

Information brochure



Murray Irrigation

Updated February 2016

Outlet and Meter Strategy Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program (PIIOP)

The Project

Murray Irrigation is investing in a \$200M upgrade of its infrastructure through to 2017 to improve irrigation services to customers, manage long term costs, and assist in meeting the company's regulatory requirements for metering on-farm water deliveries.

Funding is being provided from the Commonwealth's Private Irrigation Infrastructure Operators Program (PIIOP) to assist achieve these outcomes. Key investment elements include:

1. Upgrade of channel regulators to allow remote control or automation.
2. Upgrade irrigation outlets to allow remote control or automation.
3. SCADA¹ and telemetry to provide the hardware essential to upgrade from a manually controlled system to remote control or system automation.



Outlet and Meter Strategy

Murray Irrigation is implementing this Outlet and Meter Strategy, which recognises:

- Increasing customer demand for consistent flows, more frequent order changes and higher flow rates, to assist make on-farm water use more efficient;
- Reduced reliance on a manually operated water delivery system which will improve staff safety and assist the company manage its future costs;
- Improved control of flows through our channel system resulting in improved delivery efficiency;

Murray Irrigation, through its PIIOP project, aims to reduce the number of irrigation outlets across our irrigation footprint by up to 30 percent.

Reducing the number of outlets is important to avoid overcapitalisation of Murray Irrigation infrastructure.

Reconfiguration

A reconfiguration project is defined where a customer remains connected to our channel system but has an alternate supply point.

In each division there may be opportunities to reduce the length of channel or the number of major channel assets such as outlets or regulators by altering how a landholding is connected to our channel system.

Murray Irrigation has a methodology for assessing the costs and benefits of reconfiguration projects. In cases where there are cost savings to Murray Irrigation, there will be financial incentives available to customers.

All customers are encouraged to consider what options may exist to alter how their landholding is connected to our channel system.

¹ SCADA Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition

Consultation Process

Step 1: Determine Eligible Outlets

1. Location of the outlet

Confirm if the current outlets are in the best place for customer service, in particular command of the customer's irrigation layout/s and opportunities to reduce Murray Irrigation's channel length or regulators by relocating an outlet.

Where there is a relocation of an outlet for the customer's benefit there may be additional costs that would need to be met by the customer. This cost could be offset if the customer is able to achieve other Murray Irrigation cost savings, such as the removal of a regulator or a further reduction in the number of outlets.

2. Number of eligible funded outlets

Murray Irrigation's approach is to only fund a certain number of outlets on a landholding due to limited amount of funding available and a desire to reduce overcapitalisation of our infrastructure.

In cases where a landholding is serviced by multiple outlets and is split due to infrastructure or natural features, each area is assessed separately with the Outlet Reduction applying to that eligible split area.

Table 1 identifies the outlet reductions required to be applied over a landholding or eligible split area in order to determine the number of eligible funded outlets.

Table 1. The number of existing and eligible funded outlets per landholding or eligible split area.

Current number of meters per landholding or split area*	Company funded outlets
5 or more	3
4	2
3	2
2	1
1	1

*based on the number of outlets on a landholding prior to any amalgamation since 1995 and includes decommissioned outlets since January 2011.

3. Outlet size

The size of the eligible funded outlet will depend on the number of Delivery Entitlements, Water Entitlements and the average history of water use through that outlet from the 2011/12 to 2014/2015 irrigation seasons.

Customers will be asked to apply their Delivery Entitlements or Water Entitlements (whichever is greater) or outlet water use to each company funded outlet to determine the size of the outlet.

The more Delivery Entitlements, Water Entitlements or water use, generally the larger the company funded outlet. Table 2 outlines the eligible outlet size which is based on entitlements and water use history.

Table 2: Eligible outlet size based on entitlements and water use history.

Outlet Size	Number of Delivery Entitlements, Water Entitlements or average water use (ML) from 2011/2012 to 2014/2015 irrigation seasons
Small (up to 5ML/day)	Less than 70 DE's, WE's or ML
Large (up to 15ML/day)	At least 70 and less than 600 DE's, WE's or ML
Extra Large (up to 30ML/day)	At least 600 DE's, WE's AND greater than 200ML of water use

Customers need to be aware that whilst these new outlets may have the capacity to deliver higher flows, the actual volume delivered on-farm is dependent on a range of factors, including the capacity of Murray Irrigation's channel leading to the customer's outlet and the capacity of the on-farm irrigation layout. For example, an extra-large irrigation outlet discharging into a farm channel with a capacity of 10ML/day will not deliver 30ML/day on-farm.

Step 2: Review Multiple Landholdings

Where multiple landholdings are owned by a common business entity and the landholdings have common boundaries, a review will be completed as a whole, to optimise the aims of the project.

In certain circumstances, Murray Irrigation can offer assistance to customers for making decisions by using irrigation professionals for outcomes that may benefit both Murray Irrigation and the customer.

Step 3: Finalise Customer Outcomes

1. Customer Payments

Customers who elect to decommission eligible funded outlets are eligible to receive a payment of \$9,000 (+ GST).

This payment is provided to the owner of the landholding following the installation of the new outlets and decommissioning of all remaining outlets on the landholding.

2. Customer Payments

Where a customer requests an additional outlet or for a larger outlet size than is eligible to be funded, they are required to contribute these costs.

If a customer is eligible for a large outlet and requests a relocation or new concrete structure to improve flows and reduce headloss, this will also incur additional costs.

3. Notice of Assessment

A Notice of Assessment will be issued following consultation setting out the results of the consultation in accordance with the Outlet and Meter Strategy.

Customers have 30 days to respond to the Notice of Assessment. After this date the Notice of Assessment becomes binding on the landholding. It is Murray Irrigation's preference to reach agreement with its customers, however, if a customer does not respond to the Notice of Assessment, Murray Irrigation will proceed with the works identified in the Notice of Assessment after the 30 days. Requests to make changes to the Notice of Assessment after this expiry date may incur late notice fees to recover costs.

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4. Outlet Construction

Construction of outlets will be prioritised based on the history of water use for the individual outlet. Before installation of new outlets commences, a Notification of Works letter will be sent to the customer providing more details of the installation timeframe and meter type.

Customers will be contacted prior to the installation of new outlets and also contacted when the new outlets are commissioned and ready to use.

Our Water Distribution staff will provide customers with training in the use and understanding of the new outlets, and in the use of the new *Water ordering* system.

For further information about Outlet and Meter Strategy, contact our PIOP Customer Consultation team on T. 1300 138 265 or visit our website: www.murrayirrigation.com.au.