

Irrigation news

Confirm your water ownership now

Default ownership arrangements will take effect for any unconfirmed water shares from **31 December 2008** and this may not be the preferred structure for some customers. G-MW has been contacting customers and assisting them in confirming their shares - if you have not resolved your unconfirmed shares

please contact G-MW and we will work with you to assist this process.

After 31 December, changes to the ownership structure will incur water register lodgement fees. You can check whether you have unconfirmed water shares by contacting G-MW on 03 5833 5533.

Talk to a planner

A trial is underway in Central Goulburn and Shepparton (where most of the channel automation has been undertaken) to make a planner available for contact from 7am up to 11pm, 7 days a week. We know that farmers don't knock off according to regular office hours so if you need to talk to a planner use option 4 on WaterLINE.

If the planner is busy on other calls then leave a message and if it's before 11pm the planner will get it. It is hoped that this facility will improve customer service as part of modernisation roll out and become a normal feature. Let us know what you think. Contact the Area office for details.

Web ordering / information

Web ordering offers a quick and easy way to carry out your water ordering transactions, and access information on your Allocated Bank Account(s). To access this facility, go to the G-MW website (www.g-mwater.com.au), click on WaterLINE, enter your usual User name & PIN number, and follow the prompts.

Useful information

Where can I find my Allocation Bank Account (ABA) numbers or get a water statement?

You can find your ABA number via WaterLINE online at G-MW's website. Simply log in with your current user and pin number and follow the prompts.

contacts

G-MW can be contacted during normal business hours at any of its offices. Customers may contact G-MW to report emergencies and urgent matters such as reporting of pollution incidents and illegal activities by using the after hours 24 hours emergency line: **1800 064 184**

WSC MEMBERS

Ross Crawford (Chair)	03 5854 8356
Kelvin Bruce (Deputy Chair)	03 5826 0442
Ray Sellwood	03 5826 0322
Murray McDonald	03 5484 6226
Gerardo Fasano	03 5824 1128
Paul Quirk	03 5824 2589
Peter Costello	03 5859 0557
Kevin Fitzsimmons	03 5855 2220
Ken Wood	03 5855 2481

TMB 7703



Central Goulburn

Message from WSC Chair

The continuing dry conditions and low allocations are challenging us all. We are in uncharted territory with irrigators and Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) operating the systems, it is not business as usual.

This past year has also seen a number of far reaching policy developments and as your representatives we have been actively involved in informing and shaping the final outcomes. Over recent weeks you will have had opportunity to attend meetings held by the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP) at which they have detailed progress on the project including the scope of the system backbone that will be modernised. Our Water Services Committee (WSC) has been meeting with NVIRP since early in the year and through regular meetings and discussion we have ensured the future needs and current concerns of customers from across the Area are reflected in the project and its delivery.

The WSC have also been very actively involved in shaping outcomes of the Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy

(NRSWS) to ensure that we can meet the challenges of a potentially drier future. The range of challenges and ongoing drought have emphasised the importance of strong and active WSCs that ensure your views and the views of irrigators across the region are heard by decision makers. Our contributions are greatly valued by G-MW, with Board and Executive managers attending 50 of the 86 WSC meetings held last year across G-MW. To make this happen, Committee members commit to a heavy schedule of meetings and discussions and meet at least monthly to scrutinise G-MW business and activity and advocate for improved outcomes. WSC chairs meet regularly as a Leadership group to coordinate positions and inform the decision making of G-MW and other Government agencies on significant issues. I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their time and input over what has been a very intense and challenging year.

We have many challenges to come including the efficient roll out of



Ross Crawford

modernisation across our systems and the potential impacts of the Federal Government water buy backs. We will be advocating for positions that reflect the interests of G-MW customers and communities dependant on irrigation in Northern Victoria.

We wish all our customers a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and also thank you for your support and input over the past year.

Ross Crawford
Chair
Central Goulburn WSC

Planning over the Christmas period

All irrigators are encouraged to plan their water needs for the coming Christmas and New Year period. If you are intending to trade water please confirm your brokers' and/or exchanges' operating dates and deadlines and allow sufficient time for your trades to be executed and processed.

G-MW is also interested to hear from anyone planning to take delivery of water over the Christmas and New Year period so we can continue to work with customers to run the system as efficiently as possible.

Christmas trading hours

The Central Goulburn Tatura Office will be closed to the public from 1pm on 24th as well as 25th and 26th December and 1st January. Please use WaterLINE for all your ordering requirements or to leave a message for your Planner.



Message from Operations Manager & staff

Management and staff of G-MW Central Goulburn Area thank customers for their high level of cooperation in the past year in these adverse circumstances and wish all a happy Christmas and fulfilling 2009.

Daniel Irwin
Acting Manager
Central Goulburn Operations

2009 Season Update

Start of season issues

Some customers may have experienced supply interruptions at the start of the season. This has been caused by two main factors;

1. Drought operation mode – G-MW is running the channel system differently to a normal year. We are keeping channels low between deliveries to minimise losses and make more water available to customers. This means we have to increase levels prior to irrigations and therefore consistent deliveries are more difficult.
2. Manual operation of new regulators - In areas where we have installed new automated regulators they have to be operated manually before we commission them completely and then “tune” the channel system. When all regulators have been commissioned and the channels tuned, we will begin to see the improved system management made possible by the new technology.

Thankyou for your continued cooperation and understanding during this time, and if you are experiencing any supply issues please contact your Area planner immediately.

Improving customer service

Coming soon - new WaterLINE online on the way

In 2007/08 the number of customers' using our online ordering service nearly tripled. To support your growing use of this service G-MW is planning a new web ordering facility with enhanced services. The new services will make the most of the online environment and the information that will be available to G-MW and its customers from the new modernised system. All the current features that make the current online ordering easy will remain plus;

- New improved look and easier navigation;
- Meter read entry – this will enable customers to enter meter readings and get updated entitlement remaining information
- Graphical channel capacity – customers can see available channel capacity to help ordering in advance
- Messaging – customers can send and receive messages and other important communications

The new WaterLINE will roll out in 2009 and will be accompanied by comprehensive customer information and training.

NRSWS

The Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy (NRSWS) is developing a 50 year blueprint to guide water management across northern Victoria to meet the challenges of a drier future. WSCs have been actively involved in this process, providing ongoing feedback and formal submissions. WSCs views on the proposed NRSWS strategy will be submitted to the NRSWS Committee in mid December. Visit <http://www.gmwater.com.au/policy/> to find out more about the NRSWS and how you can provide input into this process.

Modernisation and reconfiguration update

From 1 November 2008, G-MW's reconfiguration program has shifted under the management of Northern Victoria Infrastructure Renewal Project (NVIRP). This means all reconfiguration initiatives across the region will be funded, driven and delivered by the one organisation with a common approach and criteria on key aspects including financial compensation. To assist with the seamless transfer G-MW reconfiguration staff have been seconded to NVIRP and G-MW Reconfiguration Working Groups will become NVIRP's Modernisation Committees and will provide input on the entire NVIRP roll out. The WSC has been involved with discussions with NVIRP on the development guidelines and the extent of the proposed automated backbone and members will continue an active oversight role as the project progresses.

Reconfiguration offers submitted to G-MW before 1 November will be delivered by G-MW, offers received after that date will be delivered by NVIRP.

NVIRP has commenced their consultation program with a number of well attended community forums held across G-MW. An integral part of this process was the release of the location of the core automated-backbone system, further details of the connections program, and information of the year 2 works programs. Copies of the backbone maps can be obtained from NVIRP's new website at www.nvirp.com.au or your local area office.

2009 Works Program

In the winter of 2008 over 750 automated gates were installed in the Central Goulburn Area and replacement of meters has commenced. It is planned to complete the automation of the backbone in the winter of 2009, which will require an additional 260 automated gates to be installed. An extensive consultation program will commence early in the New Year to provide property owners with time to plan for these changes and to advise of precise locations for all planned works.

CGI-4 modernisation delivers

A massive reduction in system outfalls, which include spills and releases that overtop channel banks, in the Central Goulburn 1 to 4 channel systems has been attributed to channel automation. This system was one of the first to be modernised and in 2007/08 we had only 25 ML of outfall compared to 1,850 ML in 2002/03 (in both seasons allocations were 57%). In 2002/03 deliveries were higher but the results are still outstanding - in 2007/08 G-MW delivered more than 1500 ML onto farm for every 1 ML of outfalls – in 2002/03 we delivered around 30 ML onto farm for every 1 ML of outfall. The technology has improved G-MW's ability to monitor, control and respond to changes in customer demand and the CGI-4 results are evidence that the new technology can improve system performance and reduce water losses in all seasons – including dry years.

Future service standards under modernisation

G-MW and NVIRP have committed to principles that service levels must be improved under the modernisation of the system. The channel systems will still have capacity limits and so in peak periods everyone still won't be able to access water at the same time. All customers will need to order deliveries; however, the notice required for delivery in most circumstances will be significantly reduced. The more notice you give the better the chance of getting water when you want it. When a channel is fully automated then confirmation of the order delivery will be instantaneous via WaterLINE.

NVIRP/G-MW Memorandum of Understanding



Left to right: Murray Smith NVIRP CEO, Stephen Mills, G-MW Chair, Richard Guy, NVIRP Chair, David Stewart G-MW MD.

G-MW and NVIRP have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to define roles and responsibilities for the modernisation of G-MW's systems. NVIRP have been charged with the responsibility to modernise G-MW's system and deliver water savings while G-MW must allow access to sites and ensure that customer entitlements and service levels can be delivered while the work progresses. The document provides the framework and specifies cooperative arrangements to ensure efficient project planning and delivery.

Continued service during modernisation

G-MW will continue to operate the existing channel network to supply water to all customers - including customers not located on the NVIRP backbone. Modernisation of the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District channel system by NVIRP will continue through to December 2012.

New WSC Member Profiles

Kevin Fitzsimmons



Current Committee: A member of the Water Services Committee

Family: I am 50 years old, married to Faye and have 3 children.

Occupation: I am a third generation dairy farmer at Merrigum. After leaving school I completed a farm apprenticeship then later a farm management course with the Department of Agriculture. I then worked for several years with the Ford Motor Company (tractor division) as an area manager servicing firstly Central New South Wales and then far North Queensland before returning to farming.

Goals/Ambitions: In becoming a member of the Water Services Committee, my aim is to contribute to the future of our irrigation system in the Goulburn and Murray Valley areas. As you are all aware with the current roll out of the modernisation and rationalisation of our irrigation system, we must get it right.