



# Summary Information Sheet

## Board Meeting 170

Held in Melbourne on Wednesday 8 April 2009

### *A summary of information and deliberations*

Stephen Mills  
Chairman

Craig Cook  
Deputy Chairman

Catherine Scott  
Director (apology)

Peter Fitzgerald  
Director

Claire Penniceard  
Director

Des Powell  
Director

John Brooke OAM  
Director

David Stewart  
Managing Director

Russell Barnier  
Corporate Secretary

For queries regarding this information sheet, please contact Russell Barnier, Corporate Secretary, on telephone 5833 5769 or email [russellb@g-mwater.com.au](mailto:russellb@g-mwater.com.au)

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### **Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed all in attendance and acknowledged director Des Powell and managers Graeme Hannan and Shane McGrath who recently passed their AICD qualification.

### **Governance Report**

#### Conflicts of Interest

- a) The Chairman advised the Board that he was involved in a reconfiguration project on farm with NVIRP which involved himself and several irrigators using the same channel distribution system.
- b) The Board noted the appointment of Des Powell as a Commissioner to the State Services Authority.
- c) In a general discussion, the Board noted that Directors who are irrigators brought their experience to the table but care was required when discussing irrigation issues which should be discussed as board members and not as interested individuals.

The Board agreed to further consider open and transparent methods of dealing with issues as a board when some directors may have a personal interest in the topic discussed. Some guidance may be given by the Public Service Act which addresses perceived conflicts of interest.

## **Authority to sign water transfer applications**

The Board considered the proposal to authorise the Corporate Secretary to sign water transfers on behalf of Goulburn-Murray Water and passed the following resolution –

“Resolved that the General Counsel and Corporate Secretary be and is hereby authorised to sign Form 1 – Water transfer Applications and follow up documents (other than where the Corporate Seal is required, in which case normal delegations apply) on behalf of Goulburn-Murray Water.”

## **Board Improvement Plan – Board Charter**

To further support good governance procedures, a Board Charter was approved. The Charter covers such issues as –

- Functions of the Board
- Responsibilities of the Board
- Composition of the Board
- Directors
- Disclosure of pecuniary interests
- Chairman
- Managing Director
- Delegations
- Matters reserved for Board
- Meetings of the Board
- Board Committees
- Self Assessment

## **NVIRP Coordination Committee Report and Charter**

The Board approved the amended Charter and confirmed the reporting role of the Committee back to the Board. The role of the Committee ties into the joint G-MW / NVIRP Coordination Committee which was established to form a link between the two boards to assist undertaking the various requirements of the modernisation program. The joint Committee meets regularly and has as its members two directors from G-MW (Catherine Scott and Craig Cook) and two members from the NVIRP board.

## **Finance and Management Audit Committee**

J Brooke gave a report on the proceedings of the Committee at its latest meeting, which included -

- a) Revisiting the proposal of spreading the pumping costs of the Waranga Basin evenly across all customers, including those that did not receive any water in the process.
- b) A paper on recent billing errors was considered. Management is addressing contributory factors to this error.
- c) The Committee endorsed recommendations on water pricing increases provided by all the WSC's.

## **Strategy**

The Board considered that a joint vision would be useful for the NVIRP and G-MW Boards which would focus attention on the outcome of modernisation and the role of the two organisations in undertaking the project. J Brooke proposed the following, which will be formally put to G-MW / NVIRP Coordination Committee to discuss –

“Within ten years, every gravity irrigator will be connected to the backbone, using equipment that will be owned and managed by them.”

## **Goulburn-Murray Water Business Model**

The Board considered a paper detailing progress on the development of the G-MW business model and noted the next stages, which included benchmarking and external review.

## **Managing Director's Report**

The Board noted the Managing Director will be taking two days leave after Easter and passed the following resolution to appoint an acting Managing Director -

“Resolved that Darren Nabbs, General Manager Business Modernisation, be and is hereby appointed Acting Managing Director for the period 10 to 15 April 2009 inclusive, in the absence of David Stewart.”

## **General Manager Operations Report**

The report, presented by the General Manager Operations, was noted with the following matters discussed –

- There have been record low inflows into the system
- Predictions are for drier than average conditions over the next three months
- 23 meters were destroyed in the recent fires
- a proposed amendment to the Mokoan BE will be presented to the June meeting of the Board
- the Irrigation Australia Conference will be held in Swan Hill on 18 – 21 October, with G-MW proposing \$5,000 sponsorship in a combination of cash and in-kind assistance.

The Board approved \$5000 sponsorship in cash and kind (the latter being conference assistance) for the Irrigation Australia conference and requested Management to put forward a G-MW Sponsorship Policy to the next Board meeting.

## **Review of Gravity Irrigation Water Service Committees**

The Board considered a report following the review of Gravity Irrigation Water Services Committees. It was noted that the results of the review will be shared with the WSC's as soon as possible.

## **Waranga Basin Water Savings Proposal**

- a) A report on possible water savings in the Waranga Basin has been funded by Coliban Water after being jointly announced in 2008 by Coliban Water and G-MW. The report has been passed for assessment and any further work to NVIRP by the Department of Sustainability and the Environment.
- b) The Chairman received a letter from the Deputy Chairman of Pyramid-Boort WSC claiming possible conflict and incorrect statements purportedly made in relation to the study by a Director of G-MW. The Board also noted a resolution of the Central Goulburn WSC along similar lines.

## **General Manager Business Modernisation Report**

The General Manager Business Modernisation presented his report to the Board, which was duly noted.

The Board was advised that issues relating to the Shepparton East pipeline will in future be dealt with between the Department of Sustainability & Environment and NVIRP.

## **General Manager Technical Services Report**

The report presented by the General Manager Technical Services was discussed, with the following noted –

- The DSE audit on drinking water quality was picked up in the local press with G-MW rating low in some categories including water quality. The press were advised that G-MW does not provide drinking water, only irrigation water. G-MW will make representations to DHS that the next audit differentiates between rural and urban water providers and the reporting of responses.

## **General Manager Corporate Services Report**

The Acting General Manager Corporate Services presented his report, which was noted by the Board. The following was discussed -

- The water price increases recommended by the WSC's for the 2009/10 pricing year were recommended by FMAC for approval. The Board approved the increases
- The Board requested that the Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate be benchmarked in the OHS Report against other organisations for comparative purposes
- The current work in progress draft of the Corporate Plan was considered by the Board, noting that it was due for submission by 30 April, 2009.

## **Board Reports**

The Board noted the following reports –

- Workforce Reports
- The Finance Report
- The Capital Performance Report

As part of an ongoing assessment method adopted by the Board, Director Claire Penniceard gave her views on the performance of Directors, Management and the general decision making process at the Board meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm

David Stewart  
Managing Director

Russell Barnier  
Corporate Secretary

20 April, 2009

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