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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Commencement of MI irrigation season sooner than expected

Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) has announced the commencement dates for its 2017/18 irrigation season.

The commencement dates have been staggered to enable customer access to water as early as possible in each area of the network with normal supply operations to resume by 5 August (over a week ahead of schedule).

MI CEO Brett Jones said that MI had been working closely with WaterNSW to expedite water availability across the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area.

“Demand for water is high at the moment due to both the extended irrigation shutdown and dry winter, so we have been working to open the network as soon as possible,” he said.

“Thanks to the cooperation of WaterNSW and the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), who are currently managing an environmental flow down the Murrumbidgee River, we will be able to commence the season sooner than expected.”

Mr Jones thanked all customers for their patience during the extended winter works period.

“This has been a once in a life time opportunity to modernise our Main Canal and set up the region for the future,” he said.

“With the upcoming commencement of the irrigation season, we look forward to working together again with our customers in what we hope is a prosperous season for everyone.”

MI also announced this week they will be providing a 4% additional annual water allocation to eligible customers as a result of company water savings and efficiency measures.

Staggered commencement dates are below, but please note there are isolated pockets of works currently being completed. This may cause minor delays in the commencement of water delivery services to some parts of the system:

- 1 August – Leeton area (upstream of Boundary Regulator) – supply available to support town and critical crop needs
- 2 August - Sturt system open on a limited supply
- 3 August- Griffith area (downstream of East Mirrool Regulator) – supply available to support town and critical crop needs, and
- RESUME NORMAL OPERATIONS- 5 August Main Canal system, 7 August Sturt Canal system.

Water orders can be placed through MI’s water ordering system, EASYWATER, using the regular ordering methods. For any enquiries on the commencement of our water delivery services, customers can contact their Division Operator or MI on (02) 6962 0200.

The next DPI Water annual allocation announcement is scheduled to be made on Tuesday 1 August.

**ENDS**

*Photo: The upgraded Roaches Regulator ready to take water this week for the commencement of the 2017/18 irrigation season*

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