

Murray Irrigation independent Director of the Board to step down

Murray Irrigation Chairman, Bruce Simpson, regrets to announce that independent Director, the Honourable Dr Sharman Stone, has tendered her resignation from the Board.

Mr Simpson said that while he was disappointed to lose Dr Stone's services, he understood completely that her growing commitments to the Commonwealth Government were making it increasingly difficult for her to dedicate the time and effort that she felt was required to fulfil the role.

"Dr Stone has served the Government with distinction as our Ambassador for Women and Girls. With her recent appointment to assist the Commonwealth to secure a seat at the United Nations Human Rights Council she has reluctantly decided that the increased work and travel commitments have made it untenable for her to maintain her position on the Board," he said.

Dr Stone said this was a difficult decision for her and one that she has taken with some regret.

"I took up the role as independent Board member because I believe passionately in irrigated agriculture and the role it plays in advancing the economic and social interests of the Murray-Darling Basin and neighbouring districts.

"I served for 20 years as the Member for Murray, fighting for the future of irrigation and helping ensure water stays as an affordable and secure farm input. Joining the Board of Murray Irrigation was a natural extension of this work as we set about transforming the company into a modern, customer-focussed business.

"However, I now find myself travelling overseas some seven days out of every 10, and this simply makes it impossible to properly connect to the work required to fulfil my duties as a Murray Irrigation Director," she said.

Dr Stone is a renowned advocate for all aspects of diversity and for advancing the full participation of women in the workforce and particularly in leadership positions.

"It is important for our industry that more women participate in the region's agricultural businesses and take on greater leadership roles in this area. While I have made the decision to stand down from the Board of Murray Irrigation, I hope, and encourage, other women to put their hand up to be considered for this vacancy.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my all too brief time on the Board and have learnt a huge amount. I have been particularly impressed with the calibre of both my fellow Board members and the management team at Murray Irrigation," she said.

Mr Simpson thanked Dr Stone for the outstanding contribution she had made to the Board of Murray Irrigation, and both the wealth of experience and new perspectives she brought to the organisation.

"Dr Stone is highly regarded within government at the highest levels, and her obvious passion and enthusiasm for advancing the interests of water users and the wider community will be greatly missed.

"Importantly though, her extensive business acumen brought outstanding financial and governance disciplines to the Boardroom, along with an appreciation of the need to take steps to ensure Murray Irrigation is a viable company for the long term benefit of all water users and shareholders.

"Dr Stone will formally conclude her duties with Murray Irrigation on 30 June so as to assist the Board in finalising end of financial year arrangements as part of addressing the long term viability of the company. The Board will shortly be commencing an extensive recruitment process to find a replacement for her," he said.

Ends.

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