



Murrumbidgee  
Irrigation



Irrigation Research &  
Extension Committee

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### IREC and MI team up for automation pilot project

The Irrigation Research & Extension Committee (IREC) and Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) are teaming up to deliver a pilot automation trial project for irrigation supply channels, which has the potential to be expanded across the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA).

Trial sites have been established on irrigation properties adjacent to MI's channel system in Gogeldrie, with automated gates fitted to existing metered outlets.

IREC Chairman, Rob Houghton, said that a number of other potential automation sites across the MIA had already been identified.

"This project could be a real game changer for many farmers in the region," he enthused.

"While not all areas are suitable for automation, MI have identified up to 400 sites where automated gates could be retrofitted to existing outlets."

Results from the trial will be used by MI to inform future investment, including as part of round three of the Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operator's Program (PIIOP3).

MI received \$84.9 million in funding in June 2016 under PIIOP3, taking total investment by the Australian Government under the PIIOP in the MIA to \$309.5 million.

"The trial will demonstrate the benefits of automation technology and quantify network cost savings," MI CEO Brett Jones said.

"There will be opportunities to expand the trial across the region when the trial has been successfully completed."

"This will compliment significant water delivery system improvements that are currently being delivered under previous funding rounds.

"Our customers want value, and this funding enables us to deliver water to them through a more efficient and responsive irrigation network."

Mr Jones said a key benefit of automation is the ability to provide a greater degree of control over water flows required to meet changing water demand patterns.

"Projects to automate the main supply channels will allow the delivery system to be operated at greater flow rates with the ability to satisfy customer demand for shorter and more intense periods of irrigation," he said.

Mr Jones said part of MI's focus is to work together in partnership with bodies such as IREC to grow the value of agricultural production in the region.

"Our vision is to grow our future together with customers and the community," he said.

"This automation project will assist to improve farm productivity and crop yields which support the continued growth and prosperity of the MIA."

**ENDS**

**Photo:** IREC Executive Officer Iva Quarisa and MI CEO Brett Jones

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