

**BEFORE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED ON  
BEHALF OF OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

RM20.005, RM20.007.01 and  
RM20.007.02

**IN THE MATTER** of an application for resource  
consent

**PISA HOLDINGS LIMITED**

**AND SMALLBURN LIMITED**

**Applicants**

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**BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF ROBERT STANLEY (BOB) PERRIAM**

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## **BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF ROBERT STANLEY (BOB) PERRIAM**

### **INTRODUCTION.**

1. My full name is Robert Stanley (Bob) Perriam. I am a Director and sole shareholder of Wakefield Estates Limited which is the holding company from my family trust.
2. The company owns 37 hectares of land in the Pisa Moorings area. 17 hectares of this land is mostly irrigated with water from our 25% stake in WR95789. The water is conveyed to our land via a water race that runs in conjunction with the other joint applicants in WR 95789 until reaching a natural landform called the Saddle. From that point, my share is taken solely another 3 Km down through the Morton's property via a race known as the Wakefield Race.
3. Once the water reaches Wakefield Estates property it is used for irrigation and stock drinking water. I discuss this further below.
4. The operation of the permit 95789 is also coordinated with the Smallburn permits which I discuss below. The discussion of how we work together is relevant to both applications.

### **HISTORY OF WATER USE**

5. Our original Perriam family settlement of Wakefield Farm was in 1865 after another Perriam relative built the first Lowburn hotel in 1860. The very initial settlement of this area needed to be near a constant clean water source such as the Lowburn Creek or the Clutha River. The heavy, fertile soils of the river flats allowed for some grazing opportunities without irrigation and initial mining was limited to river and creek banks also. Later our family joined with a neighboring family to construct the current water race over 100 years ago which allowed new opportunities to goldmine rich new claims in the foothills of this barren dry land. The water take awarded to our family at that time was a large amount due to the volume of water needed to drive a hydro sluicing gun operation on claims. I was told that water was so precious they did all the establishment work during fine weather and washed their claims during times of heavy rain to maximize water availability.

6. In those days the water was taken from Amisfield creek permanently and discharged mainly into the Smallburn catchment. This would help maintain a constant stream for mining and for domestic use and irrigation to grow essential food supplies.
7. After the mining apportions on these foothills closed down, this reliable water source became available to develop the fertile flats below into productive Pastoral and Arable farming along with some horticulture and vegetables. Three homes also needed the hill water for domestic water supply right up until the completion of the Clyde Dam and filling of Lake Dunstan. The ground water aquifer then rose to allow bore takes to provide plentiful clean potable water for these domestic supplies.
8. The once in 500-year flood event of November 1999 tore our water race to pieces. We completely lost our head works for take from the Amisfield and also our fluming across the Parkburn creek. The repair work took 9 months and cost nearly \$40,000 to restore.
9. We got it operational again for the following 2000/01 summer. The time and cost of these repairs was borne by ourselves and Smallburn at a time when we also had many other repairs to undertake on our farms.
10. This event is a prime example of the commitment and investment that we have put into this water race infrastructure. We need to be able to gain a return on that investment through the ongoing irrigation of our lands.

#### **OPERATION OF THE SYSTEM**

11. Today we manage the Amisfield water take much differently than the old goldminers originally did.
12. The irrigation season usually begins early/mid Sept. Acting for all interests in our current WR95789, I turn in approximately 60 % of our water race capacity to fill dams and commence some irrigation of pasture/horticulture. By November, all users are into irrigation and I need to increase the take to about 90% of our capacity.

13. The capacity of our water race can be limited by flood events or land movements that create weak areas in the race. We carry out ongoing maintenance work to rectify this damage and maintain capacity. We have made good progress in recent years with diggers gaining access around the water race to clean out surplus gravel and vegetation and fix any slip areas. This work was all done by hand until 1985 which I can assure you was slow hard work. Most of this work is completed by late Sept each year.
14. Through Jan/Feb I regularly inspect the water race and adjust the intake to keep our water race near full as demand at that time is at a peak. We also have installed a pipe at the head that only allows a certain amount of water past so in rain events over summer, all residual creek water is automatically returned to its true source.
15. By mid/late April most irrigation requirements for the season are completed and I will block our intake to turn almost all residual water back into Amisfield creek. We do need to keep a very small/minimal flow along the water race to my property for stock water that also serves Mt Pisa and Smallburn farms for their livestock needs.
16. It should be also noted that the Smallburn's Amisfield water race follows below our water race the entire length from the intake to our "Saddle" where they separate. This effectively means that any leakage from our race at dry times is not wasted but collected by their water race for use. We also co-ordinate by washes with Smallburn so that when there is a heavy rain event, all surplus water is spilled over both our races to the same catchment. This also protects our water races from damage.

#### **WATER USE ON WAKEFIELD ESTATES**

17. My share of the water is currently taken by an agreed roster with the other users. Every 3-4 weeks I take the full flow from the saddle the Wakefield race for 5/6 days. This full flow is needed to gain maximum cover over the land in a short time as I have very little storage ability.

18. I currently use the water to flood irrigate 12 Ha of pastoral land via a predominantly boarder dyke and head race system. I also use a small amount of wild flood. These methods make the most of the infrequent availability of the water.
19. My intention is to put all my water take under pressure and reticulate it around the farm through underground piping to strategic points for overhead sprinkler or hard hose irrigation. This will maximize efficiency and cover higher land that cannot be reached under our current system. This will enable us to irrigate almost all of the 17 ha of land for grazing and establish 2 ha of new vineyard on some lighter soils that would complement our existing vineyard near Lake Dunstan.
20. I have plans drawn up for this work but I have held off implementing these very costly improvements until I have certainty with respect to water access to support such a long-term investment.

**Bob Perriam**

**Wakefield Estates Limited**

24 August 2020