



# Pyramid-Boort

IRRIGATION AREA

## Chairman's Comments

The grass looks greener than it has for some time so lets hope that the rain keeps falling. We still need those good spring rains that have been avoiding us in recent years. The storages are slowly increasing, but not enough to get excited about any allocations yet.

This winter the Northern Victorian Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP) has been undertaking significant works on the Pyramid side of the Pyramid-Boort Irrigation Area. They installed approximately 379 gates on the backbone and also some meter replacements as well. Hopefully we will get a decent allocation so that we can try out this new technology and see what advantages it offers.

Congratulations to Laurie Maxted and Chris Harrison on being re-elected to the Water Services Committee as both are extremely valuable contributors to the Committee.

Whilst NVIRP will be hoping for dry weather to complete their winter works program, irrigators will be hoping the rain keeps falling and we do not need irrigation water until about November.

Hoping for a good water allocation.

Regards,  
John Nelson  
Chairman, Pyramid-Boort Water Services Committee



John Nelson



## Pyramid-Boort Modernisation Works

After a late start due to the weather conditions, the modernisation works begun and are now well on track to achieving approximately 379 gate installations. There are large numbers of machinery, equipment and work teams on the ground making the works happen.

As a result of the contractor's arrival in the area, local businesses have been well supported especially in regard to accommodation and meals.

G-MW appreciates customer's patience and understanding when contractors are required to use their properties to complete the works.

Next winter the works will be west of the Loddon Valley Highway. It is anticipated that backbone channels in this area will be drained and customers are encouraged to consider their options in relation to winter supply now and plan ahead. G-MW staff will provide relevant information to customers who will be affected by these works.

## Long service of Pat Dingwall

We wish to acknowledge and congratulate Pat Dingwall for his continuing long service with G-MW. Pat began working at G-MW in June 1964 and is still with G-MW today.

Pat began working in one of the five work groups that were operating at that time in construction. His main duties were operating spray carts. The spray program included spraying channels, East Loddon D&S, Dinee drains, Mitiamo urban channel and Macorna Salt Drains. Pat then shifted into the plant side of things, driving and operating a variety of machinery before moving into installation of meter tapplings with the Normanville Pipeline System. Pat continues to work in the construction and maintenance team today.

Three generations of the Dingwall family have passed through G-MW gates over the years, including Pat's father, uncle and his two sons Barry and Christian. Pat has vast experience and is a valuable employee for our area.

# Pyramid-Boort Irrigation Area

## Irrigation News

### 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 HRWS and 100% of LRWS 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](http://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.

### 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 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.

### Web Use Increase

The end of the 2008/09 irrigation season marked a 50% increase in ordering over the internet by irrigation customers. 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 continue to increase.

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.

### 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 HRWS as any operation of the system must be within the water available for system operating requirements. Operating Plans are available on the G-MW website

[www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)



### 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 Goulburn-Murray Water (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](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/modernisationcasestudies)

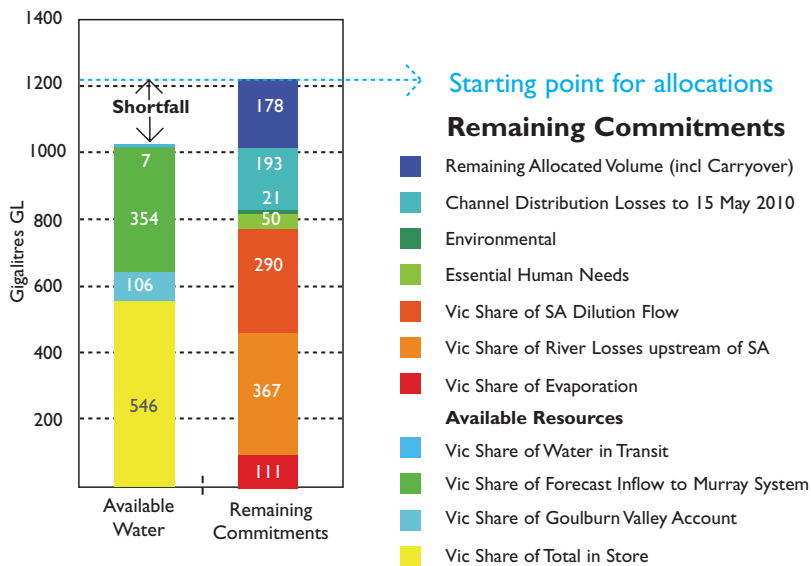
# Pyramid-Boort Irrigation Area

## Irrigation News

### 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.

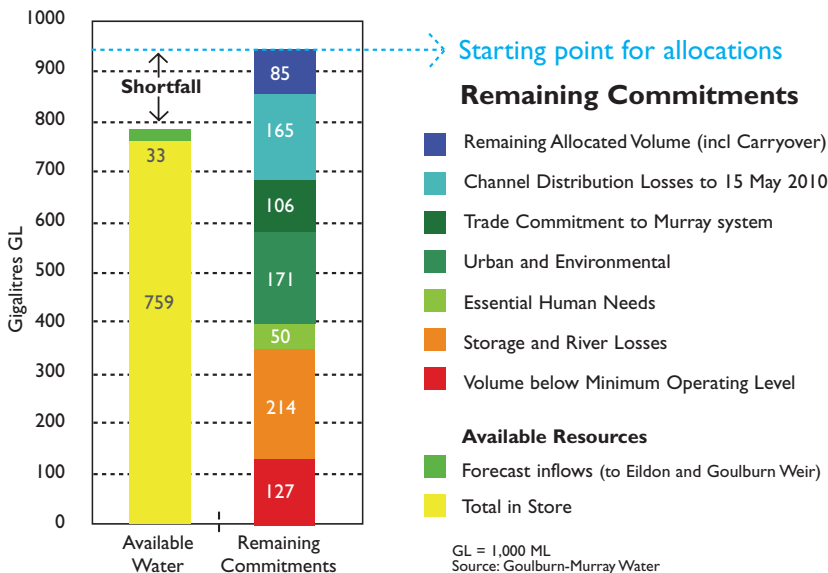
To provide customers access to detailed information on the resource position, in particular what is the shortfall before allocations are made, G-MW has established "Rocket Diagrams" indicating details of the volume of water available and commitments to be met prior to allocations being made. The two diagrams included below indicate the position on the Murray & Goulburn systems as at the 17 August 2009. Current information on all systems is available on G-MW's website [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au) under the Customers Services/G-MW Drought Response tabs.



GL = 1,000 ML  
Source: Goulburn-Murray Water

Breakdown of water in store and commitments  
17 August 2009

Murray System



GL = 1,000 ML  
Source: Goulburn-Murray Water

Breakdown of water in store and commitments  
17 August 2009

Goulburn System

# 2009 Season Update

## Customer Service – information or advice

When it comes to managing water entitlements, there is no doubt the unbundling of water has provided customers with greater flexibility and choice than ever before.

Customers now need quick access to information to support their decision-making and to help make the best use of all the available options.

Over the past two years the value of water trading transactions has increased dramatically. Water Administration staff regularly process transactions which are equal in value to a family car or a house.

Customers will often ask G-MW staff “what should I do” or to fill out forms on their behalf.

Unfortunately we can't give that type of advice - we can't tell people what they should do, or fill out forms on behalf of customers. These are personal and important decisions based on individual circumstances and options.

What we can do is provide customers with quality information. We can tell you all we know about that issue and the consequences of an action, but at the end of the day, customers have to make the final decision about what they will do with their valuable water assets.

G-MW always recommends customers seek professional advice from qualified people such as solicitors and reputable water brokers. These professionals have plenty of experience in providing sound advice to their clients about the wide range of water management options.

Allocation Bank Account Statements have now been issued to G-MW customers. G-MW is urging all customers to keep their ABA statements in a safe place for reference when completing water trade applications as the statements include references such as ABA, WEE and WUL numbers. The statements recently issued include details of allocations, successful trades and usage against the account from July 1 2008 to June 30 2009.

## Costs of Modernisation “Whole of Life Project”

G-MW has now completed the “Whole of Life Project” which looked at the impacts that modernisation will have on our irrigation network and how this will shape the future price path for customers. The Whole of Life Project involved extensive modelling covering three primary scenarios.

1. A Base Case which looked at G-MW in its current form, including the Shepparton and Central Goulburn 1-4 Modernisation Projects, however assuming no further modernisation. ie without NVIRP.
2. An NVIRP Stage I Scenario, which modelled the system where the backbone is established, automation of the backbone and replacement of all dethridge meter outlets on the backbone with magflow meters undertaken. This scenario also assumed the rationalisation of 28% of channels, not on the backbone and the movement of delivery share associated with these assets to the backbone.
3. This scenario assumed G-MW would only operate the backbone and that all “spur” channels are rationalised, with the associated delivery shares transferred to the backbone. These customers would either be “connected” through I to I connections or syndicates.

This work identified the key cost drivers in the modernised system. Assets such as magflow meters, automatic regulators, the software and hardware associated with running these assets have been identified as major cost items. The combination of these costs with the reduction in future liability for assets rationalised, and connections established were modelled to demonstrate the impact on future prices.

We will now be working through the results of this project with our Water Service Committees and NVIRP's Modernisation Committees over the coming weeks.

Copies of G-MW's Whole of Life cost review Executive Summary are available from [www.g-mwater.com.au/wholeoflife](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/wholeoflife). The full report will be available in the near future.

[www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)



# Drainage Tariff Review

A review of the way G-MW recovers the cost of providing drainage services has commenced. The tariff review will cover Surface Drainage, Community Surface Drainage and Drainage Diversion Services.

The process has been initiated following requests from Water Service Committees and individual customers for G-MW to review the current Drainage Diversion tariff. Ongoing drought, modernisation and improved farming techniques have resulted in the water available in drains for diversion being dramatically reduced. In these changing times it is timely for a fresh look at the way costs are recovered for drainage services.

Stakeholder Reference Committees that include customers have been established to ensure customers have input into the future tariff options. A significant amount of preliminary work has already been done and several options developed for discussion. Some initial consultation with WSC's has also occurred.

Prior to more formal and extensive consultation, financial modeling of the different options will be completed to provide information for a selection of practical options. Following consideration by the Reference Committee, options considered practical, will be progressed to formal customer consultation.

Board approval is required for any changes to the existing tariff. It is expected that the process will be completed in time for any proposed changes to be implemented in the 2010/11 year.

Customers wanting to have an input into the process will be able to attend one of the public information sessions which will be advertised once details are confirmed or can contact the local Area office for details of Reference Committee members.

## WSC changes

The Board of G-MW have appointed 6 new members to its customer advisory Water Services Committees (WSC). A further 21 representatives have been reappointed and join a customer committee network that includes more than 100 customers from across G-MW's service region.

The formal appointment of committee members by the G-MW Board follows a nomination by public election process which commenced in April this year. Elections were held in two Areas where there were more candidates than positions available on the committee. Local irrigators voted for their preferred nominees.

All of the committees provide advice to G-MW and discuss policy matters impacting on local water users in their area. Your WSC members are listed on the back of this newsletter.

## NVIRP Update

The 2009 winter works for Stage 1 of the \$2 billion irrigation upgrade is now complete with over 1000 more regulator gates installed during the current winter shut-down.

Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP) CEO Murray Smith said, although we had a slow start to the works this winter because of rain, we have been able to install another 1000 gates in backbone channels throughout Torrumbarry, Murray Valley, Rochester, Pyramid-Boort and Central Goulburn Irrigation Areas.

"We are now two thirds through the replacement of these regulator gates and the replacement of on-farm outlets is continuing.

"NVIRP's Modernisation Coordinators will continue to work with G-MW customers to make sure that that the connections program is assisting them to review their farm operation and to take advantage of the modernised backbone.

"This is a time of great change in the irrigation industry and we encourage all landowners to rethink what will make their enterprise more profitable in the future and discuss these options with our Modernisation Coordinators and Farm Irrigation Designers."

**Modernisation Coordinators for all irrigation districts can be contacted by phoning NVIRP on 1300 163 006.**

# WaterLINE Modernisation

*G-MW has made improvements for customers ordering and managing their water through WaterLINE.*

## **New Phone Number to order water – 1300 469 469**

Customers can now contact WaterLINE using one common phone number – 1300 469 469 (i.e. 1300 GMW GMW), for the cost of a local call from anywhere in Australia.

## **More functions via WaterLINE Online**

G-MW encourages all customers to use the internet for ordering and managing their water using WaterLINE - Online (i.e. via the internet). WaterLINE – Online is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and a direct link is found on G-MW's homepage, [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au). WaterLINE - Online now offers customers additional functions such as meter read entry, a facility enabling customers to more actively manage their water accounts and generate current statements, and the ability to leave messages for planners via the internet.

## **New User Number – additional 2 digits**

For improved security and functions for customers, the User Number has been increased to 7 digits. 2 digits have been added to the start of customers old User Number. The 2 digits have been set based on the channel or river system your property is supplied from. Every G-MW customer will receive a letter detailing this information. If you have not received this letter please contact your local G-MW office. In response to customer feedback and to provide improved system monitoring, as systems are modernised, planners will be in the office, contactable and check messages for extended hours when water is being delivered during the irrigation season. Details are contained in the letters being sent to customers and on the G-MW website or via WaterLINE.

## **Free WaterLINE information sessions**

Over the coming months there will be opportunities available to come along to free WaterLINE information sessions where you can have a demonstration of WaterLINE online. Details of these sessions will be communicated in the media. If you would prefer a G-MW staff member to visit and provide individual assistance please contact your local office. G-MW has posted to every customer a guide to help you access the services available from WaterLINE please take the time to familiarise yourself with this information and take advantage of the improved functions now available. Additional copies will be available from your local office.

**Rural Support Line 1300 655 969**

**Lifeline 131 114**

**Beyondblue 1300 224 636**

## contacts

To place an order go to Waterline online via G-MW's website or phone Waterline on 1300 469 469

### **Internet**

[www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)

**Hint** Add the login page to your favourites

G-MW can be contacted during normal business hours at any of it's offices.

**Pyramid-Boort Office:**  
03 5455 7100

### **Emergencies**

Customers may contact G-MW to report emergencies and urgent matters such as reporting of pollution incidents and illegal activities by using the 24 hours emergency line.

**24 hours emergency line:**  
1800 064 184

## 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.

### **WSC MEMBERS**

Col Fenton	03 5457 6275 0428 435 527
Paul Gill	03 5457 8210 0427 578 210
Dean Harrington	03 5455 2168 0428 316 795
Chris Harrison	03 5455 1251 0438 551 251
Laurie Maxted (Deputy Chair)	03 5455 1244 0428 551 332
Murray Haw	03 5455 1236 0427 649 928
John Nelson (Chairman)	03 5455 2255 0427 543 447
Pat Quinn	03 5455 9273 0427 559 273
Ken Pattison	03 5494 7324 0427 534 158