



Wednesday 2 April 2014

Round Four On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program funding announced

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment, Senator Simon Birmingham, yesterday announced that Murray Irrigation will receive funding for a portion of its application to be a Round Four On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program Delivery Partner.

Following the receipt of expressions of interest from customers, Murray Irrigation submitted an application to the Commonwealth in October 2013. Murray Irrigation's application was divided into categories which were based on the price sought per water entitlement in the expression of interest process.

Total in-principle funds awarded by the Australian Government to Murray Irrigation for Round Four is \$29,183,697 (ex GST). These funds only cover a portion of the application amount sought.

"I am delighted to have received in-principle agreement from the Australian Government for just over \$29M to fund these important projects," said Murray Irrigation's General Manager Anthony Couroupis.

"We have been successful in the first stage of a two-stage application process.

"The first stage involved Murray Irrigation applying to be a delivery partner.

"The types of projects in our application included upgrading of surface irrigation infrastructure and also conversion of surface irrigation infrastructure to overhead spray infrastructure," said Mr Couroupis.

Murray Irrigation will communicate with all customers who expressed interest in participating in this round. Customers with expressions of interest that fit into the categories funded will be asked to prepare a stage two application.

"This is quite detailed and includes a project plan, detailed project costing, and a water savings assessment," Mr Couroupis said.

"In our stage two application each individual project is assessed and approved by the Department of the Environment for funding.

"Unfortunately, because only a portion of our application was funded not all of our customers will be invited to complete a stage two application," he said.

In the coming weeks, Murray Irrigation will provide further information via their weekly customer newsletter, *Talking Water*, along with written advice to each applicant to confirm the status of their expression of interest.

"More information will be available over the next couple of weeks, once we have had some time to understand the Department's requirements," Mr Couroupis said.

"We also plan to hold workshops for successful applicants and we will do this once we have a better understanding of the Commonwealth's requirements in this second stage."

This funding provides irrigators with the opportunity to invest in more efficient and productive on-farm infrastructure with a portion of the water savings being transferred to the environment. Investment in infrastructure has been supported by the irrigation sector in preference to buyback because of the economic and productivity benefits it provides to participants and regional communities.

The On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program is supported by the Australian Government's Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program.

For more information contact Murray Irrigation General Manager Anthony Couroupis on T 03 5898 3332.