



## MEDIA RELEASE

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# MAKING EVERY DROP COUNT

The regions irrigation communities are well on the way to getting a sustainable, modern and reliable water supply, with Murrumbidgee Irrigation's rollout of water saving modernisation projects continuing this winter.

Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) Chief Executive Officer, Brett Jones, said that the works will shore up the future for the next generation of MIA irrigators and local communities, keeping the region as the food bowl for the nation.

"The infrastructure works are ensuring we capture every last drop and are ready for when allocations turn around," he said.

MI have an extensive modernisation program planned for the 2019 winter period, off the back of the Main Canal works in 2017 and South West works in 2018. Project areas include: Lake View Branch Canal, Gogelderie Branch Canal, Mirrool Creek Branch Canal, Yanco Stock & Domestic, Warburn and the ongoing region wide Outlet Program.

"The works include more automation, some channel lining and structure upgrades," Mr Jones said.

"Our off-farm modernisation works are helping us to deliver water in the most efficient way possible, and the on farm works our irrigators have completed are making the most out of every last drop."

The Murrumbidgee Valley has recently moved to Stage 2 drought, and DPI Water have commenced drought operational planning in preparation in the event of extreme dry conditions continuing throughout 2019/20. DPI Water have also advised that opening conveyance allocations will be reduced, and this will have a direct impact on how MI can run the system.

Mr Jones acknowledged that it is currently a difficult period for irrigators and local businesses due to the ongoing drought, associated low allocations and a bleak forecast for the season ahead.

"The livelihoods of those within our communities are directly linked to the fortunes of our irrigators, he said.

"These infrastructure projects will assist us through these periods of reduced water availability and ensure we build a positive future."

During the upcoming 2019 winter works MI's focus will be on system efficiency and minimising impacts to water supply where possible.

The modernisation works, combined with WaterNSW restoration works at Berembed Weir, mean that MI will be maintaining a modified irrigation supply from 27 May through to mid-August.

MI Operations General Manager, Alan Shea, said depending on the extent of WaterNSW works there may be some impact to towns.

"We will continue to work with WaterNSW to minimise any potential impacts," he said.

Sections of some channels where there are no modernisation works will be lowered intermittently to allow for inspections and programmed maintenance works.

MI is working with Australian Government support to deliver projects that will optimise economic, social and environmental outcomes in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area.

Further information is available on our website [www.mirrigation.com.au](http://www.mirrigation.com.au). If you have any questions, please call MI on (02) 6962 0200.

### ENDS

*Photo: MI Water Delivery Team Lead Chris Palmer, MI Customer Engagement Officer Hayley Foscarini, Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area Renewal Alliance Site Engineer Zara Khandouzi and MI Engineer Sebastian Panazzolo working together to manage the MIA system efficiency and optimise supply leading up to the 2019 winter works.*

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