

# Chairman's report

Friday 20 September 2013



Murray Irrigation

This is the Chairman's report, distributed following a meeting of the Murray Irrigation Board of Directors yesterday.

## Stakeholders' breakfast

Murray Irrigation hosted a stakeholders' breakfast yesterday which provided an update on current operational activities. Attendees were largely the business community who service our customers. We welcome the positive feedback received.

## 2014 Strategic Plan review

The Board has commenced preparation of a new Strategic Plan. Priorities identified include building on the successes of the 2014 Strategic Plan and continuing to focus on improving customer service, communication and cost control. The importance of Murray Irrigation controlling its costs whilst continuing to provide service was evident at the recent round of Landholder Association meetings. The current investment in the Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program (PIIOP) will make an important contribution to both these goals.

## Implementation of our new water ordering system

The Board received a progress report on implementation of the new water ordering system. The new system is a massive change to how our customers order water and has involved significant changes to Murray Irrigation's water management and IT systems. We acknowledge there have been some implementation issues for both customers and staff. However, the Board is confident that these will be worked through and resolved satisfactorily.

I encourage any customer that has experienced difficulties or would like more guidance in the use of this new system to attend any of our Deniliquin, Finley or Wakool offices between 10.00am and 12.00pm on Tuesdays or Thursdays for dedicated assistance. If this arrangement does not suit you please request an appointment with your Water Distribution Supervisor via reception on T. 1300 138 265.

## Annual General Meeting preparations

The Board approved the notice of meeting for our 2013 Annual General Meeting to be held at 10.30am on Thursday 21 November at the Deniliquin RSL Club.

## Listing of the Lower Murray River as a critically endangered community under the EPBC Act

The Board confirmed at the meeting that it will seek, along with other irrigation industry stakeholders, that the incoming Federal government to disallow this listing. This listing, under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (Cth) (the EPBC Act), was announced by the former Environment Minister Mark Butler in August. Murray Irrigation will argue this listing is an example of excessive green tape and will also highlight the inadequacy of the consultation process used by government.

## Incoming Federal Government

The Board considered its approach to the new Federal government and will ensure that they are aware of priority issues for our business, shareholders and community. These issues include the Basin Plan, the new government's approach to water recovery and infrastructure investment, and use of environmental water.

## Round 4 On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency

Customers are reminded the deadline for Expressions of Interest is 5.00pm today, Friday 20 September. For more information, contact Aimee Snowden via reception on T. 1300 138 265.

## Blighty Pilot Field Day

I encourage customers interested in seeing first-hand the new technology being installed under Murray Irrigation's PIIOP project to attend the Blighty Pilot Project Field Day, where the new system is operational and providing these customers with our high level of irrigation service. The Field Day is on Tuesday 1 October commencing at 12.30pm. For more information contact Lauren Noonan on T. 1300 138 265.

## Postal ballot

I encourage shareholders to vote in the postal ballot to fill three shareholder director vacancies. Shareholders are reminded that Murray Irrigation uses a preferential voting system and that ballot papers must be returned to the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) in Melbourne by 5.00pm Friday 11 October. For all enquiries, contact AEC returning officer, Mario Chindamo, on T. 03 9285 7108.

Noel Graham, Chairman