

Table 10: Turner and Carter (1989) provide a useful history of approximately 125 years of drainage in the South East of South Australia as outlined below.

DATES	EXPLANATION
1840s	Large pastoral runs were established in the upper and lower South East, and closer settlements were progressed around Mt Gambier.
1858	Expanding populations in the South East saw a need for improved infrastructure and communication between the South East and Adelaide. Residents of the South East (particularly around Mount Gambier) petitioned the Government to spend revenue raised from the sale of Crown land in the region.
1859	Public petition request resulted in the construction of two bridges over Reedy Creek.
1862	Landholder petition request resulted in draining of swamps around Port MacDonnell and minor earthworks undertaken to improve transport access.
1863	Complete inspection of the South East region was undertaken by W Hanson (Engineer-In-Chief and architect), W Milne (Commissioner of Public Works) and George Goyder (Surveyor General). This was a significant trip, as it set the vision for the region. Hanson's primary interest was in draining wetlands to improve access across them during the wet months. Goyder's broader vision recognized the interests of the South East community.
1864	Drainage commences with the "Narrow Neck" cutting near Millicent to separate the inundated Mt Muirhead Flat from Lake Frome and the sea.
1864-1883	The Millicent to Tantanoola Drainage System is constructed. It comprises a 361km drainage network that opens 40,000 hectares of land to agricultural production and enables transport access.
1870s	Inception of Drainage Board to provide overarching governance to drainage systems in the South East.
1875	<i>The South Eastern Drainage Act 1875</i> was introduced and passed by Parliament. It introduces a mechanism for Drainage Boards (or relevant authorities) to apply drainage rates to landholders for drainage maintenance and repair.
1895	South East Drainage Boards were established initially on a district by district basis, progressing to District Councils with members becoming Councillors from that date
1883 – 1908	The National Drainage System is constructed. It comprises 310km drainage network to extend the existing system to the north and improve northerly flowing watercourses. It facilitates further land settlement and was fully financed by Government.
1911 – 1925	The Scheme Act Drain System is constructed. It comprises sea outlets at Lake George and Drain M. It further comprises 245km east to west oriented Drains A-E and Drains L-K,M. Drainage works in these early periods of settlement were a by-product of the public works carried out by Government – particularly road and railway works. As drains increased in importance in the landscape, it was necessary to establish an authority charged with their construction, control and maintenance. This was originally under authority from the Commissioner of Public Works. These works were transferred to the Survey Branch of the Crown Lands Department.
1905 to 1950	The Petition Drain System is constructed. It comprises 170km drainage network arising from direct petition by landholders to Government to undertake construction at complete cost to the landholder. This system further engaged landholders during Parliamentary enquiries regarding proposed works. In the course of construction, some drain liabilities and charges were discharged from the landholder to the government (<i>South-Eastern Drainage Act (Further Amendment Act) (No 1295) of 1917</i>).
1908 to 1926	Responsibility for the control of works and management of the drainage system changed hands a number of times, and numerous amendments were made to the legislation. This included incorporation of landholder liabilities.
1908	Control of works was removed from the District Councils and put under the Commissioner of Public Works. A new Assessment Board was created and a Drainage Management Board was appointed.
1917	Drainage Management Board was abolished and the care, control and management of the drains resided with the Assessment Board.
1926	Following the passage of the <i>South East Drainage Act 1926</i> the Irrigation and Drainage Commission had care, control and management of the drains.

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1931	South Eastern Drainage Board was set up for the care, control and management of the drains.
1940-1950s	Legislation is amended to enable the South Eastern Drainage Board to construct the Comprehensive Drain Scheme (also known as the Andersons Scheme).
1950 – 1972	The Comprehensive (Andersons Scheme) is constructed to remove surplus water from flats. It comprises 220km extension to the existing system by enlarging drains L –K, extending and enlarging Drain M and sees construction of the Wilmot Drain and other “trunk drains” and subsidiary drainage systems.
1958	The Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement recommended that a policy be formulated to enable the South Eastern Drainage Board to impose a betterment rate on landholders as the drainage scheme progresses.
1968	Cabinet approved the formation of a Committee to investigate and report upon the financial sections of the <i>South Eastern Drainage Act 1931-1959</i> . The primary cause of concern lay in the inequality of the various rating methods used: Old Scheme Drains – landholder contributions were based on maintenance rate and capital contribution Petition Drains – landholders were levied on capital contributions Western Division – landholders were levied based on maintenance rate and capital contributions
1970s	Landholder liabilities on Scheme and Petition drains are amended. Revenue earned from drainage is tied directly to relative expenditure on drain maintenance and management.
1971	<i>The South Eastern Drainage Act Amendment Act No 12 of 1971</i> was assented to and all rating methods were abolished.
1972	A new rating system based on unimproved land values came into force on 1 July.
Late 1970s	South Australian Cabinet directs no further drainage be undertaken, without prior consideration environmental impacts. Increased awareness of the need for integrated water resources management emerges in this period also].
1980s	Land use of the South East has evolved to be characterized by: Intensification of agriculture with shifts in areas from extensive grazing to intensive irrigation (80,000 ha); Intensification of grazing and a shift to broad acre cropping Conversion of agricultural land to plantation forestry.
1980	The State Government assumes total financial responsibility for the South East Drainage Network after unsuccessful attempts to raise a levy/ drainage rates from landholders. Further legislative amendments were made to reintroduce petition drains, and provide that the authority (either Drainage Board or Council), within 3 years after the completion of drainage works to make an apportionment of costs that the Minister determines must be paid, between the landholders benefited by the drains or drainage works. These provisions continued until the <i>South Eastern Water Conservation and Drainage Act</i> came into operation in 1992.
1980	Environmental Impact Study commissioned by the South Eastern Drainage Board recognised that early drainage schemes assisted agricultural expansion with planning and design techniques achieving these in a cost effective manner. As knowledge and technology progressed, the Board identified the potential for future drains to address broader land and water management objectives.
1981	Flooding in the northern portion of the Upper South East raised landholder concerns around management of surface water. Individual landholders undertook their own drainage works to manage local flooding and a coordinated and consolidated approach to surface drainage was recognized. A number of community groups took an interest in developing management solutions.

DATES	EXPLANATION
1990 to 2011	<p>The Upper South East Scheme is constructed. It comprises 714km of drains and floodway to address dryland salinity, flood mitigation, vegetation management and returns water to the environment. Partial landholder contribution is raised through the <i>Upper South East Drainage Act (1992)</i>.</p> <p>Phase 1 – Environmental Impact Statement and upper South East Dryland Salinity and Flood Management Plan (1990 and 1994)</p> <p>Phase 2 – (1995-2003) consisted of a package of related but originally separate drain construction (255 kilometres), saltland agronomy, and environmental works and measures projects. Landholders fund 25% of construction (\$6m). State and Australian Governments contribute 37.5% each (\$9m each).</p> <p>Phase 3 - (2003-2011) was an integrated program of environmental activities and drainage construction. The REFLAWS project, which restored historic environmental flows to key upper South East wetlands, was included during the middle of this phase. Landholders fund 22.5% of construction (\$11m). State and Australian Governments contribute 38.75% each (\$19.15m).</p>
1992	<p>The <i>South Eastern Water Conservation and Drainage Act 1992</i> repealed the <i>South-Eastern Drainage Act 1931</i> and the <i>Tatiara Drainage Trust Act 1949</i>.</p>
1995	<p>Amendments to the SEWCD Act were introduced and passed, allowing the Drainage Board to collect a levy from landholders in the upper South East to be applied towards the cost of carrying out works involved in the Upper South East Project, enabling the agreed Phase 2 community share of 25%. The levy was applied to landholders at differing rates according to where land is situated. The levy was paid by zone. Zones A and B were deemed to receive the most benefit from the drainage system, zones C and D were identified as 'contributing' zones to the groundwater and surface water drivers of the salinity issues. This levy continued to be collected until 2004-05.</p>
2002	<p>The <i>Upper South East Dryland Salinity and Flood Management Act 2002</i> was passed by Parliament, providing specific powers for the construction of the upper South East drainage network. This Act removed the Upper South East Project Area from the administrative control of the South Eastern Water Conservation and Drainage (SEWCD) Board. It included levy provisions to enable the Minister to raise the agreed community share of 22.5% for Phase 3 of the upper South East Program. Three payment zones were established.</p>
2012	<p>On December 19, with expiry of the USE Act, all interests in the upper South East was vested to the SEWCD Board, which is now responsible for operating, managing and maintaining the total South East Drainage System on behalf of the Minister. As at 31 December 2012, 99.15% of landholders (1392) had either fully paid or offset their levy amount.</p>
2014	<p>South East Flows Restoration Program The project area extends 93.4 kilometres from the existing Blackford Drain to the Salt Creek outlet into the Coorong South Lagoon. The construction works are anticipated to commence in late 2015 over 75 weeks, after extensive detailed design and approvals processes take place. The Project is part of the Murray Futures Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Recovery Project. Funding is jointly provided by the Australian Government through the Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program and the State Government.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Private drainage works. Numerous small private drains are constructed to remove water from land. These works are at cost of the landholder .</p>