



# Murrumbidgee Irrigation

## DPI Water Allocations

Stock & Domestic	100%
Town	100%
High Security	95%
General Security	23%

AS AT 15 AUGUST 2017

## Storages at 31 August 2017

Burrinjuck	58%
Blowering	82%

## EASYWATER

[www.mirrigation.com.au](http://www.mirrigation.com.au)  
Freecall 1800 822 450

# NEWS IN BRIEF

AUGUST 2017 Newsletter

## Responding to changing customer needs:

### LETTER FROM THE CEO

I am taking this opportunity to respond to recent ill-informed media reports that we are closing our Leeton office and significantly restructuring our business.

Let me be clear - Murrumbidgee Irrigation is committed to a long term presence in Leeton. We are not losing or downgrading our Leeton office and reports stating that we are transferring 15 staff to Griffith are not correct. In fact, only three permanent staff are changing their home base to Griffith. We are not downgrading our level of service to Leeton customers.

### **What we are doing is making some changes to increase value for all customers and continue doing things better.**

We are refurbishing our Leeton office and depot area to make it a modern and contemporary work space and to reduce our running costs. This office facility was originally built to house five times the current staff levels. It is not efficient to keep running the office and depot the way we are, and ultimately this cost is borne by our customers.

We are moving our project team back to Griffith as Leeton area works reduce in order to support work already commenced in in Benerembah, Wah Wah and Tabbita. The team were originally based in Griffith and have spent the last 12 months in Leeton working on the Main Canal and Division 3 upgrade. Our project teams will continue to move locations as needed.

### **We are continuing to make it easier for customers to do business with us no matter where they live.**

The number of dedicated Customer Service officers in the Leeton office has increased from one to two, we have upgraded the phone system to enable better call management and less waiting at the counter and we have created dedicated area specific customer engagement teams. More broadly, we have improved response times to new works requests, removed unnecessary statutory declarations on forms, harsh security provisions and restrictive rice rules.

At Murrumbidgee Irrigation we recognise that our customers' needs are changing. We are changing to meet those needs and to keep this the premier irrigation district in Australia.

Yours faithfully

**Brett Jones**  
Chief Executive Officer

Our privacy statement can be downloaded from our website: [www.mirrigation.com.au](http://www.mirrigation.com.au)

Contact MI if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter.

## Season commencement sooner than expected

The commencement dates were staggered earlier this month to enable customer access to water as early as possible in each area of the network, with normal supply operations resuming by 5 August in most areas.

We worked closely with WaterNSW and the Office of Environment and Heritage (who were managing an environmental flow down the Murrumbidgee River). This assisted us to open up the network sooner than expected to meet customer demand after the extended winter works program.

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.

## Transition to automation

Our Main Canal and Division 3 structures will transition from manual to automated operation over the next month. During this time there may be some fluctuations in supply as individual structures are commissioned. Please contact your Division Operator if you experience supply difficulties.

## Modernisation works

### Main Canal refurbishment complete

The \$15 million refurbishment of the Main Canal to automate all regulating structures is now complete. These works will amplify the benefits of automation projects already installed across the system. This once in a lifetime opportunity, was funded by the Australia Government, and will reduce our operating costs and increase the Main Canal flow capacity rates.



PHOTO: MI Board members inspecting infrastructure on Simpson Lane during a recent tour.

### NBC expansion a success

The expansion program on the Northern Branch Canal is now complete, with the additional joint customer and MI funded works complementing the government modernisation program.

The expansion program will allow new control structures to be utilised to their full extent - effectively doubling the canal's delivery capacity. Expanding the capacity of the NBC will allow us to deliver more water and higher flow rates to better meet the needs of customers' farming operations.

### NBC and LVBC lining nearing completion

In conjunction with the Main Canal upgrade, we took the opportunity to line around 26km of channel on the Northern Branch Canal and Lake View Branch Canal. Both these projects are nearing completion, with water being taken along most sections of these canals.

The newly lined channels are different and very slippery. We are building fencing in key areas but in the meantime will operate the channels at low levels to minimise risk. Please do not swim in channels and ensure children and pets are kept away from/out of the channels.

### Additional \$38M PIOP3 funding

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Barnaby Joyce, announced earlier this month that MI will receive a further \$38 million to implement additional works under Round Three of the Australian Government's Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program (PIOP3) in New South Wales. This represents a total investment of over \$347 million by the Australian Government in critical water saving projects in the MIA.

### South-West Division modernisation works – EOI's sought

In 2017/18, we will be undertaking modernisation works throughout the south-western part of our network. This will include the Sturt Canal and Benerembah channel systems, as well as the Tabbita and Wah Wah districts. The works are being funded by the Australian Government through the Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operator's Program (PIIOP).

The modernisation works will result in the automation of these systems, including customer outlets. This will involve the upgrade of regulating structures as well as some channel refurbishment.

Work on the South-West Division modernisation program has already commenced with the channel survey work being conducted in the area. Where access is possible, automation and outlet renewal works will continue throughout the current irrigation season, with major works are scheduled for 2018.

## Additional works to increase capacity

We are investigating the opportunity to undertake additional works that would significantly increase the capacity of our south western channel systems.

The increased capacity works are outside the scope of the government funding and would need to be funded jointly by MI and customers. Additional works could include channel widening, replacement of smaller culverts and enlarging regulator capacity along the system.

As a first step, we are talking to customers in these areas to understand their future farming plans and to gauge the level of interest in taking up extra flow rate (DEs). If there is a strong level of interest we will prepare a full cost-benefit analysis for the additional works program. This will include the cost of customer capital contribution that would be required.

The additional expansion program will only go ahead if there is clear customer support and after a formal cost benefit review has been conducted. Prior to any expansion works we will confirm customer interest in taking up additional flow rate (DEs). This will be done through a formal expression of interest process.

If you have any questions or would like more information on the modernisation works or expansion opportunity please call (02) 6962 0200.

## AGM

The nineteenth Annual General Meeting of shareholders will be held on Monday 13 November 2017 at the Historic Hydro Motor Inn. Registration is from 7pm, for a 7.30pm start.

The nomination period for member-elected directors is now open, and will close at 5pm on Thursday 14 September.

The window for submission of shareholder resolutions is also open, and will close at 5pm on Monday 11 September 2017.

## New operational areas

We are transforming how we run our water operations, which will increase our efficiency, reduce costs for customers, and improve our teamwork across operations and the business. These changes include three new operational areas - North (largely Mirrool), East (largely Yanco) and South-West (Sturt and Wah Wah) – as well as the amalgamation of some existing Irrigation Divisions.

These changes are part of our ongoing commitment to providing customers with the service you want at the fairest possible price.

If you need to contact your division operator and you are in a new division your call will be redirected. Please don't hesitate to leave a message for the planner if you are unsure about how to contact your division operator or need assistance with your water order. If you wish to update your contact details please call us on 6962 0200.



PHOTO: MI Chairman Frank Sergi and MI General Manager Delivery, Jody Rudd, showing Member for Farrer Sussan Ley over recent modernisation works at Roaches Regulator.

## MI additional annual water allocation (2017/18)

We are pleased to provide a 4% additional annual water allocation to eligible customers as a result of company water savings and efficiency measures.

If you are eligible for the additional water allocation, it will have been automatically credited to your water allocation account. Your available water balance, including any additional water, is listed on your EASYWATER water statement (See our website [www.mirrigation.com.au](http://www.mirrigation.com.au) and click on the EASYWATER logo). Please don't hesitate to contact Customer Services on 6962 0200 if you require assistance with EASYWATER or would like more information on delivery entitlements.

## Safety update: driving in wet conditions

Driving in wet conditions The NSW Roads and Maritime Services reminds road users that driving in wet conditions should always be conducted with caution.

**Slow down:** In normal conditions, it's recommended that you leave a three second gap between you and the car ahead – in the wet, try to double this.

**Take it easy:** You need to take extra care in all aspects of your driving. Accelerate and steer smoothly. Avoid slamming on the brakes – apply steady pressure.

**Look out:** Make sure you can see and be seen.

**Watch out:** Keep an eye out for water on the road. Sometimes water can gather in dips or unseen potholes, creating deceptively deep pools.

**Patience:** The most important thing is to be patient