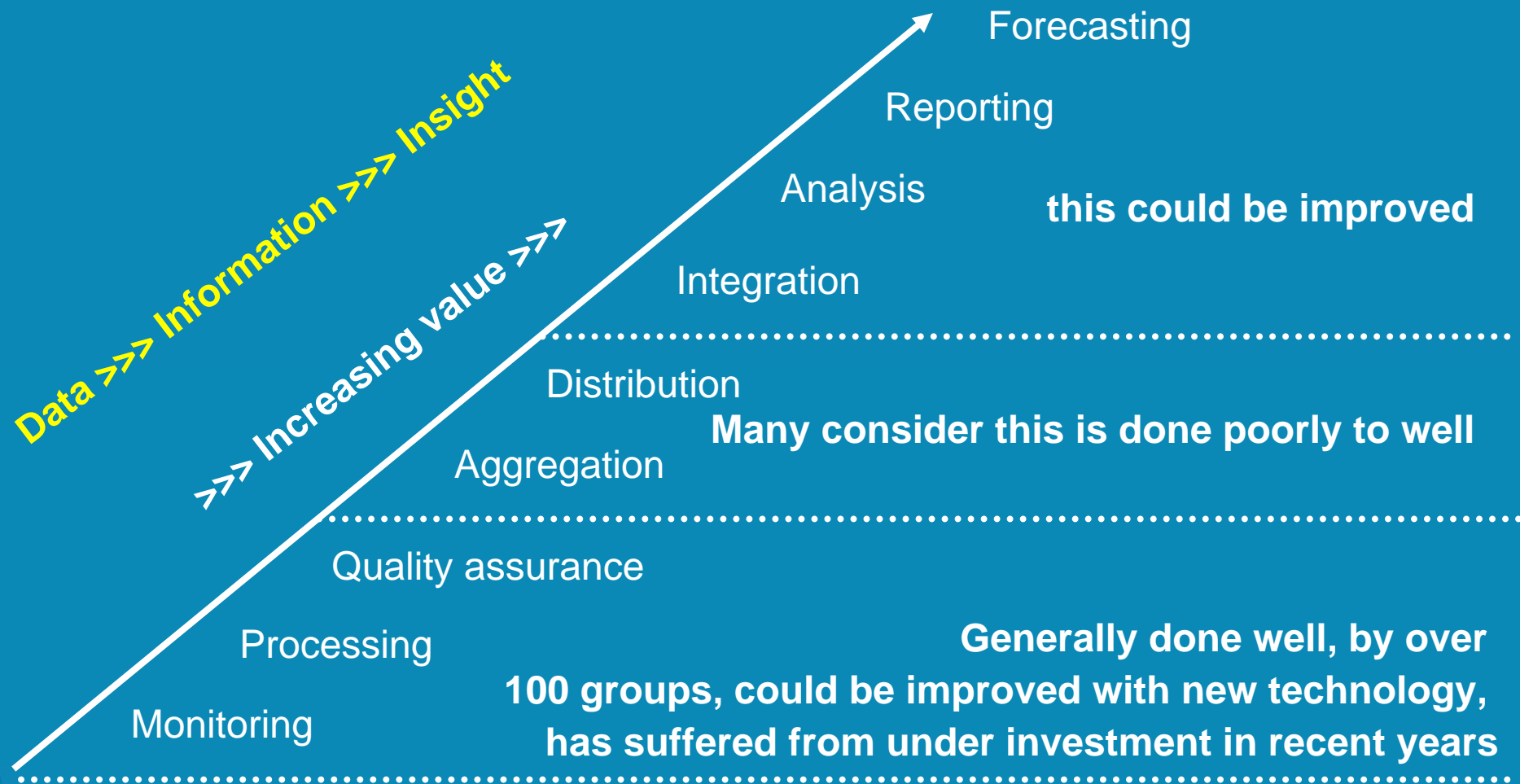
# Water storage volumes in the MDB system.



# *Sustainable water resources management*



# The water information value ladder



# *The opportunity*

- Drought inspired
- Political support locked in
- Dollars on the table

**Chance for a major improvement in water information data in Australia**

# *The National Plan for Water Security (NPWS)*

- **Announced by the Prime Minister in January, 2007**
- **\$10b over 10 years to reform water management**
- **Accelerates the National Water Initiative**
  - Australia's water reform blueprint
- **Supported by enabling legislation**
  - Water Act 2007
  - (passed in Aug 07; to be proclaimed in Mar 08)

# *Elements of the NPWS.*

- A new Murray-Darling Basin Authority
- MDB water purchases and structural adjustments
- National irrigation delivery system upgrades
- National on-farm water savings measures
- MDB river system improvements
- ACCC oversight of MDB water charging and market rules
- National water use metering and telemetry
- **National water information program**
- Understanding the potential of Northern Australia
- Reducing groundwater losses in the GAB

# *The questions we need to answer*

- How much water is available in different parts of the country today (and how does it compare with history)?
- How much water is likely to be available in the coming days, weeks, months and years?
- How much water is the environment, industry and the people getting?
- How is water quality changing?
- How much water is being intercepted by farm dams and various land management changes?

# *Australian Water Information Advisory Council (AWIAC)*

- Provide strategic advice to the Bureau on emerging water information needs across the water sector.
- Advise the Bureau on how to maximize the value of its water information activities across the water sector.
- Evaluate the Bureau's contribution to NWI and NPWS objectives.
- Assist the Bureau by providing advocacy across the water sector for its new water information mission.

# *AWIAC members*

- Russell Mein (Chair)
- James Horne (Dept of Environment and Water Resources, AG)
- Ken Matthews (National Water Commission, AG)
- Rob Freeman (Dept of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation, SA)
- Warwick Watkins (Department of Lands, NSW)
- Ross Young (Water Services Association of Australia)
- Jolyon Burnett (Irrigation Australia Limited)