

Diversions News

Allocation and Outlooks

2009/10 Irrigation Allocations - Regulated Systems

The seasonal allocations for all regulated water systems in Northern Victoria commenced at zero at the start of the traditional irrigation season. On the 15 September 2009 the Murray system reached an allocation of 13% and the allocation on the Goulburn system commenced at 7%.

System	15 September Allocation
Murray	13%
Broken	0%
Goulburn	7%
Campaspe	0%
Loddon	0%
Bullarook	0%

2009/10 Irrigation Season Allocation Outlooks

G-MW updated the allocation outlooks for the 2009/10 Season on 15 September 2009. The outlooks are based on observed inflows in seasons following dry autumn and winter inflows, which provide an adjustment for reduced runoff caused by dry catchments. The allocation outlook will be updated on the 1st and 15th of each month (or next business day). Log on at www.g-mwater.com.au for current updates.

Groundwater Management Unit	Zone	Allocation
Katunga Water Supply Protection Area	All Zones	70%
Campaspe Deep Lead Water Supply Protection Area	All Zones	50%
Spring Hill Water Supply Protection Area	All Zones	Refer to Spring Hill allocations table

2009/10 Groundwater Irrigation Season Allocations

All 2009/10 Groundwater Allocations are 100% except for those zones outlined in the tables below. Customers can access current allocation information on G-MW's website: www.g-mwater.com.au

Spring Hill Allocation table	
Spring Hill Zone	Allocation
• Mollonghip Zone 1001	100%
• Blampied Zone 1002	80%
• Forrest Hill Zone 1003	50%
• Smeaton Zone 1004	100%

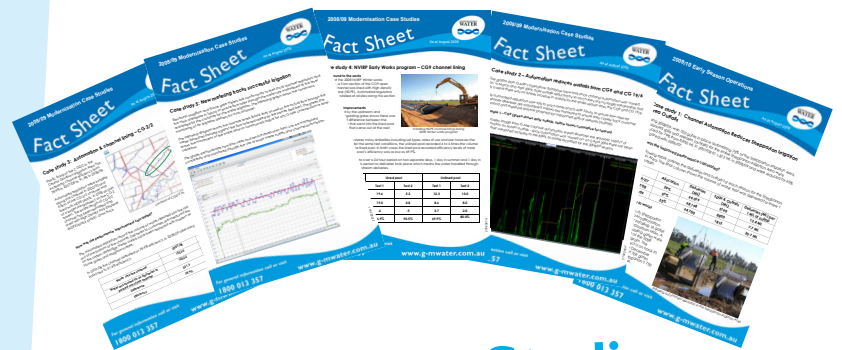
Customer Survey

G-MW seeks the views of customers on the quality of the service it provides and importantly how it can further improve these services in an annual survey.

The survey is undertaken annually with 20% of its customers representing channel irrigation, river diversion and groundwater users across an area of 68,000 square kilometers, roughly the size of Tasmania.

The information gathered in the survey is extremely valuable for G-MW to gauge its performance and identify areas for change or improvements.

Results from the survey, expected to be complete before September 2009, will be used to guide G-MW business operations and services to its 32,000 customers.



G-MW Case Studies

Modernisation of northern Victoria's irrigation network is already delivering dividends for farmers and other water users across Northern Victoria according to five case studies released by the region's system manager G-MW.

At this early stage of the 5-10 year modernisation program G-MW wanted to provide the broader community with some tangible examples of how channel automation, channel lining and new meters are improving the operation of the system, improving water efficiency and also enhancing our services to our customers. Losses like spills, seepage, leakage and meter error all delay allocations and also reduce the amount of water that is available for allocation and delivery to farmers, local communities and the environment.

All case studies are available from the G-MW website www.g-mwater.com.au/modernisationcasestudies

Web Use Increase

The end of the 2008/09 irrigation season marked an increase in ordering over the internet by irrigation customers by 50%. As customers become aware of the new features available and how easy it is to use, G-MW anticipates the use of internet ordering will increase into the future.

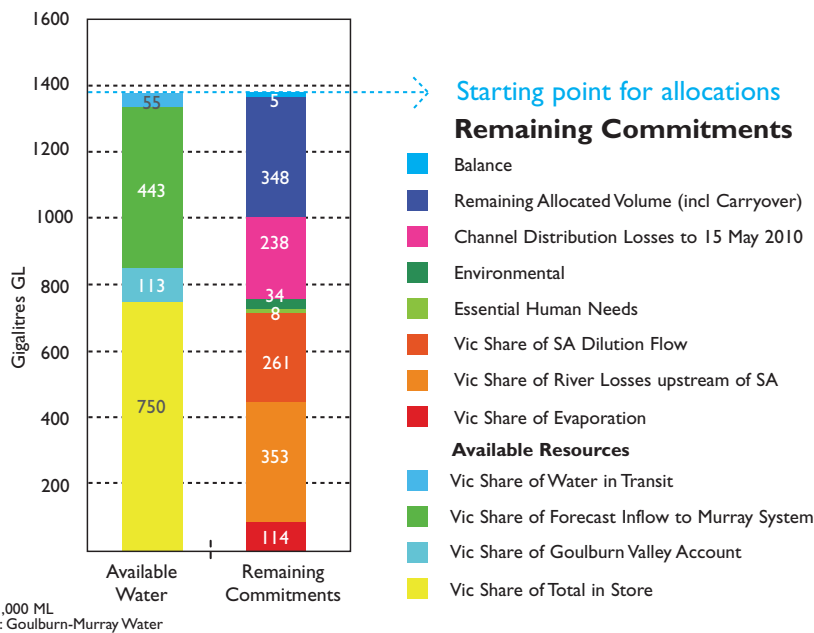
On average, 350 orders were processed each and every day of the 2008/09 irrigation season, with one third of those orders placed through the internet.

Placing orders via G-MW's traditional WaterLINE phone service continues to be available and used by many customers, but we are seeing a larger proportion of our customers take up internet as their preferred method of ordering water.

Water Allocations – Information On Resource Position

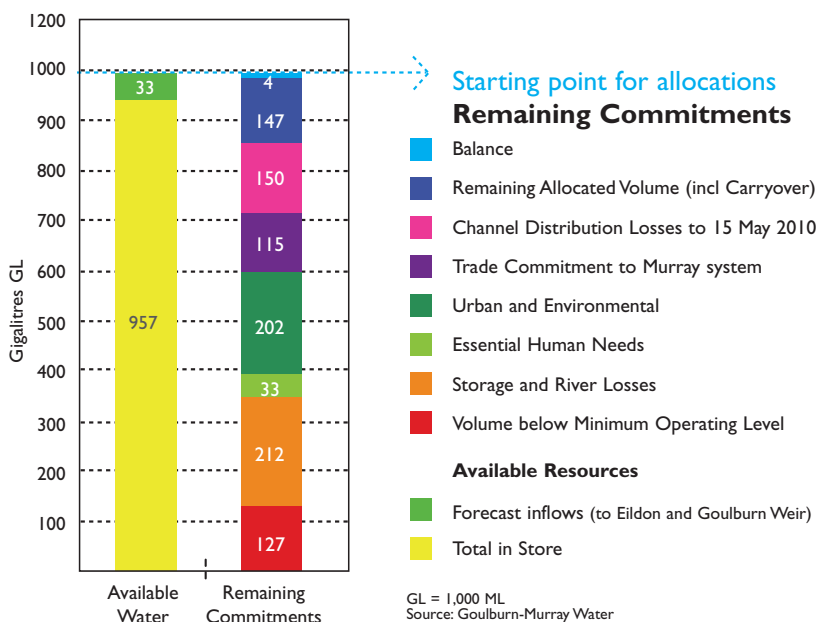
G-MW released the first information on 2009 allocations and resources on the 1st of July 2009 and will provide updates on the 1st & 15th of each month or next business day. At 1 July 2009 there was insufficient resources to enable allocations on any of G-MW's six regulated systems including the Murray, Goulburn, Broken, Campaspe, Bullarook and Loddon Systems.

To provide customers access to detailed information on the resource position, in particular what is the shortfall before allocations are made, G-MW has established "Rocket Diagrams" indicating details of the volume of water available and commitments to be met prior to allocations being made. The two diagrams included below indicate the position on the Murray & Goulburn systems as at 15 September 2009. Current information on all systems is available on G-MW's website www.g-mwater.com.au under the Customers Services/G-MW Drought Response tabs.



Breakdown of water in store and commitments
15 September 2009

Murray System



Breakdown of water in store and commitments
15 September 2009

Goulburn System

Managing use within Entitlement

G-MW reminds all customers that use must be managed within licence entitlement. If temporary transfer of entitlement is available in your area you must ensure a transfer is approved by G-MW before any use additional to your licence entitlement volume occurs.

It is important that groundwater customers do not assume that use in excess of licence entitlement can be included as Domestic and Stock allowance. Customers should contact their local Diversion Inspector who will provide advice as to the calculation of a reasonable domestic and stock allowance.

Customers who use in excess of their entitlement face the risk of prosecution for breaching licence conditions or cancellation of their licence.

Rostered Restrictions

If rostered restrictions are applied, all licence holders with Irrigation Entitlements are sent a copy of the roster spreadsheet and personal roster calendar. Pump times are found on the spreadsheet and calendar. You are only entitled to pump on the days highlighted on the calendar between the hours shown.

Licence holders who have traded water for the season have their pumping hours adjusted accordingly.

Rural Support Line 1300 655 969
Lifeline 131 114
Beyondblue 1300 224 636

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**

Tatura	03 5833 5740
Shepparton	03 5832 9957
Rochester	03 5484 0415
Cairn Curran	03 5475 2049
Cobram	03 5871 0112
Wangaratta	03 5723 2501

TMB 7896



Diversions

newsletter

New WaterLINE number - 1300 469 469



Lindsay Jarvis OAM
Chair Murray System WSC

Craig Madden
Chair Regional Groundwater WSC

Alan Rothacker
Chair Goulburn System WSC

Message from Alan Rothacker

An often quoted piece of philosophy is "that the more things change, the more they remain the same". Rapid change has been a feature of irrigated agriculture and "things" are definitely not remaining the same.

The current ongoing drought has been unprecedented in its length and severity since record keeping began in the 1890's. We are reliant on improved rainfall during the spring period.

The Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy was released for community comment late last year and our Water Services Committees made submissions on issues that affect diverters, groundwater and Domestic and Stock users. Of particular interest are the system reserve policy, carryover policy, farm dams and management of unregulated water harvesting and groundwater supply protection and management. This strategy is to form the basis of allocation and management of our river basins and groundwater reserves. I urge all Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) customers to make an effort to keep informed of changes that occur.

We are concerned about likely increased charges due to metering requirements and potential increased maintenance requirements to meet national measurement standards.

The Water Services Unit of G-MW is undergoing internal management changes to bring local

management closer to customers. A Steering Committee comprising of Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the Murray, Goulburn and Regional Groundwater Committees has also been formed to review the structure of the Water Services Committees.

A Catchment Committee workshop was held in September seeking feedback on options and direction on a preferred WSC structure model for the future. Both the Code of Conduct and Charter for customer representative committees has also been revised.

From dry creeks and dams that are unable to supply Domestic and Stock water, falling groundwater levels and severely reduced or nil allocation to the closure of Lake Mokoan, G-MW customers are having their economic and emotional resilience tested like never before. G-MW and their staff are trying to distribute a scarce resource equitably in line with Government policy. Your representatives are a link between customers and G-MW and will bring any concerns and issues to the attention of G-MW.

I sincerely hope the coming spring can bring well above average rainfall to all customers of G-MW.

Regards
Alan Rothacker
Goulburn System WSC Chair

Local Management Rules for Groundwater Resources in the Mid Loddon Catchment

Local Management Rules for groundwater resources in the Mid-Loddon Groundwater Management Area came into effect on the 1st of July 2009. The Mid-Loddon Groundwater Management Area stretches from Tullaroop Reservoir to Mitiamo in the Loddon catchment, encompassing the towns of Carisbrook, Bridgewater, Serpentine and Calivil.

G-MW's adoption of the Local Management Rules marks the start of the roll-out of improved management arrangements for water resources across Northern Victoria. The introduction of Local Management Rules was a recommendation of the Draft Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy. G-MW is the first water corporation to progress new management arrangements for groundwater following from the Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy (NRSWS).

The Local Management Rules provide a specific operational framework that protects existing groundwater users and the environment while providing opportunities for further development in the region. Significant technical work has led to a better understanding of the aquifer system and how it responds to groundwater pumping and drier climatic conditions.

The development of the Local Management Rules was a community driven process in response to falling groundwater levels. The rules were developed by a Groundwater Reference Committee comprising groundwater users from the Mid Loddon area who were committed to producing rules to enable equitable and sustainable management of groundwater resources.

For further information contact Brendan Cossens on 03 5833 5437.



Back Row - Rob Rendell (RMCG), Garry Addlem, Ian Connaughton, Brendan Cossens (G-MW), Max Blackmore, Graham Morse, Frank Maher

Front Row - Matt Barden (G-MW), Chris Pollock, Dianne Bunnnett, Phillip Macumber (Consulting Hydrogeologist), Barry O'Donnell (G-MW), Jock Leishman (NCCMA), Simon Cowan (G-MW) absent

Committee to Consider Water Management in the Upper Ovens Valley

The Upper Ovens River Water Management Plan Consultative Committee held its first meeting in June. The Committee is made up in equal parts of local residents (including irrigators) and Government agency representatives. Chairman of the Committee is Bright resident, Mr. Alan Barlee.

Groundwater in the alluvial sediments of the Valley is strongly connected to the Ovens River. The plan will

recognise this connection and the Upper Ovens River Management Plan will be the first in Victoria to combine the management of both groundwater and unregulated surface water.

It is anticipated that a discussion paper will be released for public comment mid way through 2010. The Committee is due to submit a draft plan to the Minister in November 2010.

2009 Season Update

Works Authorisation and Approvals

Any alterations to your Diversion works should be discussed with your local Diversion Inspector before commencing. Some works require authorisation and you will need to obtain a works licence issue or amendment.

All works on a Waterway require prior authorisation and approval by G-MW. Upon approval you will be issued with a works licence – no works may be undertaken without this authorisation.

All works or excavations on the bed and banks of a waterway requires prior approval from G-MW and other relevant agencies.

What constitutes a Waterway is not always clear to landowners. If you are proposing any works such as excavations, embankments, drainage works etc please seek prior confirmation from G-MW to see if approval is required.

It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary permits.

Failure to obtain relevant authorisations prior to undertaking works may result in prosecution.

Carryover

The delivery of carryover depends on G-MW securing enough water to meet system operating requirements. Then depending on the system;

Diverters drawing water directly from the Murray River or Goulburn River can access allocations in Allocation Bank Accounts (ABA) (including allocation carried over from 08/09) but must lodge and have orders confirmed through WaterLINE prior to taking that water.

For diverters on the Broken, Campaspe or Loddon Rivers – there is not yet enough water to guarantee that the river system will operate continuously for the whole year. Diverters have access to water for essential needs, but do not have access to water for irrigation.

NRSWS Update

The Northern Region Sustainable Water Strategy (NRSWS) aims to analyse all aspects of water management in the region, share the findings with the community, and determine a fair and sustainable balance between urban, industrial, agricultural and environmental water needs.

The major urban centres covered by the Northern Region are Mildura, Swan Hill, Echuca, Bendigo, Shepparton, Seymour, Benalla, Wangaratta and Wodonga.

The draft report is now being considered by the Victorian Government and may be available in September 2009. Copies of the draft strategy and project updates are available on <http://www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/programs/sws/northern>

Operations Plans

With low water allocations again likely for the 2009/10 season G-MW will continue to provide Operation Plans for each of its Irrigation Areas and regulated systems to provide customers information on how these systems will be operated. These plans will be updated following each allocation announcement which occur on the 1st and 15th of each month (or the next business day). The Operation Plans specify how customers can access water for essential household needs, Domestic and Stock and where delivery of any water in Allocation Bank Accounts might be possible, including allocation carried over from 2008/09. Operation Plans are especially important when the seasonal allocation is less than 1% of high-reliability water share. Operating Plans are available on the G-MW website

www.g-mwater.com.au

Changes to Licence Format

Groundwater & Unregulated Diverters will notice a change to the format of any licence that is issued from August 31. The new licenses will be issued from the Water Register.

New G-MW Customer Service Centre at Wangaratta

Goulburn-Murray Water's new office in Wangaratta will bring the North East diversions and dam's management staff to one location and provide local customers with an opportunity to discuss their G-MW service enquiry in person.

Stephen Gemmill, North East Coordinator has 15 years experience with G-MW and will provide a new front line contact point for customers.

The Wangaratta Office will be open from 8 am to 4:45 pm Monday to Friday and can be contacted on phone (03) 5723 2501 or fax (03) 5723 2535

New WSC Charter Code of Conduct

Water Services Committees are an important part of G-MW's consultative arrangements. The primary role of these Committees is to provide advice to G-MW Board on a range of operational and policy matters. One of the key areas these Committees influence is that of price/service trade off. WSC's provide full and frank advice and represent a range of customer views, often engaging in vigorous debate with G-MW and other authorities. Committees are often faced with challenging and competing issues, members bring diverse views to meetings and consensus is not always easy to gain within these meetings. Strong positive debate is encouraged and ensures better outcomes for the customers they represent.

The Water Industry has and continues to be increasingly complex and has become a critical political issue. To ensure WSC's remain effective, members are clear about their role and display acceptable conduct in the key role of representing fellow irrigators. G-MW is reviewing the Code of Conduct and Charter for WSC's.

The new Charter and Code of Conduct will clarify the roles, responsibilities and set standards for personal and Committee behaviors. G-MW values WSC inputs and wants to ensure members and Committees continue to contribute to debate and policy development. It is anticipated that the revised Charter and Code will be available on G-MW's website from late September.

Carryover changes and delivery

The use of carryover as a method to help manage security during times of low allocation has been well accepted by G-MW customers since its introduction in 2007/08. The maximum volume that can be carried over from one year to the next has increased from 30% to 50% of high and low reliability water shares. The Northern Sustainable Water Strategy has proposed that this limit be increased to the equivalent of 100% of high-reliability water share and 100% of low-reliability water share in a concept called a "spillable water account". Along with proposed changes to allocation policies these key concepts should be understood by all irrigators and interested community members. Information is available on the website www.ourwater.vic.gov.au.

Delivery of carryover is dependant on the delivery system operating. Refer to Operations Plans on G-MW's website for more details.

Water for Essential Needs

Holders of water shares are eligible to access water for essential needs under the Qualification of Rights approved by the Minister for Water.

Customers may take water for in house use, stock watering and fire fighting. Dairy wash down is permitted, but watering of gardens and lawns is not allowed under the qualification.

Commercial and industrial businesses that use water in manufacturing can also access water.

Water use will be managed as follows;

- All usage will be accounted through metering or deeming against the allocation available in your Allocation Bank Account (ABA).
- If your allocation does not meet your essential needs as specified in the Qualification of Rights, then additional usage to meet those essential needs is permitted.
- If you plan to irrigate or trade your allocation, you should retain enough allocation to meet your essential needs throughout the season.
- Under no circumstances can usage under the Qualification of Rights exceed the volume of your HRWS.



WSC Member in Focus

– Mac Paton

Current Committee: Mitta Mitta Catchment Committee

Currently resides: Mitta Valley

Born: 10 March 1946

Family: Wife Pat, sons Tom, Archie, David & daughter Lucy

Interests: Farming, Regional Development, Local Government & Family

Goals / Ambitions: See the Dams full again

Three famous people you would invite to dinner: Gary Buswell, Rex Howard & Danny Baker.

Currently Reading: Border Mail

Issues that concern you: Over regulation and too many layers of Government in Australia.

Best place to visit: Melbourne

Best way to spend a weekend: At home with family and friends

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? Continuing to enjoy the Upper North East.