



Western Murray Irrigation Limited

Newsletter

July 2018

From the CEO

The dry conditions persisting well into winter have pushed the volume of water pumped to the end of June, 9% above the previous season and nearly 3% above the 5 year average.

I would like to believe that new and/or maturing horticultural plantings have also contributed to this increase. We will see how our plantings in our area of operations have changed with the 2018 crop report due in October.

National Irrigator Council members met in June to discuss policy on the Basin Plan, environmental water and energy.

We were also fortunate to have dinner with the Federal Water Minister the Hon David Littleproud MP. I was able to thank him for his tremendous efforts in obtaining strong bipartisan support for the Murray Darling Basin Plan.



National Irrigator Council's June meeting was well attended by its members including WMI.

The NSW Department of Industry - Water conducted a 2-day workshop with all their stakeholder advisory panels to discuss water

reforms and compliance, water resource planning, environmental and cultural water, and Northern/Southern Basin issues.

The NSW Minister for Regional Water the Hon. Niall Blair presented on two main topics: the water reform action plan and draft Bill recently introduced into Parliament; and progress of the Murray Darling Basin Plan/Sustainable Diversion Limit (SDL) adjustment mechanism. The Minister was obviously relieved (as we were) to see the SDL disallowance motion defeated and the Basin Plan back on track.



NSW Department of Industry Water hosted government, industry and community representatives at a 2-day workshop in June to discuss NSW water issues.

ACCC Water Monitoring Report 2016-17

Some interesting points from the recent ACCC report include:

- The largest volume of Australian water entitlement trades in 2016-17 took place within the southern Murray Darling Basin, estimated at \$14.5 billion. This market more than doubled in value from 2013-14 to 2016-17.
- Perennial crops (particularly almonds) are expanding in the lower Murray region; cotton continues its expansion south.

Fourth Quarterly Invoice and
Annual Invoice for 2017/18

Due for payment:
4.30pm on Tuesday
7 August 2018

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:

T: (03) 5027 4953

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www.westernmurray.com.au

E: enquiries@westernmurray.com.au

Upcoming office closures:

Labour Day (NSW)

Monday 1 October 2018



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- Rising energy prices have been a cause of concern among irrigators and irrigation infrastructure operators.
- Transformations and terminations continued to decline, with volumes in 2016-17 being the lowest on record.
- The smallest bill increase for pressurised networks was in WMI Curlwaa (0.3%); the highest was in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation network for high security customers (12%).
- WMI is an example of an irrigation infrastructure operator that has encouraged both the permanent and temporary trade of delivery entitlements, generally assisting irrigators known to have an excess of or need for water by personal matching.
- ACCC found no major issues with water charge and water market rules compliance.

The full report can be found at:

<https://www.accc.gov.au/publications/accc-water-monitoring-report/accc-water-monitoring-report-2016-17>

Proposed water quality project: reducing organic build-up with scouring and low-dose hydrogen peroxide

Organic build-up within WMI supply infrastructure (water plants and animals such as snails and bryozoans) can sometimes be a problem particularly in Curlwaa and Coomealla where these areas have low flows in early spring creating near perfect conditions for these plants/animals to flourish.

Blocked filters are the most common customer problems.



A typical filter choked with Bryozoa and a few snails.

WMI is carefully considering the feasibility of chemical dosing to better manage organic build-up in conjunction with our normal scouring practices and is proposing to trial a low-dose hydrogen peroxide treatment.

Hydrogen peroxide is already used in farming practices to maintain irrigation systems and provide oxygen to soil and plants. It is easily broken down to oxygen and water; is environmentally friendly and does not generate any by-products.

The dose being considered is 5 parts per million which is equal to:

- 150ml in a typical backyard swimming pool;
- 50ml in a 10,000L rain tank;
- A 5ml teaspoon in 1,000L.

The hydrogen peroxide treatment will NOT make the water potable and the water should continue to be used solely for irrigation and stock and garden use.

The treatment is proposed for an early spring application at the pump stations for Coomealla and Curlwaa, followed by an early winter application in 2019 if necessary.

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The trial may last several seasons to quantify the improvement to water quality.

More details will be provided when the project is approved by the WMI Board.

Contact David Hilton, Assets & Operations Manager on 0429 183 619 or david@westernmurray.com.au if you have any questions or comments.

Winter maintenance progressing well

CURLWAA

The Curlwaa tower major restoration is almost complete.



Scaffolding was required inside the tower to undertake the 6 week restoration project which included blasting, repairs, coating and painting.

COOMEALLA

The Coomealla balance tower is scheduled for its standard inspection and clean in July. No interruption to service is expected.

An additional scour will be installed on Branch Channel 2 and affected customers will be advised directly of details.



Asbestos pipe removed on Comebunye Rd by qualified asbestos removalists. Site returned to normal profile for surface drain.

BURONGA



New vacuum pump installed and operational at the main pump station

Delivery Entitlements can be temp traded

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

A temporary transfer means the customer who receives the DEs enjoys the reduced cost of using

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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 transfer, and facilitate the transaction.

Transfer forms must be lodged by Friday 21 September 2018, with the transfer applying for all of the 2018/19 season.

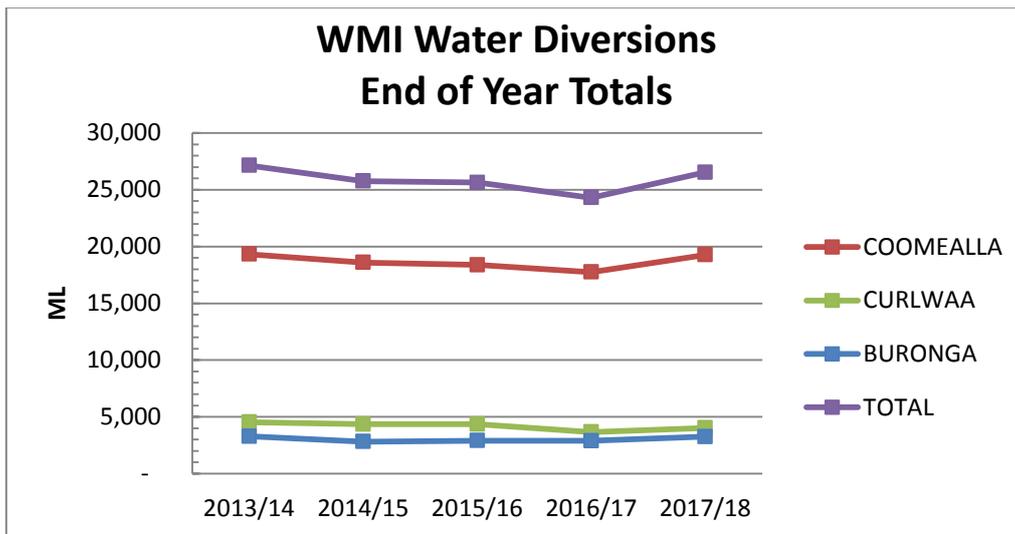
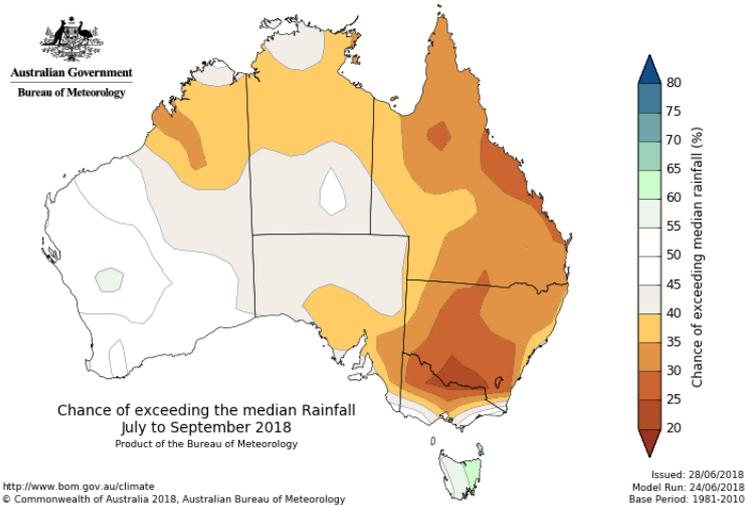
Surplus allocation trade result

The change to the close of water trade by WaterNSW (and hence WMI) in 2017/18 presented some new challenges for us!

Despite this, the total volume traded was 1,265ML with nearly \$225,000 returned to customers after WMI costs were deducted.

Eligible customers will see that their final WMI bill for 2017-18 will return these funds to their account.

Drier and warmer conditions forecast by BOM for July to September 2018



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