



Western Murray Irrigation Ltd

# Newsletter

July 2019

## From the CEO

*Increased water use and welcome high seasonal allocation overshadowed by worsening drought conditions and overdevelopment/water deliverability concerns in the Murray.*

New plantings and dry conditions have resulted in an 8% increase above the 5-year average of the volume of water pumped by WMI in 2018-19.

Coomealla and Buronga increased 9% and 15% respectively while Curlwaa was down 3%.

NSW Murray high security allocation for 2019-20 has been confirmed at 97% - the highest opening allocation in the southern Murray Darling Basin.

However, a drier than usual winter continues across regional NSW with the Northern valleys already in deep drought, and drought conditions on the Southern valleys worsening. The climate outlook for July to September remains drier and warmer than average - not good news.

A recent report commissioned by the Victorian government shows water demand for permanent horticulture in the lower Murray is much higher than previously estimated and will continue to grow as existing plantings mature. This has prompted the Victorian government to take the extraordinary step in directing Lower Murray Water and Goulburn Murray Water to refer all new water works licence applications in the lower Murray to the Minister for Water for review for the next 12 months, effective immediately. It seems unlikely that any new applications will be approved.

This approach, suggested by VIC to NSW and SA, will be reviewed when Murray Darling Basin Authority

modelling is complete, and all states can put clear plans in place to manage how water is delivered through the Murray system.

This follows a surprising but perhaps timely call by the Almond Board of Australia for a moratorium on all new water use licenses pending a review of the river system's capacity to deliver water to support more development without adverse third-party or environmental impact.

WMI continues to advocate for government action on this deliverability constraint (mainly Barmah Choke) particularly through the peak summer demand period.

The governments are finally starting to take this seriously, but will it be too little too late?

## Prepare now to manage your future water needs:

VFF Water Workshop with Aither  
Thursday 25 July 7pm, Mildura  
(Register with VFF [www.vff.org.au](http://www.vff.org.au) - members and non-members welcome.)

*Similar water workshops with Aither have attracted hundreds of irrigators in SA.*

## Meter upgrade & telemetry project update

WMI, Siemens and Datacall, with engineering management support from GHD, have partnered to digitalise the water supply in the Curlwaa, Coomealla and Buronga irrigation areas.

Delivery of all project materials has commenced and is expected to be completed by mid-August.

Installation of eight 8m telemetry masts (5 in Coomealla, 3 in Curlwaa, 1 Buronga) will commence later this month.

Final Quarter Invoice 2018/19  
Due for payment:  
4.30pm on Thursday  
15 August 2019

On-call Officer – 24 hours/365  
days  
Ph: 0428 596 428

Office Hours: 9:00am to 4:30pm  
Monday to Friday, ex. public holidays  
Contact us:  
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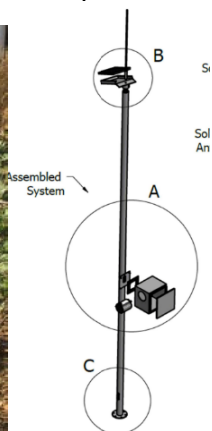
Upcoming office closures:

**Labour Day NSW**  
Monday 7 October 2019



These masts will collect continuous data from each meter and telemetry pole through a radio network and send it via the internet to the Datacall system. Customers and WMI staff will be able to view the data through a secure login.

Installation of meters and 4m telemetry poles will commence in Coomealla from late August. WMI staff will liaise with customers to discuss workplans.



Replaced meter awaiting telemetry pole      Telemetry pole

In some cases, meter outlets will require a tidy up by customers to ensure safe and effective installation by WMI and its contractors.

Installations of Curlwaa meters and telemetry poles will follow, expected between April and June 2020.

Once meters and telemetry poles are installed and operating they are required to undertake a month-long proof of performance test. Customer access to the online data will be granted after this has been successfully completed.

### Back-up generators for Coomealla update

This project, managed by Foreman Sheean, has been progressing well with works including:

- Concrete slab (see photo)
- Trenching and conduits laid
- Delivery of 10 tonnes of cabling
- Foundations for the generator switchboard
- Purchase of the mobile generator for the re-lift station (see photo)



Concrete slab being poured at the Coomealla pump station for the 2 generators and fuel tank.



The new mobile generator for the Coomealla re-lift station.

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### Winter maintenance program 2019

We have our scheduled winter maintenance program planned for the 2019 winter period, including:

#### Buronga

- Pump B water seal replace (complete)
- VSD D replace (complete)
- Pump yard security fence (complete)
- Peroxide treatment system
- PLC upgrade

#### Coomealla

- Balance tower inspection (complete)
- Generators
- Second replacement KSB Pump
- Allomba Road scour install

#### Curlwaa

- Balance tower inspection (complete)
- Pump B bearings
- Install new motors A and B

WMI endeavours to minimise any interruptions and will alert customers to any planned or unplanned events.

### 2018-19 Surplus allocation trade result

The total volume traded was 457ML with nearly \$225,000 returned to customers after WMI costs were deducted.

Eligible customers will see that their final WMI bill for 2018/19 will return these funds to their account.

### Fourth quarterly invoice due for payment

The final quarter invoice for 2018/19 is now available and due for payment on or before Thursday 15 August 2019.

Please contact the office before the due date if there are any difficulties in prompt payment of accounts.

### Delivery Entitlements can be temp traded

The annual temporary transfer of Delivery Entitlements (DEs) from one customer in the same irrigation area to another customer in the same irrigation area is possible.

A temporary transfer means the customer who receives the DEs enjoys the reduced cost of using water (for one season) by avoiding or reducing the impact of the higher Casual Users Access Fee, while the customer who acquits the DEs enjoys a reduced overall WMI bill (for one season).

WMI staff are happy to assist customers understand the costs and benefits of any such temporary transfer and can help facilitate the transaction.

Transfer forms must be lodged by Friday 20 September 2019, with the transfer applying for all of the 2019/20 season.

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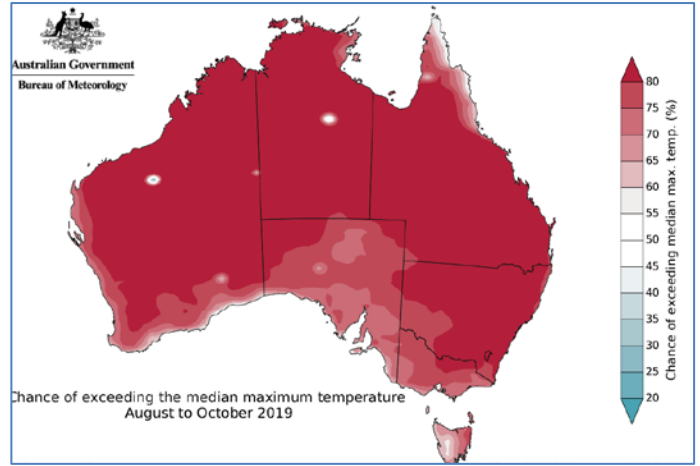
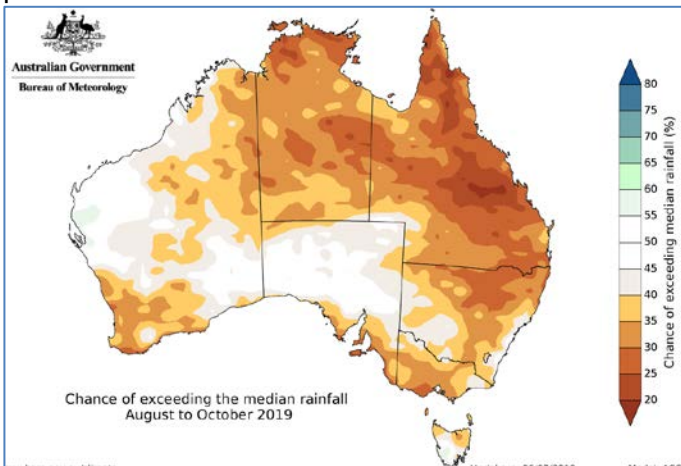
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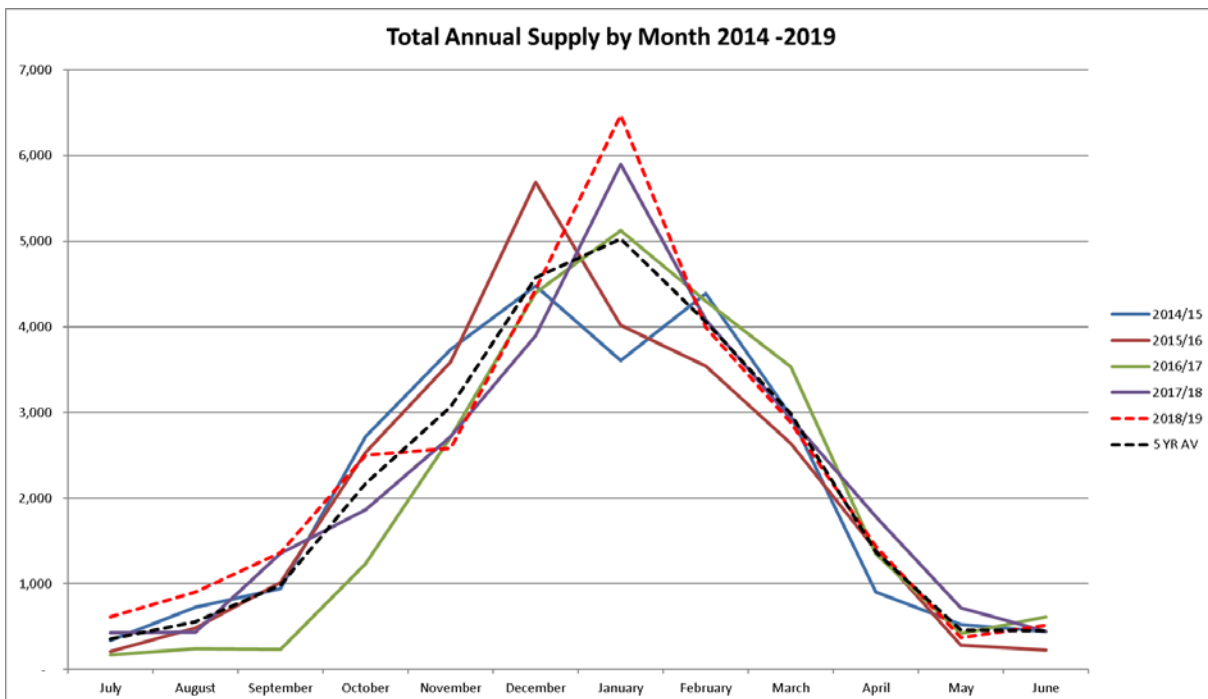


### Climate Outlook: August to October 2019

The Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology is forecasting warmer and drier conditions for many parts of Australia:



### Total Water Pumped over 5 Years



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