

Media Release

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Projects deliver best outcomes

Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) has highlighted the success of its infrastructure upgrades over the past decade as a better alternative to water buybacks, following the Commonwealth Government's announcement to expand its voluntary water purchase program in the southern connected Basin.

MI Chief Executive Officer, Philip Holliday, said the company has worked closely with governments for more than 15 years to reduce water losses caused by aging infrastructure, with significant results.

"We remain committed partners in continuing this positive approach," Mr Holliday said.

Since modernisation works began in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA) in 2010, MI has maintained the same volumes of water delivered to irrigators. The major improvement has been a dramatic reduction in conveyance water - the water required to move supply through the network, which includes losses from seepage, evaporation, and operational inefficiencies.

"Thanks to efficiency gains from infrastructure projects, we've cut conveyance water by around two-thirds compared to pre-modernisation levels," Mr Holliday explained.

He acknowledged that some irrigators have little choice but to participate in the buyback program, given rising cost pressures.

"We understand the difficult decisions these individuals face," he said.

"However, we believe there are better solutions than removing productive water from regional communities."

Mr Holliday emphasised that addressing water quality issues, reducing losses, and delivering targeted environmental improvements provides the best outcomes for both the environment and the socio-economic wellbeing of regional Australia, while safeguarding food security.

"We remain committed to working with all stakeholders to achieve these goals," he said.

"The MIA is the nation's food bowl, and we have always been determined to protect, promote, and enhance the natural assets of this region."

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