

Media release



Murray Irrigation

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Murray Irrigation CEO: Listening and learning

Murray Irrigation Chief Executive Officer Michael Renehan has commended the customers he has met throughout August and said the frank feedback will help him to develop a sound strategy for the future of the company.

As well as meeting individually with a wide range of customers, Mr Renehan hosted meet-and-greet breakfasts in Deniliquin, Wakool and Finley to get first hand feedback.

After just over eight weeks with the company, Mr Renehan said he is excited by the Board's desire to ensure the long-term sustainability of the company and the fact they are willing to implement fundamental change to see that happen.

"I am working with the Board and I am meeting with customers to ensure the strategy we develop will deliver what our customers need while securing the future of the company," Mr Renehan said.

"The feedback I have had so far is that customers want good service and value for money.

"It is clear there is still a role for Murray Irrigation in the advocacy space, but we need to determine just what our role is and what sort of resources we commit.

"What I have said to customers is that we will address our own cost base – the cost of doing business – before we review our price and tariff structure.

"I also want to look at attracting volume into our system which will reduce the pressure on the business bottom line," he said.

Four percent of Murray Irrigation farm businesses were represented at the customer breakfasts, while many other customers have taken the opportunity to meet the new CEO directly. Customers have included the full range of high volume and low volume water users and included several next generation farmers.

"I am keen to get further input from the younger farmers in our region to see what ideas they have about the future of the region and the role of irrigation," Mr Renehan explained.

"We have here a group of young farmers who want to engage and I want to harness their enthusiasm and ideas as part of my strategic review.

"I have also been out and about attending the Ricegrowers' Association conference and several Landholder Association meetings," he said.

"All of these have put me face to face with our customers who are the reason for our existence.

"While we need to ensure we focus on building on the strong foundation of this business to ensure we maintain our reserves and operate on a break-even basis, we must also remember that without our customers, we are redundant."

Mr Renehan said he would collate all the feedback to start the strategy development process and would be seeking to re-engage with customers and stakeholders in October.

"We are listening and we will continue to do so as we build a customer focused business model.

"This is only the beginning of the process which includes delivering the outcomes of the strategic review at the Annual General Meeting to be held in November," Mr Renehan said.

Ends.

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