

NVIRP/G-MW Memorandum of Understanding

G-MW and NVIRP have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to define roles and responsibilities for the modernisation of G-MW's systems. NVIRP have been charged with the responsibility to modernise G-MW's system and deliver water savings while G-MW must allow access to sites and ensure that customer entitlements and service levels can be delivered while the work progresses. The document provides the framework and specifies cooperative arrangements to ensure efficient project planning and delivery.

Continued service during modernisation

G-MW will continue to operate the existing channel network to supply water to all customers - including customers not located on the NVIRP backbone. Modernisation of the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District channel system by NVIRP will continue through to December 2012.

Confirm your water ownership now

Default ownership arrangements will take effect for any unconfirmed water shares from **31 December 2008** and this may not be the preferred structure for some customers. G-MW has been contacting customers and assisting them in confirming their shares - if you have not resolved your unconfirmed shares please contact G-MW and we will work with you to assist this process.

After 31 December, changes to the ownership structure will incur water register lodgement fees. You can check whether you have unconfirmed water shares by contacting G-MW on 03 5833 5533.

Web ordering / information

Web ordering offers a quick and easy way to carry out your water ordering transactions, and access information on your Allocated Bank Account(s). To access this facility, go to the G-MW website (www.g-mwater.com.au), click on WaterLINE, enter your usual User & PIN number, and follow the prompts.

Useful information

Where can I find my Allocation Bank Account (ABA) numbers or get a water statement?

You can find your ABA number via WaterLINE online at G-MW's website. Simply log in with your current user and pin number and follow the prompts.

Christmas trading hours

G-MW offices will be closed to the public from 1pm on 24 as well as 25 and 26 December 2008 and 1st and 2nd January 2009.

Planning over the Christmas period

All irrigators are encouraged to plan their water needs for the coming Christmas and New Year period. If you are intending to trade water please confirm your brokers' and/or exchanges' operating dates and deadlines and allow sufficient time for your trades to be executed and processed.

G-MW is also interested to hear from anyone planning to take delivery of water over the Christmas and New Year period so we can continue to work with customers to run the system as efficiently as possible.

contacts

G-MW can be contacted during normal business hours at any of its offices. Customers may contact G-MW to report emergencies and urgent matters such as reporting of pollution incidents and illegal activities by using the after hours 24 hours emergency line: **1800 064 184**

WSC MEMBERS

Heather du Vallon (Chair)	03 5864 1161 0407 641 163
Dudley Bryant (Deputy Chair)	03 5864 1124 0428 641 124
Max Baker	03 5864 1011 0429 099 559
Danny Bergamin	03 5864 1175 0447 641 174
Alan Hendy	03 5865 8250
Ben McCracken	03 5864 6591
Jim McKeown	03 5873-2276 0427 845 805
Kevin Whatman	03 5865 1399 0427 772 818

TMB 7703



Murray Valley

Message from WSC Chair

The continuing dry conditions and low allocations are challenging us all. We are in uncharted territory and for irrigators and Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) who are operating the systems, it is not business as usual. The WSC thank all customers for their patience and understanding as G-MW staff try to balance your requirements and manage the system tightly to minimise water loss.

The WSC have been very busy advocating on behalf of customers. We have been active in influencing the plans to modernise our system and deliver improved services with the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP). It was pleasing to see many customers take the time to attend the recent information sessions held in conjunction with NVIRP and G-MW on the modernisation program and the WSC is confident that all attendees were able to

leave with a greater understanding of what modernisation is all about.

We have been involved in the discussions and debate on the Northern Victoria Sustainable Water Strategy (NVSWS) to ensure that we can meet the challenges of a possible drier future. Committee members commit to a heavy schedule of meetings and discussions and meet at least monthly to scrutinise G-MW business and activity and advocate for improved outcomes. Chairs meet regularly as a Leadership group to coordinate positions and then inform the decision making of G-MW and other Government agencies on significant issues.

We have many challenges to come including the efficient roll out of modernisation across our systems and the potential impacts of the Federal Government water



Dudley Bryant

buy backs. We will be advocating for positions that protect the interests of G-MW customers and communities dependant on irrigation in Northern Victoria.

We wish all our customers a Merry Christmas and a wetter New Year.

Dudley Bryant
Deputy Chair
Murray Valley WSC

Message from Operations Manager & staff

Management and staff of G-MW Murray Valley Area thank customers for their high level cooperation in the past year in these adverse circumstances and wish all a Happy Christmas and fulfilling 2009.

Geoff Enever
Manager
Murray Valley Operations



2009 Season Update

Start of season issues

Some customers may have experienced supply interruptions at the start of the season. This has been caused by two main factors;

1. Drought operation mode – G-MW are running the channel system differently to a normal year. We are keeping channels low between deliveries to minimise losses and make more water available to customers. This means we have to increase levels prior to irrigations and therefore consistent deliveries are more difficult, and
2. Manual operation of new regulators - In areas where we have installed new automated regulators they have to be operated manually before we commission them completely and then “tune” the channel system. When all regulators have been commissioned and the channels tuned the operation of these systems will improve. This should be completed on all systems prior to Christmas.

Thankyou for your continued cooperation and understanding during this time, and if you are experiencing any supply issues please contact your Area planner immediately.

Improving customer service

Coming soon - new WaterLINE online on the way

In 2007/08 the number of customers' using our online ordering service nearly tripled. To support your growing use of this service G-MW is planning a new web ordering facility with enhanced services. The new services will make the most of the online environment and the information that will be available to G-MW and its customers from the new modernised system. All the current features that make the current online ordering easy will remain plus;

- New improved look and easier navigation;
- Meter read entry – this will enable customers to enter meter readings and get updated entitlement remaining information
- Graphical channel capacity – customers can see available channel capacity to help ordering in advance
- Messaging – customers can send and receive messages and other important communications

The new WaterLINE will roll out in 2009 and will be accompanied by comprehensive customer information and training.

Reduced staff numbers

As a response to the low allocations we are currently experiencing, the Murray Valley Operational centre has made a conscious effort to reduce costs. This has resulted in the non replacement of a number of staff in the area and we have also pursued the redeployment of staff onto projects funded by others.

Currently the Murray Valley area has 7 vacant positions and 4 staff redeployed. This has allowed the area to reduce our costs and staff have taken on larger operational areas as we strive to maintain our service delivery to customers in these difficult times.

NRSWS

The Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy (NRSWS) is developing a 50 year blueprint to guide water management across northern Victoria to meet the challenges of a drier future. WSCs have been actively involved in this process, providing ongoing feedback and formal submissions. WSCs views on the proposed NRSWS strategy will be submitted to the NRSWS Committee in mid December. Visit <http://www.gmwater.com.au/policy/> to find out more about the NRSWS and how you can provide input into this process.

Modernisation and Reconfiguration update

From 1 November 2008, G-MW's reconfiguration program has shifted under the management of Northern Victoria Infrastructure Renewal Project (NVIRP). This means all reconfiguration initiatives across the region will be funded, driven and delivered by the one organisation with a common approach and criteria on key aspects including financial compensation. To assist with the seamless transfer G-MW reconfiguration staff have been seconded to NVIRP and G-MW Reconfiguration Working Groups will become NVIRP's Modernisation Committees and will provide input on the entire NVIRP roll out. The WSC has been involved with discussions with NVIRP on the development guidelines and the extent of the proposed automated backbone and members will continue an active oversight role as the project progresses.

Reconfiguration offers submitted to G-MW before 1 November will be delivered by G-MW, offers received after that date will be delivered by NVIRP.

NVIRP has commenced their consultation program with a number of well attended community forums held across G-MW. An integral part of this process was the release of the location of the core automated-backbone system, further details of the connections program, and information of the year 2 works programs. Copies of the backbone maps can be obtained from NVIRP's new website at www.nvirp.com.au or your local area office.

NVIRP upgrade in Murray Valley

During the winter of 2008 the Murray Valley area had 130 new automated gates installed in the channel system. These gates were predominantly installed in the number 1 and 2 channels located near Cobram. Currently these gates are being operated manually as we progress towards having the gates commissioned and transferred to automatic control.

2009 Works Program

The program for next season will see a further 80 gates installed along the Yarrawonga Main Channel and No 2 channel.

An extensive consultation program will commence early in the New Year to provide property owners time-to-plan for these changes and to advise of precise locations for all planned works.

In general, automation has been deferred in the Murray Valley Area to allow detailed investigations to occur into known capacity concerns throughout this system. Over the next 12 months the operations staff in conjunction with NVIRP will review the system to identify potential restrictions and supply issues prior to progressing the installation of the last automated gates during the winters of 2010 and 2011. Customers will be kept informed of the progress of the installation by both NVIRP and G-MW.

CGI-4 modernisation delivers

A massive reduction in system outfalls, which include spills and releases that overtop channel banks, in the Central Goulburn 1 to 4 channel systems has been attributed to channel automation. This system was one of the first to be modernised and in 2007/08 we had only 25 ML of outfall compared to 1,850 ML in 2002/03 (in both seasons allocations were 57%). In 2002/03 deliveries were higher but the results are still outstanding - in 2007/08 G-MW delivered more than 1500 ML onto farm for every 1 ML of outfalls – in 2002/03 we delivered around 30 ML onto farm for every 1 ML of outfall. The technology has improved G-MW's ability to monitor, control and respond to changes in customer demand and the CGI-4 results are evidence that the new technology can improve system performance and reduce water losses in all seasons – including dry years.

Future service standards under modernisation

G-MW and NVIRP have committed to principles that service levels must be improved under the modernisation of the system. The channel systems will still have capacity limits and so in peak periods everyone still won't be able to access water at the same time. All customers will need to order deliveries; however, the notice required for delivery in most circumstances will be significantly reduced. The more notice you give the better the chance of getting water when you want it. When a channel is fully automated then confirmation of the order delivery will be instantaneous via WaterLINE.

New WSC Member Profiles

Kevin Whatman



Current Committee: A member of the Water Services Committee

Family: I currently operate a dairy farm at Cobram with my wife and 3 children.

Commitment: I intend to bring a new vision and perspective to the Murray Valley Water Services Committee (WSC). I intend to be available for all customers but particularly those from the eastern end of the irrigation region. Whilst I am new to the WSC, I believe that I have a good understanding of the issues that are affecting us all and will be diligently working towards improving the area for all customers.

Goals/Ambitions: A number of the issues that I believe require us as customer representatives to be aware of and ensure that we achieve the best results for irrigators within our region are; providing a service that will encourage customers to stay within our area and this will retain water, making sure that the modernisation and reconfiguration provides benefits for customers in improved service and delivery times, being sure that the available funding is spread equally amongst all irrigation areas and that these funds are managed sensibly and utilised to improve the Murray Valley system. We are in a constantly changing environment and I encourage customers to ensure they have their say on matters such as the Northern Victorian Sustainable Water Strategy. Let us utilise the resources such as WSC to ensure we can provide input into the decisions that face us all on a daily basis.