

CICL Member Update December 2020

Water Operations - The accuracy of our advance water orders to WaterNSW are essential to minimising the risk of CICL requiring restrictions and minimising river operational losses and the risk of direct debiting.

While members place orders with two hours' notice for starting or stopping orders, Water Operations places an order with WaterNSW every day for the expected take at our offtake seven days into the future. WaterNSW then releases water from its storages to meet this ordered volume.

When our seven day order is too small, i.e. actual demand (orders) exceeds the volume available at the river offtake on the day, CICL may have to impose restrictions on members. Ordering more than what is taken on the day contributes to higher river operational losses and the risk of direct debiting being introduced. This is where CICL's water allocation is debited with the volume ordered when the volume taken is less.

Water Operations determine our advance orders by making a judgement based on:

- Members' crop types and irrigation areas.
- Forecast temperature, wind and rainfall from several forecasting services including, Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), Elders Weather, OzForecast and YR.
- Informal communication with members and local agronomists on crop demand and watering cycles.
- Review of flow conditions in the Murrumbidgee River.

We also liaise regularly with Murrumbidgee Irrigation and WaterNSW to discuss conditions, current and expected demand, and options for take adjustment.

Most members place their water orders with only two hours' notice. If members provide more notice of their starts and stops this would provide better insights into members' water demand and help Water Operations staff improve our advance order. Particularly when irrigation has slowed or stopped across our footprint after, for example around Christmas, or after a significant rainfall event.

NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment Allocation announcements

15/12/20

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| High Security | 95% |
| General Security | 77% |

CICL announcement and offers

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Additional water | 8% |
| Member benefit | 6% |

Waterways

<http://www.colyirr.com.au>

P: 1300 850 105

Christmas operations

CICL Offices

Closed from 12 noon Thursday 24 December until 8.30am Monday 4 January 2021

Waterways

No changes with staff contactable on M: 0427 544 269

WaterMart

Operational, however, trades will not be approved and transferred to allocation accounts between 12 noon 24 of December until 8.30am Monday 4 January 2021.

Annual transfers

Closed from 12 noon Thursday 24 December until 8.30am Monday 4 January 2021.



Inter-valley trade (IVT)

WaterNSW has commenced delivering IVT water to the Murray. Up to date information on the IVT is [here](#).

You can register for WaterNSW IVT alerts [here](#).

WaterMart



The WaterMart temporary water trading platform is a secure, transparent, fast option for buying and selling annual allocation with competitive transaction fees. The WaterMart platform can be accessed [here](#).

Delivery capacity and capacity sharing –

Members are reminded of CICAL's approach to management of delivery restrictions and constraints and the differences between a delivery restriction and a constraint.

- CICAL's modelled minimum service standard is 14ML/day per 1,400 Delivery Entitlements (DE).
- A **capacity constraint** is where customers' demand exceeds the design flow rate.
- A **restriction** is where daily orders exceed the flow rate available but not the design flow rate.
- CICAL has tier one and tier two DE.
- Tier one DE has access to daily flow share when there is a capacity constraint. Tier two does not.
- In the event of a constraint the available flow is shared between active orders (per farm or per SFU) for tier one DE.
- In the event of a restriction the available flow is shared between active orders (per farm or per SFU) for tier one and tier two DE.

CICAL has three fact sheets which explain delivery entitlements and our approach to managing restrictions. The fact sheets are on our website and can be found [here](#). Your DE holdings are on your water statement. If you have further questions please contact Water Operations on. T: 02 6954 4003 or M: 0427 544 269.

Annual water allocation account limits -

The water account rules which members need to be aware of are:

- Carryover plus the announced allocation net of annual trade cannot exceed 100 percent of general security water entitlements. (Carryover is limited to 30 percent of general security water entitlements.)
- HOU supplementary water use **up to** the volume of HOU held is **in addition** to the account limit of 100 percent.
- Supplementary water can be used by general security entitlement holders if no HOU right is held but any water used is part of the 100 percent of general security water entitlements account limit. Once this limit is reached, any supplementary water used will be deducted from the volume in your account (i.e. you will be

using your water allocation account water).

Registration of CIMCL's new rules -

Thank you to those members who attended the CIMCL 2020 AGM and voted in favour of CIMCL's new Rules. The final step in the process was for the Registrar of Co-operatives to register CIMCL's new Rules, which occurred on 17 November 2020. The new Rules are available on our website [here](#).

Water use intensity policy - Members are advised that total farm water use (including on-farm bores) should not exceed 8ML/ha for the current season unless they have entered into Water Use Agreements with CICAL. Please contact Keith Thompson via reception on T: 02 6954 4003 for further information.

Drainage water - Members are advised that draining water contaminated with pesticides into the CICAL drainage system is a breach of CICAL's Rules. If you accidentally release contaminated water into the drainage system Members must contact either Mark Robb on M: 0427 544 361 or Keith Thompson on M: 0439 084 569.

Spray drift – your responsibilities - With the best start to the season we've had in years, members should remain vigilant to protect crops from the harmful effects of spray drift. Spray drift is caused by the improper application of pesticides and costs farmers across the Murray-Darling Basin millions of dollars every year in crop losses, hefty fines and court cases.

Do your bit to eliminate spray drift this season and follow the pesticide Safety Data Sheet application guides and the advice of your agronomist. Many agricultural chemical companies and peak bodies have also published detailed guides for the proper application of pesticides on farm, examples are in the links below.

["Keep the spray on the weeds"](#)

[Nufarm "24 hour risk profile for summer spraying"](#)

If you would like to know more about spray drift make sure to contact your local agronomist. If you are concerned about a

spray drift incident you can contact the EPA environment line on 131 555.

Fire ban reminder – Members are reminded of the NO BURN periods that apply in the CIA. In the former Jerilderie Shire, (south of Morundah Road) the NO BURN period is from Sunday 20 December to Monday 4 January. In the original part of the Murrumbidgee Shire (north of Morundah Road) the NO BURN period is Thursday 24 December to Saturday 2 January. During the fire season you must have a fire permit from your RFS Brigade Captain or Fire Permit Officer at least 24 hours prior to burning. All conditions on the Fire Permit must be complied with and neighbours must be notified by 4pm on the day you burn. The RFS may revoke permits if conditions change.

No swimming in channels -

Irrigation channels are not a safe place to swim or play. As well as the known dangers like varying water depths, submerged objects and snakes, channels have automated structures that can trap and drown you and are remotely operated resulting in unpredictable flows. I remind you that swimming in channels is prohibited. Please ensure your children and visitors are also made aware of this.



Water safety for primary schools - CICAL has again financially supported both of our primary schools to run intensive swimming programs for all primary students. Our goal is to encourage maximum participation in this program, and for the program to reinforce our message that swimming in channels is prohibited because it's dangerous.

Amateur photographers – CICAL is looking for photographs from our region to build our photo library for use on our website and for publications. If any members or their families would like to share photographs of farm life in Coleambally, or take photos over the coming weeks, please contact Jenny McLeod via reception on T: 02 6954 4003 for more information.

External issues

Flood Plain Harvesting (FPH) regulations

- The NSW Government has released four regulations for public comment by 20 December, with the government intending to make the regulations in February. Many irrigators are not aware that the Flood Plain Harvesting Policy is a state-wide policy, it's not just an issue for irrigators in the northern Basin. The regulation recently 'disallowed' by the NSW Upper House had an impact on all irrigators because the regulation exempted irrigators from the requirement to have a licence and a work approval for the collection of rainfall runoff in irrigation tail water systems, including within CICAL.

CICAL is responding to the draft regulations and supports irrigation tail water being exempt from the need for a licence or work approval.

More information can be found [here](#)

NSW ICAC report released – The long awaited report of the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) investigation, arising from the *ABC Four Corners Pumped Program* aired in July 2017, has been released and can be found [here](#).

ICAC has made 15 recommendations to the NSW Government to improve the management of the state's water resources. Most of the recommendations are directed at improved transparency and procedures.

Significantly ICAC did not find any person had engaged in corrupt conduct. However, ICAC reached the opinion that certain decisions and approaches by the department were inconsistent with the objects, principles and duties of the Water Management Act. ICAC believes the rights of productive water users were given priority over the rights of other stakeholders.

This opinion is in stark contrast with our experience where water reform has, over the last two decades, progressively reduced CICAL and its members access to water in favour of the environment.

The report should be viewed as a reflection of government performance, not of the irrigation sector.

Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council

– The failure of the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council in November to agree to the proposal from NSW and Victoria to audit progress of the Basin Plan in 2022 is disappointing. The SDL projects were created to protect the community and agriculture production whilst still delivering the environmental outcomes. CICAL is seeking governments take urgent action to:

- Properly engage with communities to implement approved projects;
- Identify and implement alternative projects should approved projects not be achievable; and
- Remove or amend legislation so that the timeframe is extended and the risk of further buyback is removed.

Water market transparency - The Department of Planning Industry and Environment is seeking feedback on three key questions:

1. What water holder information should be made public?
2. What water market information would be most useful to water users?
3. How can we present water market information in a way that enhances transparency, understanding and participation in our water markets?

Feedback can be via participation in a webinar and/or by completing an online survey. Details are available [here](#). The survey is open until 5pm Monday 1 February 2021. Members are encouraged to express a view about information to be made public and your requirements for water market information.

Important meeting about groundwater access in 2021/22

– The Department of Planning Industry and Environment is holding two meetings at Darlington Point on Thursday 4 February, one at 12.30pm and the other at 3.30pm. The meetings will discuss options for managing groundwater extraction limits. Further information is available [here](#). Feedback from this consultation will determine the policy options for managing groundwater use within legal limits. You must register [here](#) to attend.

Seasons' greetings – I wish you and your families a happy and safe Christmas and New Year. As the remarkable year of 2020 ends it is pleasing to hear of strong winter crop yields and to have Waterways and Total Channel Control system operating for the first season since 2017/18. CICAL is looking forward to delivering your summer irrigation water requirements.

I encourage all members to keep abreast of their irrigation schedules. The higher irrigation demand in the Murrumbidgee this year will increase the pressure on CICAL to have accurate seven day advance orders. This is a significant challenge with most members only providing the minimum of two hours' notice for their starts. If we order more water than we take river operational losses increase. In contrast, if CICAL under estimates its advance order, there is an increased chance of restrictions at our off take with potential significant negative production impacts for our members.

It is also important members are vigilant and make every effort to retain irrigation tail water on farm. In the event of a release of irrigation run off into the regional drainage system that may be contaminated by chemicals, it is imperative you contact us. Early communication gives us the greatest ability to manage a 'pollution' event in our drainage system.

Whilst our 'external' business environment will continue to place pressure on CICAL and its members, it is important we reflect on the very significant and enduring benefits arising from CICAL becoming a Public Authority in 2020 which is a positive outcome for members and the future of the business.

I thank the Board and management and the CIMCL Board for their dedication and support for the pursuit of this change and members for voting in favour of the new CICAL and CIMCL rules.

In the coming year I look forward to CICAL continuing a strong focus on customer service and learning from our recent experiences.

Clifford Ashby, CEO